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**To:** Council Member Gabriela Santiago-Romero, Detroit City Council District 6

**From:** Ron Brundidge, Director  
Department of Public Works

**Date:** March 27, 2023

**Re:** Responses to 2023-2024 Budget Analysis

Please find below responses to your questions sent on March 23, 2023, regarding the proposed Fiscal Year 2024 Proposed Budget for the Department of Public Works.

1. **According to City policy, residents are responsible for repairing sidewalk flags. In practice, this leads to fees and very few sidewalk flags replaced. Last year, I inquired about the cost to absorb this responsibility into the City's operations – or to a pilot a low-income program to exempt households eligible for programs such as the HOPE property tax exemption.**
  - a. **Please provide an update on this inquiry.**

We have approximately 3.1 million individual sidewalk flags on residential streets throughout the city. Our most recent assessment estimates that 470,000 flags are currently in need of repair or replacement. The estimated cost to replace all of the current damaged sidewalk is \$169 million. In most years, we are able to budget \$4 million in street funds for tree-damaged sidewalk replacement. In 2023, Council approved a transfer of \$20.5 million in general funds that will allow us to implement the pilot program for qualifying low-income residents, as you have referenced.

- b. **Could the Department potentially utilize ARPA dollars to offset some of the fees residents are required to pay for sidewalk flags?**

In the ARPA budget that City Council approved, and in the current ARPA amendment under review, funding has not been set aside for sidewalk replacement.

2. **What is the plan or policy to address mounting trash accumulating in our neighborhoods? This includes dumping and bulk items left on the side of the road.**

MICHAEL DUGGAN, MAYOR

In the past three months, DPW has been able to double the amount of illegally dumped and setout trash that is removed from the neighborhoods on a weekly basis. This level of cleanups will continue, as well as increasing outreach and enforcement efforts, which will be key in reducing the amount of debris that is placed on the roads. Finally, we will be increasing the frequency of bulk collections in June 2024 to once per week; this change is expected to have a significant impact on reducing bulk blight in our neighborhoods.

**a. Have there been any discussions with BSEED to address the dumping and blight we see throughout the City?**

DPW partners with BSEED on a regular basis to address dumping issues throughout our city.