

City of Detroit

CITY COUNCIL

MARY SHEFFIELD
CITY COUNCIL PRESIDENT
DISTRICT 5

MEMORANDUM

TO: LaJuan Counts, Director, Construction & Demolition Department
FROM: City Council President Mary Sheffield
DATE: March 24, 2023
RE: Construction & Demolition Department Budget Questions FY23-24

1. Part of your mission statement is to recover costs associated with demolition of structures of privately-owned property. How often is the city reimbursed for these demolitions? What is the process for seeking reimbursement? Where do reimbursements fall in your itemized budget?
2. Under the Michigan Insurance Code, there is the Fire Escrow Fund which can provide financial relief when demolishing structures that have been damaged by fire. Has the Demolition Department received assistance from this fund? How often do our fire damage demolitions fit the requirements to receive financial assistance under the Michigan Insurance Code?
3. In a recent community meeting that I held; rodent infestations were a main complain among our residents. They shared that many demolition properties become homes for rat infestation. What does your department do to prevent this? What more can be done in FY2024 to eradicate these infestations?
4. My office has received complaints about demolition contractors causing damages to nearby lots, curbs, mailboxes, etc. How are these contractors being held accountable for damages that they cause outside of the properties they are contracted to work on?
5. In FY2024, the management of city facilities will begin to fall under the Demolition Department. Please share the purpose of his change and why it is necessary to improve the health, safety, and quality of life of the people of Detroit.

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6. Please provide a report of all demolitions either completed or in progress to date, listed by both year and district.
7. There are measures taken before and during the demolition process to ensure environmental safety. Over the past year, there have been additional inspections and tests needed (such as soil testing) for properties that were previously “ok’d” for demolition. Are there any new environmental standards expected in the foreseeable future that will increase the services needed to perform environmental due diligence?
8. As shown on the metrics report, the Demolitions Department has completed 43 commercial demolitions since FY2022. Are there any new major commercial demolitions planned?
9. This department has 98 non-general fund employees proposed for FY2024 and only 88 in the category each year after. Please explain why these ten positions will not be needed after FY2024?
10. Please share what might fall under “other expenses” in your expenditures summary.
11. Please share the following budget changes from FY2023 to FY2024:
 - a. Blight Remediation Fund increase from \$10.7M to \$13.3M.
 - b. Other Expenses increased from \$362K to \$637K.
12. Another mission of the demolition department was to provide employment opportunities to citizens returning from incarceration. Please provide employee demographics, including your number of previously incarcerated employees and which positions they hold.