



CITY OF DETROIT
GENERAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT

115 ERSKINE ST.
DETROIT, MICHIGAN 48201
PHONE 313 • 628-0900
FAX 313 • 628-1915

To: Mary Sheffield, President, Detroit City Council

From: Crystal Perkins, Director, General Services

Date: March 28, 2023

Re: Responses to General Services Department (GSD), Budget Hearing Questions, Fiscal Year 2023/2024

Please find below responses to your questions sent on March 27, 2023, regarding the proposed Fiscal Year 2024 Proposed Budget for the General Services Department.

- 1. GSD's Grounds Maintenance Division cuts grass and removes litter at city parks in city-owned vacant lots, manages snow and ice removal at municipal facilities, cleans 220 bus shelters, and operates flower beds. Our office has received complaints regarding the lack of grass cutting. What is the department's plan to ensure that grass cutting is consistent?**

GSD is committed to remediating blight and keeping our city maintained and beautiful. We have recently increased our mowing cycles for our parks to ensure our residents and visitors can enjoy their experience at our parks and outdoor spaces.

- a. Is grass cutting done in-house or is this service contracted out?**

Park mowing has traditionally been provided in-house. However, during the COVID pandemic we faced challenges with staffing our seasonal positions to adequately cover the demands of the mowing schedule. For the summers of 2021 and 2022, we contracted out some of the parks to vendors to assist with the mowing schedule.

- i. If this service is contracted out, how does the department hold these contractors accountable?**

To hold contractors accountable, we had inspectors verify the quality of the work performed prior to approval invoices for payment. The inspectors worked with the vendors to correct any issues or errors with their work.

- ii. What penalties and fines has the department issued to-date?**

The department has not issued any fines or penalties to date.

- iii. When does the current contract expire?**

The contracts expire November of each year.

- iv. How much would it cost for this service to be moved in-house?**

This service is currently provided in-house by our Grounds Maintenance employees. Services were contracted to supplement the low staffing numbers we experienced in 2021 & 2022. No additional funds are needed to provide this service by our in-house staff.



- 2. GSD's Maintenance Division also provides exterior maintenance of Detroit Land Bank Authority properties. What percentage of Land Bank properties does GSD service? What does exterior maintenance include? What is the department's plan to address the cleanliness and exterior maintenance of Land Bank properties that house rodents?**

The department provides exterior cleanout services at DLBA owned properties on an as-needed basis. The percentage of properties we service varies; this service is on an as-needed basis. Exterior cleanout addresses blighted issues at the property such as overgrown, dangerous trees, illegal dumping, and other related services. The department plans to work with DLBA representatives to identify neighborhoods with legacy blight to address any potential rodents on the exterior.

- 3. How are residents being informed of maintenance projects in their neighborhoods as it relates to alley cleaning and paving? Please provide the alley cleaning schedule for all districts.**

The department works with the Department of Neighborhoods (DON) to coordinate alley clean up with the block clubs of the area. If a block club does not exist, the DON will work with the residents to create one. GSD's area of responsibility does not include paving. Our Alleys Division creates the cleaning schedules every Friday for the following week. These assignments are based on the date of request and a tour of the alley with our staff and a block club representative. We have currently completed 2,299 of the 3,028 requests for alley cleanup.

- 4. What is the current process for a resident to request removal of a diseased tree? Has there been a current study indicating how many diseased trees are in the city of Detroit? If not, how much would this study cost and what it's possible timeline of completion?**

Residents can call our Forestry Division at 313-628-0900 to report diseased or dangerous trees. We are currently conducting a study of our trees and providing information on diseased trees. This study started in the Fall of 2022.

- 5. Our office has also received complaints surrounding issues with Hart Plaza. Is GSD responsible for the Plaza's cleanliness? If so, what is its current cleaning and maintenance schedule?**

GSD is responsible for cleaning Hart Plaza during the festival season. We provide daily cleaning with more extensive cleaning during an event and the days following the scheduled event.