

NOT ANOTHER DIME!

DETROIT People's PLATFORM

detroitpeoplesplatform.org

Black and Brown
Detroiters face
unprecedented
economic and
environmental
crises.
Stop giving our
resources away!

NEWS

Vol. 16 - JULY 2019



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PeoplesPlatform



LOOKING AHEAD: TRANSIT IN DETROIT

The Detroit People's Platform – Transit Justice Team is organizing to preserve public transportation and the current structure of the Detroit Department of Transportation.

We are organizing to ensure that new mobility services in the city are inclusive, accessible, and centers racial equity in a rapidly changing landscape where transit and mobility options are increasingly defined by race and class.

The revision of the Detroit 2012 City Charter will provide essential bus riders an important opportunity to participate in the process of protecting public transportation service for the future while retaining those rights outlined in the current charter.

(Continued Pg 1)



DETROIT'S DEEPLY FLAWED DEVELOPMENT

Detroit's revitalization model is deeply flawed and fails to address the economic realities of the city's majority black population. Under the current model hundreds of millions of public dollars are diverted into the construction of luxury high rise apartment buildings, the "Downtown Entertainment Complex" i.e. sports arenas, bars, and restaurants, and more private than public transportation alternatives.

A recent article in Bridge magazine referencing Detroit's so called "turn around" states that the touted promise of more jobs for Detroiters in exchange for our scarce public resources has BARELY materialized. "These data suggest that concerns over who will benefit from economic development initiatives are largely justified. The robust job growth in recent years has largely bypassed Detroit residents. Suburbanites have been the primary beneficiaries."¹

For years local advocates have argued for greater investment of public resources in Detroit neighborhoods. That investment would focus on rebuilding our public commons by renovating public libraries and

(Continued Pg 1)

BANKS and billionaires receive hundreds of millions of dollars in public tax incentives, all in the name of economic development; and one analysis states that tax payor subsidy of jobs created by these incentives ranges from \$68,000 to \$361,000 for one job.²

Now We're Giving
Public Funds To
BANKS?
THAT
AIN'T
RIGHT!



**CHEMICAL BANK
RECEIVED \$30 MILLION
IN STATE AND CITY
INCENTIVES. \$17 MILLION
IN BROWNFIELD TAX
CAPTURES WERE APPROVED
BY THE STATE AND \$13
MILLION IN PROPERTY
TAX ABATEMENTS WERE
APPROVED BY THE CITY.³**

DEEPLY FLAWED DEVELOPMENT

(From Page 1) ...recreation centers, updating local parks and schools and assuring quality affordable housing for residents who face rental cost that are increasingly beyond the income of the average Detroit.

Detroit People’s Platform (DPP) and the citywide CBA coalition, Equitable Detroit (EDC), have time and again challenged our elected officials to stop the corporate giveaways and the funneling of precious and scarce public resources into the deep pockets of wealthy white billionaires and their investors. For the most part these calls have gone unheeded.

In 2016, the community organized and brought forth Proposal A, a ballot initiative designed to strengthen the community’s role and position residents to negotiate with developers for community benefits when public resources are invested in large private economic development projects. In response, some members of City Council organized against community by initiating a competing Proposal B. Proposal B was heavily favored by corporate and special interest which helped to defeat Proposal A by a narrow margin.

COMMUNITY BENEFIT ADVOCATE TRAINING

Detroit residents are sick and tired of seeing millions of their tax dollars given away for private development and watching the city facilitate a process that favors corporate interest over community needs.



We hosted the first Community Benefit Advocate Training in June

After more than 5 years of working on this issue and in light of the massive amounts of public investment in private projects happening in Detroit, we are excited to announce our training for Community Benefit Agreement (CBA) advocates.

CBA Advocates learn the ins and outs of the CBA process and how community can have a more powerful role in shaping economic development in our city. If you are interested in applying to join the training please visit our website or call.



George Gaines and Linda Campbell working on curriculum for the CBA Advocate Training

Fast forward to 2019 and it is evident that Detroiters have been poorly served by Proposal B and the resulting Community Benefit Ordinance (CBO). As it is currently written, the ordinance protects developers and severely restricts the ability of residents to get a fair deal. Nearly two years into the process, nine major development projects and public investment beyond a billion dollars, we are demanding a stronger CBO.

While it is true that a community benefit agreement is not a silver bullet to address the economic injustice that Black Detroiters confront on a daily basis, it is a worthwhile tool that recognizes our presence and our value in helping to shape the comeback of neighborhoods in the nation’s largest majority Black city.

Deeply Flawed Development Sources
1 www.bridgemi.com/detroit/opinion-detroit-booming-too-bad-residents-arent-getting-jobs
2 www.metrotimes.com/news-hits/archives/2019/07/01/guaranteed-loser-state-taxpayers-give-companies-over-360k-for-1-new-detroit-job
3 www.deadlinedetroit.com/articles/22658/surprise_chemical_bank_will_use_public_funds_to_build_detroit_hq_afterall
Graphic Source: www.chemicalbank.com/About/News-And-Events/chemical-bank-bringing-headquarters-to-detroit

SAVE THE DATE
Community Benefit Agreement SUMMIT
Saturday, Sept. 14 @SEIU Local 1



TRANSIT, LOOKING AHEAD

(From Page 1) More importantly, bus riders must organize to protect the Detroit Department of Transportation (DDOT) from being restructured in a way that diminishes bus rider oversight and accountability.

In early June, the Detroit People’s Platform along with members of the Transit Justice Team hosted a Transit & City Charter focus group that included essential bus riders from across the city. Bus riders learned how the current city charter affirms their rights to “reliable, convenient and comfortable transportation”; analysis of DDOT’s current structure and funding mechanisms. What also emerged from the focus group were two key recommendations calling for major changes. Those changes include a 9-member Local Advisory Council (LAC) and a Passenger’s Bill of Rights.

We recommend a 9-member Local Advisory Council, to include members of important stakeholder groups such as senior citizens; youth; individuals with disabilities, veterans and those individuals where English is not their primary language. The proposed goal of the LAC is to serve as an advisory body that has the ability to participate and influence policy decisions regarding mobility and bus service changes. The LAC will also raise issues of accountability regarding DDOT as a publicly funded transportation entity.

The second major recommendation focuses on the implementation of a DDOT Passenger’s Bill of Rights. The draft recommendation put forth by DPP and the transit justice leadership team proposes the following: clean & well-maintained buses, on-time service, courteous & respectful service from all DDOT employees and affiliated personnel; protection from ad-hoc and punitive policies, especially at the Rosa Parks Transit Center; timely access to information; equitable services for bus riders with disabilities and those individuals where English is not there primary language; and the expectation that complaints will be addressed in a timely matter. And, most importantly, Detroit voters must decide on any structural change to DDOT that includes privatization, proposed merger with an authority/department, lease or sale.

In the fall of 2018, the Mayor of Detroit published and implemented the City of Detroit – Strategic Plan for Transportation. It was a collaborative plan authored by the departments of Transportation, Police, Parking, Neighborhoods, Planning and Development, and the Office of Mobility Innovation.

The plan heavily emphasizes pilot projects that introduce car-share services in the neighborhoods – where people can rent cars on a smartphone app, like Maven, for a given amount of

time or commute to work. It calls for the implementation of autonomous, or, “self-driving” vehicles in partnership with DDOT as a transit solution.¹

The plan also references the current rebranding of bus service as “DDOT 2.0” and calls for the reconfiguration of 12 crosstown bus routes such as: Cadillac/Harper, Chene, Chicago/Davison, Clairmont, Conner, Conant, Chalmers, Joy, McNichols, Plymouth, Russell, and Schoolcraft.² Though, it does not provide any details regarding input from bus riders, nor does it explain how these changes will affect bus service in the neighborhoods that will be impacted by these proposed route changes. However, the plan also outlines a goal of having 99% of scheduled bus trips on a daily basis³ but does not say how that will be accomplished, and it also calls for a 90%⁴ on-time arrival rate. Achieving these goals outlined in the plan will be challenging considering that DDOT funding is projected to remain flat, that is no increase in funding, at roughly \$140 million through 2023.⁵

The Strategic Plan for Transportation does not mention or address the needs of low-income essential bus riders and other vulnerable rider groups like senior citizens, individuals with disabilities, veterans, and homeless individuals.

There is no evidence of input from neighborhood residents most likely to be impacted by proposed transportation changes, and no evidence of public hearings where essential bus riders can bring forth recommendations and participate in shaping the plan. Introducing mobility services that lack equity, inclusion, and accessibility, threatens and undermines the promise of the City Charter which obligates city government to provide reliable and accessible public transportation services to Detroit residents.

Transit, Looking Ahead Sources
1 Pg. 19, 48 City of Detroit – Strategic Plan for Transportation
2 Pg. 45 City of Detroit – Strategic Plan for Transportation
3 Pg. 65 City of Detroit – Strategic Plan for Transportation
4 Ibid
5 <https://detroitmi.gov/document/fy-2020-2023-approved-four-year-financial-plan-section-b-agency-descriptions>; FY 2020-2023 Approved Four-Year Financial Plan – Section B Agency Descriptions pg. B20-2



Join the Detroit People’s Platform Transit Justice Team!
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The People’s Platform NEWS is published to support the ongoing work of the organizations and residents committed to the **People’s Platform**.
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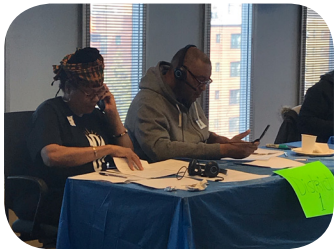
HOUSING TRUST FUND WIN!

After 2 years of advocacy and action, the Housing Trust Fund Coalition Won the Fight to Get \$2 Million in the Housing Trust Fund for deeply affordable housing for low income Detroiters. The Housing Trust Fund Coalition secured the creation of Detroit's Housing Trust Fund in Fall 2017. This fund provides money to create and protect housing exclusively for households earning approximately



50% and below AMI, or roughly \$34,000 per year or less income (for a family of 4). After the creation of the Housing Trust Fund, the city failed to support the initiative with seed funding, instead choosing to focus their time and attention on creating funding sources for higher income housing.

In Fall 2018, the Housing Trust Fund Coalition launched the Fund the Fund Campaign to secure the seed funding that the City promised to community members and advocates during the negotiation process to create the fund. After 6 months of robust organizing and advocacy, the HTF secured \$2 Million dollars of seed money for families 30% AMI. This funding was initially promised to community during the ordinance negotiations, but stripped out of the 2018 budget.



HTF Volunteers making calls. Thank you!

The Housing Trust Fund Coalition also won the creation of the Affordable Housing Task Force. This group is based out of Council Pro Temp Sheffield’s office, and will serve as an resident advocacy and accountability team regarding affordable housing issues. The Task Force will bring the voice of residents into the movement for housing justice in the city of Detroit. The Task Force will host meetings across the city to learn about affordability issues that everyone Detroiters are confronting. We could not have achieved this without all of your support. Thank you!

The fight is not over, the Housing Trust Fund will continue to seek more funding to support the creation of the deeply affordable housing that Detroiters deserve.

Please watch out for updates about the Housing Trust Fund as well as the opportunity to Join the Affordable Housing Task Force, and attend Housing Trust Fund Coalition Events.

PARENT ADVOCACY TOOLKIT 2019

Detroit People’s Platform Launches Parent Advocacy Education Trainings

This summer, DPP will launch a series of trainings in support of a citywide network to improve early education outcomes for young children who reside in Detroit. The training will feature a toolkit developed with input from parents and caregivers who participated in DPP’s Hope Starts Here (HSH) parent engagement program over the past two years.



We have drumming and more at DPP Family Events.

The toolkit is designed to educate and provide organizing tools for parents and caregivers of young children and is a companion guide to the Hope Starts Here (HSH) collaborative that is focused on creating a visionary early childhood education system for Detroit children. DPP will work with our family engagement members to organize a series of trainings for parents, caregivers, and key stakeholders who want to be effective advocates for children.

The training will focus on how organizing and advocacy can be powerful tools in creating an early childhood education landscape that centers racial equity, cultural learning and appreciation, and healthy physical and emotional outcomes for young children.

Detroit People’s Platform Family Engagement
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ONE FAIR WAGE/ EARNED PAID SICK TIME UPDATE

During the 2018 lame duck session the Michigan legislature voted to gut the recently passed One Fair Wage (OFW) and Earned Paid Sick Time (EPST) laws, significantly altering sick leave coverage and the implementation of new minimum wage. Advocates believe the initial move to adopt the OFW and EPST laws was the legislatures way to keep these popular initiatives out of the 2018 mid-term election.

In June, Civil rights leaders, social justice advocates, community and labor organizations, state and federal elected officials, including Governor Gretchen Whitmer and Attorney General Dana Nessel, filed more than a dozen amicus briefs with the Michigan Supreme Court.

The Michigan Supreme Court will hear the case on July 17, 2019.



FIAT CHRYSLER COMMUNITY BENEFITS FAIL

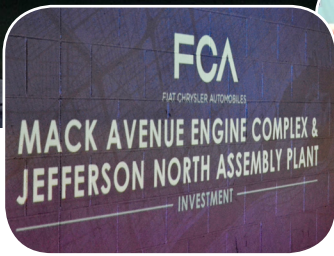
On May 21st, Detroit City Council approved land transfers and a benefits package for the planned Fiat Chrysler (FCA) expansion project. Council Member Raquel Castaneda-Lopez, Pro Temp Mary Sheffield and Detroit Council Pres. Brenda Jones voted against aspects of the FCA deal that lacked transparency and failed to engage community.

Poorly negotiated land transfers needed for the deal were not revealed until after the community benefits process had finished and the Neighborhood Advisory Council had signed off on the deal. These land transfers cost the city millions, impacts other neighborhoods and areas of the city, and should have been discussed in negotiations with community. This is just one example of how the city and FCA acted in bad faith.

Fiat Chrysler is a global corporation that earned \$4.1 billion in 2018. Tax payers have historically invested in FCA, through multiple bailouts, one in which citizen lost \$1.3 billion. They only committed \$8.8 million dollars in community benefits on a projects that will use up to \$280 million in public investment. **This is economic injustice.**

Equitable Detroit and Detroit People's Platform supported residents throughout the process. Community engagement in the process was increased through volunteer door knocking and phone calls to residents in the "impact area", along with social media efforts.

Detroiters continue to call on FCA, and all those doing business, to be better corporate citizens, to be more socially responsible and to hear and take action on the concerns of residents. Detroiters also continue to organize to amend the Community Benefits Ordinance so residents needs are more readily addressed through the process.



BLACK WORKERS ARE BEING LEFT BEHIND BY FULL EMPLOYMENT

A recent article by Andre M. Perry of the Brookings Institute puts data behind what Detroiters are and have been experiencing. While jobs are being created in or relocated to the city, black Detroiters are not getting hired.

"The unemployment rate is 15.8% in Newark, N.J. It's an alarming 17.4% in Detroit. And in Flint, Mich. more than a quarter of the population is unemployed. If these numbers referred to the white unemployment rate, our leaders would be doing everything possible to improve it. But these rates represent black unemployment, and no one is sounding the alarm."



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www.brookings.edu/blog/the-avenue/2019/06/26/black-workers-are-being-left-behind-by-full-employment/

FCA AND ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

Fiat Chrysler is also increasing emissions in our 94% black community with high poverty and asthma rates while reducing emissions coming out of a suburban plant. **This is textbook environmental racism.**

In an unprecedented move, the state's Department of Environment, Great Lakes and Energy (EGLE, formerly MDEQ) permit approval requires that FCA create a plan for additional monitoring and "community benefits" to address environmental health issues passionately raised by residents at the public hearing.

This is a major win for residents and certainly reflects the long-term struggle for environmental justice for black and brown communities in Detroit.

FCA has been given 180 days (October 26, 2019) to create the plan. Residents that attended the EGLE public hearing have been meeting frequently, are conducting Environmental Health Surveys to inform the process, and want to be included in FCA's plans.

WHY WE SAY NO TO PROJECT GREEN LIGHT:



WARNING!
THIS TECHNOLOGY HAS A HIGH POTENTIAL FOR REMOTE RACIAL PROFILING WITH LOW ACCURACY RATES FOR IDENTIFICATION OF BLACK AND BROWN FACES

Detroit People's Platform has been outspoken about the use of surveillance since we became aware of Dan Gilbert's extensive Project Lighthouse system operating downtown in 2013. Since Project Green Light was implemented we have refused to meet in locations where the system is in use. The addition of Facial Recognition applications to the system heightens our concern. For more info we highly recommend "A Critical Summary of Detroit's Project Green Light and its Greater Context." by the **Detroit Community Technology Project (DCTP)**, Source: detroitcommunitytech.org

ATTEND THE DETROIT CITY CHARTER COMMISSION MEETINGS



There has been a great deal of negative press about the Detroit City Charter Commission meetings. Here are a few things to keep in mind:

- What we are seeing is people resisting what is perceived as CORPORATE influence in the Commission.
- This push back against the process is justified in the face of the loss of black economic and political power in the city.
- We must continue to show up, engage and hold the Charter Commissioners accountable to the PUBLIC interest and support our Democracy.

JEFFERSON CHALMERS COMMUNITY ADVOCATES

Every Monday
in July and August, 6 - 8 pm
14100 Kercheval St., 48215 - 313.481.1800



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