



**DETROIT CITY COUNCIL – DISTRICT 5
OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
MARY SHEFFIELD**



Council President Mary Sheffield's Legislative Accomplishments: THE PEOPLE'S BILLS



“The People’s Bills are more than just legislation. It is a clear sign to residents that I hear them, I stand with them, and that I am fighting for them. This packet of legislation is for legacy Detroiters, for families, for young people, and for every Detroiter in between. Thank you for trusting me and I will continue to work on your behalf to make our city safer, equitable, and sustainable. I will continue to work on behalf of THE PEOPLE!”
– exclaimed Council President Mary Sheffield.

Throughout my time elected to serve on the Detroit City Council, I have worked tirelessly to pass meaningful and impactful legislation that enhances the quality of life of every Detroiter. This work could not have been without the invaluable help of every organization, community member, resident, and stakeholder who has stood with me over the years as I’ve served on this body.

Thank you to every organization, member, and supporter of the People’s Bills. While we are far from done, I celebrate how much we’ve accomplished, and I am energized to keep doing the work! Together we are changing the lives of so many, and I am eternally grateful for each partnership fostered for the betterment of the people of our great city.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Mary Sheffield".

THE PEOPLE’S BILLS: SUMMARY OF BILLS

Community Input Over Government Surveillance (CIOGS):

Surveillance technology is something that has become more and more pervasive in society with little to no community input or oversight. Working closely the ACLU and the City’s Law Department Council President Mary Sheffield introduced and passed the Community Input Over Government Surveillance Ordinance (CIOGS) to ensure Detroiters are not subjected to undue infringement of their privacy and civil liberties. The ordinance requires the submittal of a Surveillance Technology Specification Report, made available to the public at least 30 days prior to the public hearing, before the approval of any acquisition or use of new surveillance technology. The report must include applicable policies, standards, and procedures for use and in the case of the Detroit Police Department an approved policy from the Board of Police Commissioners. City Council must also, unless waived by a two-thirds vote, conduct a properly noticed public hearing regarding the requested procurement of surveillance technology.

CROWN Act:

The CROWN Act was developed to extend the provisions of the Elliott-Larsen Civil Rights Act, with the goal of promoting a more respectful environment for natural hair. The CROWN Coalition is a partnership with Dove, the National Urban League, Color of Change and Western Center on Law and Poverty that is dedicated to ending their hair bias discrimination in the workplace. By prohibiting race-based hair discrimination, the Crown Act promotes equality and inclusivity in schools and workplaces. It recognizes the cultural significance of diverse hairstyles and protects individuals from being unfairly judged or treated differently due to their natural hair texture or style choice. On August 14, 2023, Council President Mary Sheffield made a request for the inclusion of this Act into the Detroit City Code, which would safeguard City of Detroit employees against discrimination based on their race-related hairstyles.

Detroit Resident Discount Program:

In 2019, then-Council President Pro Tempore Sheffield sponsored the Resident Discount Parking Program, that offers Detroit residents 50% discounts on parking tickets. The program aims to relieve low-income residents. To be eligible for the discount, your vehicle must be registered at a verified Detroit address. Since the program’s establishment, she has maintained her involvement in the program, encouraging the Municipal Parking Department to increase its advertising so that more residents can take advantage of this discount. As out city grows and development continues, she continues to monitor parking conditions and fight for fairness for Detroiters.

Emergency Knox Box:

Senior citizens and families in gated living communities are at risk of delays of life-saving assistance during fires and medical emergencies due to a lack of access for emergency personnel. For this reason, Sheffield sponsored a Knox Box Emergency Key Box System ordinance in 2019. This ordinance mandates an emergency key box system for senior buildings and other multifamily gated communities be installed. September 2020 to the present, there have been 140 lock box installations in various buildings in Detroit and regular annual inspections have been performed in a timely manner.

Home Repair Grants:

Mary Sheffield has been a champion of the Senior Home Repair Grant for as long as she has been elected to serve on the City Council. During her first several years on Council, the administration attempted to shift funding from the program in favor of the 0% Home Loan Program. Every budget season before 2021, she's secured as much as \$2.5 million per year for the home repair grant program. The Senior Home Repair Grant program provides recipients up to \$15,000 for needed home repairs such as roof and window replacement. The program has been so successful at helping seniors safely stay in their homes that it inspired the federally funded Renew Detroit program, which now provides home repair grants for 1,000 households every year.

Homeless Bill of Rights:

Through the City's first-ever Homeless Task Force, created by Sheffield, the city has implemented a housing-first approach to servicing individuals' experiencing homelessness. However, there is still a need to ensure that individuals experiencing homelessness are still afforded every right most residents enjoy. It is her mission that individuals experiencing homelessness are not treated as second-class citizens.

Thus, she introduced a resolution creating a "Homeless Bill of Rights" that codifies certain rights for homeless individuals staying in publicly funded temporary shelters. Some of the rights we will be intentional about affording those experiencing homelessness which include the ability to move about free of harassment or intimidation, access to emergency medical care, equal access to voting, access to employment opportunities, and access to supportive housing.

Industry Standards Board:

In November 2021, City Council passed the Industry Standards Board Ordinance, sponsored by Council President Sheffield. This ordinance allows for the creation of a 9-member Industry Standards Board that will conduct outreach, investigate local working conditions, and report to the City Council with recommendations to improve workplace environments to strengthen our workforce. In Spring of 2023, Council approved the establishment of the nation's first ever Industry Standards Board for Sports Arenas. Anyone looking to establish an Industry Standards Board in their field must start by picking up a petition packet from the City Clerk.

Juneteenth (Paid City Holiday):

In May 2023, Sheffield sponsored the Juneteenth Paid City Holiday Ordinance which establishes Juneteenth as a paid holiday for city employees. This day is crucial to recognize and commemorate the emancipation of enslaved Black Americans. It not only acknowledges the historical significance of this day, but also demonstrates a commitment to equality and justice for all. Providing a paid day off honors the ongoing struggle for civil rights and foster inclusivity in our society. Together with the city's Law Department and the OCFO, she able to do this in a way that has a lower impact on the city financially. As the City Council President of the blackest city in America, it is imperative that Detroit acknowledges the sacrifices and successes of Black ancestors.

Neighborhood Improvement Fund and Neighborhood Beautification Program:

In 2017, the Detroit Pistons announced that they were relocating from their longtime home at the Palace of Auburn Hills to the Little Caesar's Arena in Detroit. In an effort to be responsive to residents' concerns with the deal to relocate the Pistons to Detroit, then-Councilmember Sheffield fought to deliver more tangible benefits to the neighborhoods outside the greater downtown area in the form of the Neighborhood Improvement Fund. The NIF is funded with the proceeds from all income tax revenue generated by the Pistons Players, visiting NBA players, and the Pistons and Palace Sports & Entertainment employees.

The establishment of the NIF allowed for the funding of the Neighborhood Beautification Program (NBP) in 2022, which provides \$500 to \$15,000 grants to eligible community groups and nonprofit organizations for community gardens, public space improvements, and other public benefits. Since its establishment, the Neighborhood Beautification Program has distributed over \$1 million to over 80 community projects, with another \$2.5 million recently allocated for future projects.

Neighborhood Enterprise Zones:

Creating affordable communities has been one of Sheffield's highest priorities as a member of the City Council. In June 2021, City Council voted to accept the updated Neighborhood Enterprise Zone (NEZ) boundaries that she championed. The NEZ provides property tax reductions to residents in eligible neighborhoods who commit to \$500 worth of home improvements over the first 3 years of the tax incentive. While making sure that as many existing NEZ areas as possible were extended, she also worked with residents, community advocates, and the City Assessor to establish new NEZ areas. The creation and expansion of the NEZ areas has been crucial to keeping Detroit neighborhoods affordable and preventing displacement due to high property taxes

Overassessment/Benefits Period Homeowner Program:

The overassessment issue in Detroit has had significant financial implications, with homeowners collectively overtaxed by an astounding \$600 million between 2009 and 2016. This overassessment issue stemmed from a violation of the Michigan Constitution, which prohibits property assessments exceeding 50% of market value. In Detroit, assessments ranged from 55% to a staggering 85% of property market values. Tragically, this overassessment played a role in causing the loss of homes for around 100,000 Detroit residents.

Council President Mary Sheffield worked with the Coalition for Property Tax Justice and the Administration to comprise and pass a historic resolution authorizing legal methods of compensation for homeowners who were unconstitutionally over assessed between 2009-2016.

Working since 2020 to identify remedies that would attempt to begin to make affected homeowners whole, she knew it was important to take the first step towards restoration. Through budget deliberations and over the last several years, she has kept over-assessed homeowners at the forefront of the public policy debates before City Council. Below are the remedies that were created in the initial attempt to repair the harm done to Detroit's homeowners:

- \$6 million discount program for the purchase of a Detroit Land Bank Authority home or side lot,

- Preferential access and placement in the \$12 million Grow Detroit's Young Talent (GDYT) Program for children of Affected Homeowners ages 14-24,
- Prioritization in any City home repair program as permitted by law,
- Preferential access to the \$6 million Down Payment Assistance Program,
- Financial/technical assistance for affected homeowners who are also small business owners under the \$6.25 million Small Business Launcher Program.

Council President Sheffield's remains focused on finding ways to provide cash compensation and/or tax credits to affected homeowners. Currently, she is pursuing state law changes to allow for these methods of restoring affected homeowners.

Permanent Funding for CAM System:

During the March 2023 City Council Budget deliberations, Council President Sheffield secured an unprecedented \$900,000 in City funding to continue operations of the Coordinated Assessment Model (CAM), the primary intake program for all emergency homeless shelters in Detroit. The CAM, which acts as the coordinated entry system for homelessness services as required by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), faced a more than \$1 million funding gap that would have seriously jeopardized services for the thousands of vulnerable Detroiters who go through the shelter system. The funding she secured, along with a grant from the Homeless Action Network of Detroit, ensured that the CAM continues to operate at its full capacity and provides entry intake and supportive services for all who need it.

Property Tax Exemption (HOPE):

The Michigan Constitution states that no property should be assessed at more than 50 percent of its market value. From 2009 to 2016, between 55 and 85 percent of Detroit homes have been unconstitutionally assessed. As a result, approximately 1 in 4 Detroit properties were foreclosed from 2011 to 2015, which resulted in massive displacement of residents, an increase in blighted properties, and vastly reduced home values. In 2016, nearly 40,000 owner-occupied households – or 32% of all Detroit homeowners – qualified for the HPTAP, but the vast majority did not receive it either because they were not aware it existed or because the process was too burdensome.

Council President Sheffield, along with the Coalition to End Unconstitutional Tax Foreclosures are proposing an ordinance, which ensures that Detroit homeowners have access to the City's Homeowners Property Tax Assistance Program (HPTAP), also known as the Poverty Tax Exemption (PTE). The ordinance aims to codify the requirements stipulated by the 2018 *Morningside v. Sabree* settlement order and propose additional changes that will prevent further hardship to Detroit homeowners by ensuring the HPTAP is readily available, easily obtainable, and equitably provided to all who qualify.

Detroit Reparations Taskforce:

In June of 2021, Mary Sheffield passed a resolution in support of Reparations and started a working group to move the cause forward. Then, partnering with the Michigan Democratic Black Caucus, a Reparations Task Force ballot initiative was established which garnered over 80% of the vote during the election in November of 2021. The mission of the task force is to help further exploration of the

feasibility and ability of the City of Detroit to create, develop, and implement community reparations for the mass historic unjust treatment of Detroit's majority Black population by making recommendations for housing and economic development programs that address historical discrimination against the Black community in Detroit.

The Task Force consists of thirteen (13) members. An Executive Committee of three (3) ad hoc working coordinators and nine (9) Members at large. The Reparations Task Force shall submit a written report of its findings and recommendations to the City Council no later than the date that is eighteen (18) months from the date of the first meeting of the Reparations Task Force, which was in June of 2023.

Right to Counsel:

According to published studies, at least half of all tenants fighting eviction would not lose their case if they had legal representation. Additionally, about 97% of cases in housing court are initiated by landlords, and almost all landlords have representation while the vast majority of tenants do not. This results in landlords evicting tenants because they have power, not because the law supports them, ultimately causing the City's population to decrease and increasing the need for supportive housing services.

The Right to Counsel Ordinance, sponsored by Council President Sheffield was passed on May 10, 2022, amending the current City Housing Code. This amendment would require the City of Detroit to furnish comprehensive legal representation to low-income residents confronting eviction and foreclosure proceedings in the 36th District Court. The services offered encompass legal guidance, advocacy, court appearances, and any other essential support. All eligible individuals will receive full legal representation through a competitively procured non-profit organization.

Slavery/Prison Affidavit & Notification:

Prison labor and the exploitation of inmate workers is the modern-day form of slavery in America. In the spirit of the original chapter in the City Code dealing with slavery disclosures, Sheffield thought it would be prudent and in line with the City's values to require potential contractors to disclose any relationships with prisons and amended the code to require this new affidavit.

Responsible Contracting Ordinance:

The ordinance, authored and sponsored by Council President Sheffield, in partnership with the Laborer's International Union of North America and Local 1191, provides two (2) new voluntary 6% equalization credits for contractors who pay living wages, give employees benefits and provide retirement benefits, and for contractors who have registered apprenticeship programs for their employees. In addition, the ordinance requires clearances calling on Contractors to affirm they have the requisite licensing and workplace safety training for employees performing covered work under City of Detroit contracts. As evident by a recent U of M study, workers have been left behind during Detroit's resurgence and the Responsible Contracting Ordinance attempts to inject our values, with respect to workers, into the hundreds of millions of dollars in contracts the City of Detroit procures every year.

Property Tax Reform Ordinance:

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2011 to 2015, which resulted in massive displacement of residents, an increase in blighted properties, and vastly reduced home values. In 2016, nearly 40,000 owner-occupied households – or 32% of all Detroit homeowners – qualified for the HPTAP, but the vast majority did not receive it either because they were not aware it existed or because the process was too burdensome.

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Inclusionary Housing Ordinance:

Since 2017, when Sheffield sponsored the Inclusionary Housing Ordinance, the discussion around housing, affordability, and the future of development in Detroit has been forever changed. The first of its kind legislation mandated that developers seeking taxpayer-funded assistance on their multifamily projects must set 20% of the units as affordable. What was rare in 2017, has now become the standard for residential development in Detroit in 2023.

Housing Trust Fund:

The greatest housing need in the City of Detroit is for individuals and families at or below 50% of the Area Median Income. Historically, most developments in Detroit has not addressed the needs of this segment of the population, especially in recent times. As a result, City Council passed Inclusionary Housing Ordinance authored by Council President Mary Sheffield which included the creation of a housing trust fund called the Detroit Affordable Housing Development and Preservation Fund (DAHDPF) or “Housing Trust Fund.” President Sheffield initially secured \$2 million and 20% of Detroit commercial real estate sales for funding for the Housing Trust Fund. Listening to her affordable housing taskforce she increased the funding by requiring 40% of Detroit’s commercial real estate sales for funding. She also negotiated contribution to the funds when major developments project sought tax abatements.

Water Affordability:

Under continuing distressed local economic conditions, and in the absence of a water affordability program for City residents, the predictable result has been the inability of many residents to pay the full charges for water and sewerage services, leading to mass water shut offs affecting up to 3000 families per week (over 30,000 total). This has led to a disparate impact on residents living in poverty, people of color, persons with disabilities, single parents with children, and elders living on fixed incomes, among other vulnerable groups. Water is a human right and depriving residents of access to clean, safe drinking water is inhumane and a serious threat to public health.

As a result, Council President Sheffield passed a resolution the requested and secured a moratorium on water shutoffs. She also introduced a income-based water affordability ordinance to ensure that no Detroiter is forced to survive without access to clean, safe drinking water. As a result of her advocacy and testimony at the State Legislature, an income-based water affordability law passed and funded providing relief to some of Detroit’s most vulnerable residents.

Proportional Funding

Pursuant to the 2012 revision of the Detroit Charter, the City Council shall establish a proportional method to fund oversight agencies to ensure the proper oversight of executive and legislative branches of government, arrive at an equitable proportional method to fund oversight agencies in local government, and prepare and adopt a proportional funding system within ninety (90) days of the effective date of this Charter.

In response to the Charter mandate, Council President Mary Sheffield authored a resolution establishing a proportional funding working group which was unanimously adopted by her colleagues. After several meetings, which included the Legislative Policy Division, the Law Department, Office of the Chief Financial Officer and all the oversight agencies, there was a collective agreement, in principle, to proceed with pursuing an ordinance which codifies Council's method of proportionally funding oversight agencies in future budget years. As a result, President Sheffield authored and passed the Proportional Funding Ordinance which provides oversight agencies the framework to receive adequate funding to properly oversee governmental operations and provide better transparency and accountability

INITIATIVES:

Occupy the Corner – Detroit:

11 years ago, Council President Mary Sheffield, after visiting with Brooklyn Council Member Jumaane Williams and attending an Occupy the Corner event in New York, decided to launch Occupy the Corner – Detroit in her district. The mission is to **engage** the community, **connect** them to resources and **empower** residents to be self-determinate with respect to improving the quality of life in some of Detroit's most impoverished neighborhoods. The improvement goals for residents in these areas include the following which positively affect quality of life:

Improving Police and Community Relations
Connecting Neighbors and Neighborhoods
Increasing Physical Activity
Improving Mental Health
Providing Healthy Nutrition Information

Providing Access to Jobs, Education & Resources
Improving Access to Health and Dental Care
Providing Nutritional Meals and Food
Giving Away Bicycles and Backpacks
Providing Clothing and Shoes to the Underserved

Since its inception, Occupy the Corner – Detroit has occupied 40 Neighborhoods throughout District 5 and provided entertainment, family fun, and resources to produce healthy outcomes for over 100,000 residents, mostly children, in District 5 and Detroit as a whole. Starting in the first part of June each year, Occupy the Corner – Detroit events are held every other Friday evening throughout the summer. The program grows every year with more non-profit and social services agencies signing on to be a part of this important service to the community.

Past Occupy Kick-off events, billed as community celebrations, have been extremely successfully attended by Mike Epps, National Action Network's Dominique Sharpton, Council Member Jumaane Williams of Brooklyn, Mike Brown Sr. of Ferguson, MO, Hip-Hop artists including Jeezy, Big Sean, Sada Baby, Royce Da 5'9, and Kash Doll, as well as NBA Legends like Derrick Coleman and Willie Burton and many more!

State of the Youth:

Driven by the quote, “The youth of today are the leaders of tomorrow,” Sheffield launched “State of the Youth” to have open and honest discussions about the challenges Black youth face today. “All too often our young people struggle with feeling relevant, struggle with being heard and struggle with not feeling loved. The “State of the Youth” Symposium is designed to show them they matter, it’s designed to have their voices heard and last, but certainly not least, it is designed to show that people they admire have a real love for them,” exclaimed Council Member Mary Sheffield. “Our children need to hear from people they respect about the alternatives to violence, the real ramifications of their actions and how to avoid situations which could jeopardize their future and their very life,” said Councilwoman Sheffield. 2024 marked Council President Mary Sheffield’s 9th consecutive year engaging with Detroit Youth through her innovative and effective State of the Youth Annual Symposium.