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To: Council Member Latisha Johnson,
City Council District 4

From: Tyrone Clifton, Director

Date: March 15, 2023

Re: Responses to Council Member Latisha Johnson 2023-2024 DBA Budget Questions

Please find below responses to your questions sent on March 14, 2023, regarding the proposed Fiscal Year 2024 Proposed Budget for the Detroit Building Authority.

Detroit Building Authority – (Fri., 3/10/2023 @ 11:00 pm)

- 1. The budget proposes eliminating a Project Manager Analytics Specialist III and adding a Project Manager and a \$1.1 million dollar budget increase. How will this affect operations?**

This is an error in the proposed budget for the Detroit Building Authority. The Proposed FY24 expenditures for DBA show as \$2,303,226, but it should only be \$1,207,113, which is much closer to prior year levels. Budget will submit an errata sheet with the correct amount noted.

- 2. In the upcoming year, will there be any assistance from the DBA for minority Detroit business owners wishing to purchase commercial lots adjacent to their business when the lots are selling at “market rate”; discounted rates?**

At the start of our contract, we met with representatives from Housing & Revitalization, Planning & Development, and the Law Department to establish a protocol when selling city-owned property to adjacent property owners. It was determined that applicants who receive an approved response to their application and applied for properties adjacent to their business will receive applicable credits of up to 40% for adjacency, non-profit, & job creation.

- 3. Will there be a concentrated effort, in the form of monitoring, to maintain DBA owned lots ensuring they remain free of blight; overgrowth and illegal dumping? Will the budget for maintenance allow for additional contractors to assist GSD with maintenance of these DBA owned lots and properties?**

The DBA does not own any properties. The City of Detroit contracted with the Detroit Building Authority to manage the portfolio of City-owned surplus properties, which entails improving the efficiency of transacting, marketing, selling, and leasing the properties. Our role is to monitor the properties and resecure as necessary and remove signage, which may be hazardous to public safety. We perform annual inspections of the surplus properties. We are frequently in the field and as we notice overgrowth, blight, & dumping, we report it to General Services and Department of Public Works for remediation. We also respond promptly to reports from citizens and other agencies.

4. What is being done to address the seawall and flooding issues in the Jefferson-Chalmers area?

Through Community Outreach and engagement, the DBA understands that the Jefferson-Chalmers Community does not want to lose access to the canals. Our consultant team is currently assessing the condition of existing seawalls and shoreline conditions of City-owned properties only. We intend to have repairs under construction later this year.

We look forward to continuing to work on an acceptable, permanent flood prevention solution with the Jefferson-Chalmers Residents, District 4, US Army Corp of Engineers, and the Administration. In the interim, temporary measures such as sandbags and Tiger Dams will be deployed when warranted by rising Great Lakes levels.

5. Where are we with regard to the study that was to be contracted out in December?

The Detroit Building Authority is not currently doing a study on flooding, in the Jefferson-Chalmers Community. Through Community Outreach and engagement, the proposed study was not supported by the Jefferson-Chalmers Community, due to the possibility of closing two of the canals. The funding for the feasibility study was repurposed for the repairs of city-owned parcel seawalls.

6. Where are we with the repairing of the city owned seawalls along the canal?

Our Civil Consultant is currently assessing City-owned property seawalls and soil conditions along the canals in the Jefferson-Chalmers neighborhood. This information will be used to create construction documents for bidding out the repairs, installation, and/or replacement of City-owned seawalls this construction season. The goal is to have the City owned seawalls repaired by the end of 2023.