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MEMORANDUM

TO: Council Member James Tate

FROM: David Massaron, Chief Financial Officer, City of Detroit
Arthur Jemison, Group Executive for Planning, Housing and Development
Brad Dick, Group Executive of Infrastructure

DATE: October 21, 2019

RE: Responses to Questions about Blight Removal Bond

The following are answers to questions you asked Arthur Jemison at a recent meeting.

1. Can there be a tree mitigation fund?

Of the annual \$50 million recommended for blight removal by the POA, we propose that \$10 million should be spent each year on other blight removal activities, to the extent surplus dollars are available. For the past few years, GSD has used other blight funding for murals, graffiti removal, vacant house board up, vacant property clean up, and commercial corridor clean up. By completing more demolitions, we can reroute funding that was previously used for board up and vacant property clean up to other activities such as contracting out removing blighted trees.

In general, it is the property owner's responsibility to address trees in their own yards. The Administration is happy to work with Council Member Tate on a program where the City could help property owners address dangerous trees in their yard, and place a lien on the house to recover the funds when the property is sold.

2. What is the way we will deal with vacant areas after demo?

The City grows when we deliver better opportunities (residential, small business, industrial): current Detroiters stay and new Detroiters join them.

The City will be continuing its use of the neighborhood planning process to drive positive change in neighborhoods. With the Russell Woods and the new Gratiot 7 Mile plans, the City is expanding the planning areas to include areas that will be affected by the removal of vacant and abandoned houses. This way the neighbors will be able to identify interim and long-term plans for land in their neighborhood.

In the areas most affected by demolition of vacant and abandoned structures, the City will be investigating four primary areas:

- 1/ history of the neighborhood;
- 2/ tactical historic preservation opportunities;
- 3/ housing rehabilitation opportunities for vacant properties;
- 4/ interim and medium-term open space strategies.

These pillars will help the city and neighbors plan for redevelopment while also creating amenities, preventing illegal dumping and making the neighborhood more attractive.