



**PLANNING AND
DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT**

Coleman A. Young Municipal Center
2 Woodward Avenue, Suite 808
Detroit, Michigan 48226

Phone 313•224•1339
www.detroitmi.gov

To: Mary Waters, Detroit City Council Member At-Large
From: Antoine Bryant, Director
Department of Planning and Development
Date: March 22, 2023
Re: Responses to PDD FY 24 Budget Questions

Please find below responses to your questions received March 20, 2023, regarding the proposed Fiscal Year 2024 Proposed Budget for the Planning and Development Department.

- 1. There are currently 39 historical vacant Detroit Public Schools buildings owned by the City of Detroit. What are the future development plans for those buildings?**

Over the past five years, we have sought developer interest in all of the properties via the "After School Detroit" website and Development Opportunities website. Several of the properties have been the subject of viable redevelopment interest, and we are working through HRD, JET, and DEGC to bring those visions to reality. Where redevelopment has not attracted interest or is prohibitively expensive, we seek to demolish the structures and market the land for new opportunities beyond structure renovation.

- 2. Does the Planning & Development Department assist community groups and non-profits on how to acquire the 39 DPS vacant school buildings? If not, please explain?**

Yes. The properties have been highlighted and described at community events and in the context of the department's citywide planning work. PDD staff regularly provides detailed building condition, environmental, and survey information from the recently completed vacant schools study in response to community inquiries. We also participate in discussions with potential purchasers during a vetting process managed by the Detroit Building Authority.

- 3. Please explain the difference between neighborhood framework plans versus Detroit master plans.**

Strategic neighborhood frameworks across the City of Detroit's neighborhoods address critical needs and serve as a spark for new development, typically on a 5-10 year timeframe. They focus on affordable housing, economic development, streetscapes, and parks and open space development. The City of Detroit's Master Plan of Policies is a set of guidelines to assist in proposing and evaluating specific proposals for the development of the City and its residents. While it is land-use focused, it also includes other categories including social, art, and health related concerns for the city's future development. Most notably, the Master Plan of Policies is a long-range visioning document with a 20 year timeframe which does not make specific development project recommendations.

4. Can planning studies be done throughout the city with all development projects under \$75 million? If not, why? If so, please explain the process?

A primary focus of our neighborhood framework plans is to guide improvements and development across a designated area usually comprising 2 to 6 square miles. The neighborhood framework process usually takes about 18 months, and involves extensive preparation, analysis, and deep community engagement.

Over the past year, Planning & Development conducted 100 design reviews for developments of various sizes. Unfortunately, conducting planning studies related to each of these projects would be infeasible.

In addition, for many proposed development projects there is generally extensive outreach to inform residents and provide opportunities for meaningful feedback. This outreach is often conducted by the developer in conjunction with our sister departments such as HRD or DEGC.

5. How much will it cost to do updates on the master plan?

We do not have a definitive cost of the contract to do updates on the master plan, as we are still in the midst of the procurement process. The evaluation selection committee, led by OCP, first goes thru the process of interviewing selected bid responders prior to scoring the bids and negotiating contract scope and cost. Interviews are taking place currently and we expect to select vendor within the next few weeks.

6. When can we expect the master plan to be updated?

PDD partnered with the CPC in developing an RFP for the Master Plan Update, released at the beginning of the year. The City received three vendor proposals in late February, which are under evaluation by a committee including PDD and CPC representatives. We anticipate submitting a contract for Council approval before summer recess, with a goal of project launch by summer.

7. How much did it cost to do all the neighborhood framework studies

Since 2016, \$9.7M will have been spent on 20 neighborhood framework plans. This includes the four neighborhood plans that are currently underway (North End, Midwest/Tireman, Brightmoor, and Greater Warren/Conner) and framework plans for neighborhoods adjacent to the Joe Louis Greenway.

8. Does the planning & development department have a community development initiative for residents to be a part of the planning process for their neighborhood? If not, please explain?

The cornerstone of every neighborhood framework plan is community engagement, and the entire process is driven by community input. As a result, there are always extensive and explicit outreach efforts to involve community members and community groups throughout the process. That said, Planning & Development doesn't have a specific community development initiative, but rather this is incorporated into all planning work.