

CONTACT: LINDA WESLEY
PHONE: 313-303-9089
EMAIL: WESLEYL@DETROITMI.GOV
September 7, 2021 – For Immediate Release

PRESS RELEASE

COUNCIL PRESIDENT BRENDA JONES LEADS CAMPAIGN TO RECRUIT DETROIT HANDYMEN AND CONSTRUCTION PROFESSIONALS. AFTER SEVERAL REFERRALS, NO PLANS IN PLACE FOR ASSISTANCE FROM THE MAYOR’S OFFICE RISKING DETROIT RESIDENT ACCESS TO \$30M DOLLARS IN HOME REPAIR CONTRACTS AND OTHER CITY DOLLARS.

We are continually made promises when proposals come to the table but met with no results. The current process in place to guarantee Detroiters are a priority when spending city dollars is not resulting in any success for referrals, now or in the past.

The Detroit City Council and Detroiters were guaranteed that the Mayor’s Office would launch a campaign to recruit Detroit businesses and Detroit residents for jobs on Proposal N. We saw the first round full of minority Detroiters accessing business and employment opportunities.

However, due to a lack of availability of qualified applicants and contractors, we did not see those same results in round two of the Proposal N contracts. Despite promises for outreach, recruitment, training and preparation for Detroiters, two-thirds of the second phase of Proposal N dollars, worth approximately \$9M dollars went to Salenbien Trucking, a contractor located outside of the City of Detroit with a history of low Detroit resident workforce numbers. Steps are not being taken to prepare and assist Detroiters.

Yet, we are discussing and planning to spend another \$30M in Home Repair adding to the over \$100M that the City of Detroit still plans spend on demolition, home repair and home rehab. **If we want different results for equity with our city dollars, we need a new approach. In Detroit, we want results, not promises.**

When these Detroit professionals are referred, they deserve more than information on how to bid and register. Approaching these individuals with normal standards continues to systematically burden and block Detroiters from gaining access to their tax dollars.

Detroiters need a concrete plan, strategy and response that gets them the assistance they really need. Detroiters need technical support that provides them with the skills to bid on city contracts. Detroiters need matching with employees. Detroiters need joint venture programs to increase subcontracting and mentorship opportunities. Detroiters need funding.

American Rescue Plan Act Dollars are meant to enhance lives of Detroiters in all ways. We have a unique opportunity to turn Detroiters into thriving entrepreneurs and provide them with good paying jobs, but we must do the work!

If you or anyone you know is interested in accessing the \$30M opportunities within home repair dollars, please email barnesja@detroitmi.gov.

#InvestinDetroit