



**PLANNING AND
DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT**

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**To: Latisha Johnson, District 4 Council Member
City of Detroit**

**From: Antoine Bryant, Director
Planning and Development Department**

Date: March 31, 2023

Re: Responses to PDD Budget Questions

Please find below responses to your questions dated March 27, 2023, regarding the proposed Fiscal Year 2024 Proposed Budget for the Planning and Development Department.

- 1. Where are we with the “planning study” along the Houston-Whittier corridor from Kelly Rd to I-94? The had been discussion on the side of the administration regarding this corridor any development will extend from what was to be development at the most southeastern part of the G-7 footprint.**

We are aiming to publicly launch the Denby/Whittier Framework in late Q3 of calendar 2023. We are currently preparing an RFP for consultant services to assist the project.

- 2. When conducting planning studies, are there any intentional goals, maybe in conjunction with the DEGC, to attract grocery stores into the neighborhoods?**

Access to grocery stores, and other shopping amenities, are a consistent theme throughout all our framework studies. Admittedly, it has been difficult to attract grocery stores, but this remains a long-standing objective in PDD’s redevelopment efforts, and we will continue to work with the DEGC and other partners.

- a. And how is this being dovetailed with the Department’s strategic plan to prioritize environmental and social health in land use and planning in Detroit’s neighborhoods?**

PDD’s planning efforts largely focus on the ‘built environment’ and throughout our Neighborhood Framework Plans there has been a consistent and focused effort on areas such as walkability, green space, mobility and generally creating a healthier environment for residents.

In addition, the department focuses on industrial planning and ensuring these new job-creating developments are not detrimental to the well-being of nearby residents. This is achieved through a combination of recommended zoning changes, design review,

enhanced screening and, where possible, ensuring there is proper buffering from residential areas.

3. With plans to host the 2024 NFL Draft, what will be the long-term benefits offered to the residents in the neighborhoods? What benefits will the residents in the neighborhoods see after the draft is over?

Given the nature of the event, the activity and focus of the 2024 Draft will be on downtown in preparation for up to 500,000 short-term visitors. However, the improvements that are being developed will also have a longer-term focus of making downtown more inclusive and inviting for all Detroiters.

4. What strategies are in place at PDD to draw housing developers to areas such as Mapleridge, bounded by Houston-Whittier, Gratiot, E. 7 mile and Hayes, where there is NOT much of anything going on?

In our Neighborhood Framework Plans, PDD works extensively with the Housing and Revitalization Department to develop housing projects for each specific area. The strategies that are applied must take into account the realities of the local housing market. Even with tax credits and other state programs, private developers are challenged to make the economics work in certain areas. Nevertheless, PDD is always willing to work with developers to create new opportunities in neighborhoods throughout the city.

5. What is the status of Conner Creek planning study?

The Conner Creek Planning Study is now known as the Greater Warren/Conner Neighborhood Framework. In Spring 2022, PDD released an RFP seeking consultants to help complete the neighborhood framework plan. Following review of proposals, interviews of firms, and required Community Outreach Ordinance (COO) meetings, OHM was chosen to lead a team of planning and engagement consultants and their contract was approved by City Council in November 2022.

Beginning in 2023, PDD and the consultant team began initial community engagement – including a neighborhood meet and greet in February – and the investigation of existing neighborhood conditions and opportunities for the framework. We are preparing for the first large community meeting for the framework on April 20, 2023.

Residents and stakeholders can stay in touch with the neighborhood framework progress and future opportunities to engage by visiting our project website: www.detroitmi.gov/greaterwarrenconner and by subscribing to the newsletter using the link at this website. PDD staff has worked to coordinate the scheduling of activities and community engagement events with Council Member Johnson's office and will continue to do so.

6. What is the status of the Master Plan?

PDD has partnered with the CPC to develop an RFP for a Master Plan Update, which was released at the beginning of the year. The City received three vendor proposals in late February, which were evaluated by a committee including PDD and CPC representatives during March. A proposal has been selected. A conversation to negotiate the scope of work and cost will be had in April. We anticipate submitting a contract for Council approval before summer recess, with a goal of project launch by summer.

Per the Michigan Planning Enabling Act (MPEA), a 63-day review process is required when a new Master Plan is proposed to allow for public input, as well as a public hearing hosted by City Planning Commission. A draft of the plan sent to neighboring municipalities, local transportation agencies and local utility companies is also required per the MPEA. PDD anticipates additional community input and engagement above and beyond what is required by the MPEA.

- 7. The Iron Bell Trail runs through a large section of the east side, which include the City Airport, WCCCD, Chandler Park, I-94, and the new Lear Plant. Do you have plans for developing this area of the city?**

The Iron Bell Trail lies in the geography of the Greater Warren/Conner Framework Plan, which is now underway. More information can be found at www.detroitmi.gov/greaterwarrenconner