

## **FY26 Media Services Director Budget Address**

*Good Afternoon to your honorable body, I am honored to be here to present to you the Media Services FY26 Budget. Thank you to our Director of Administration, Myesha Crawford for her work in the drafting and completion of the budget before you for review.*

*After a tedious 4-month operational assessment, Media Services Operations and budget has been restructured for effectiveness, efficiency and enhanced digital engagement. Thank you to my partner in this process, Communications Director Vickie Thomas who could not be present due to a funeral. We could not have accomplished this task without the support, dedication and leadership of Deputy Director Shayla McElroy. Her ability to prioritize staff wellbeing, safety and development has been critical in the success of current operations. Additionally, her attention to detail, organizational skills and pleasant demeanor leading the streamlining of external services operations and requests have been key in improving the delivery of services and reaching departmental goals and objectives. We have been operating in restructured operations since July 2024 and though not met without challenges and room for continuous improvement, I am proud of the success we have accomplished thus far in a short period of time.*

*With the historic elimination of blight, reduction in crime, population increase, fiscal solvency and opportunity rising, Media Services is telling our story, our way while keeping our residents connected and engaged to city resources.*

*Detroit is undoubtedly a city that has risen from the ashes and now stands center stage for the world to see. The Media Services Department has the pristine privilege to tell our city's story and highlight our accomplishments all while enhancing our digital presence to assist in transforming the way our city is perceived locally, nationally and globally. Within the last year, our digital presence has positively impacted our city's presence in local and national news.*

*A strong and intentional digital brand presence helps us Engage Detroit on programs, opportunities and resources available to city residents while also setting the stage for us to attract new businesses, residents and industries to ensure long term viability for our city for years to come. Simply put, it is time for the world to know Detroit and all we have to offer. Having had a front row seat and presence in city government pre, during and post bankruptcy I am honored to lead this department of dedicated and creative public servants connecting residents and the world to Detroit.*

*This year we have yielded 115,000 views across 4 cable channels and broadcast over 1,000 pieces of content. Thanks to the leadership of our Director of Administration, Myesha Crawford, we have successfully reformed the city council program schedule and enhanced marketing and awareness of our Detroit connected app and Channel 10 to ensure residents are aware of how to engage with our legislative process.*

*Our external services division provides graphic design, photography, videography and audio-visual setup for city council, the mayor's office and other city agencies. We also manage the copy*

*center, process film permits, manage gov delivery and city webpages. This year the external services division processed 3,376 requests, sent 706 digital mailers and saw over 7M web visits.*

*The Media Services Department implements a strategic digital engagement strategy which includes the planning of campaigns across 4 digital sources: Social Media, Web, Mailer and Cable.*

*Our digital media division, branded "Engage Detroit" and led by our digital media manager, Alex Ennis, supported by Production Manager Brittany Smith and Campaign Manager Cyrus Tettuh plans, captures, creates, distributes and engages content across 11 social media platforms hosting over a half a million followers yielding an average of 2.8M views, 93K likes, 15K shares and 7,000 new followers monthly. #Shoutout to our 4 Social Media Managers Gregory Buggs, Sean Bowman, Jeffrey Krantz and Marcela Sifuentes for their work leading Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, Next Door, Linked In, X, YouTube, Blue Sky, Snap Chat and Threads. Detroit is the only city consistently working to engage residents, visitors and users across 11 social media platforms. Additionally, the digital media division also manages content creation and distribution across a weekly mailer with over 70k subscribers, an engage detroit webpage and cable in collaboration with the external services division.*

*In True Detroit fashion, our rapid response team, lead by our Rapid Response Manager Alan Hunt II, works diligently to defend our city's brand, connect Detroiters to resources and resolve complaints. As you can see, we had a viral "clap back" moment defending Detroit against being called a layover city, which we all know we are not. Negative commentary and misinformation regarding*

*Detroit discourage new business, new residents and new industries from investing in our city. It is key that as we build our online brand presence, we also defend our city's local, national and global appeal to assist in keeping our city thriving and growing. Additionally, as we are in a digital age where most people are connected via social media, residents being able to access hotline phone numbers, job application links and be connected to information removes barriers to access to city government which often exist in minority communities due to the limitation on access to information.*

*The media services department utilizes contractors for major events as a cost-effective solution that reduces strain on staff. Contractual services help manage peak workloads, extended-hour meetings, weekend events and large-scale, one-time projects without overburdening our team or requiring additional full-time hires. Contracts also help prevent wasted resources during periods of limited workload in standard operations.*

*92% of the Media Services budget is allocated towards salaries, wages and employee benefits. Less than 6% of our total budget is allocated to contractual services. Hiring staff to cover the contractual services would cost the department almost 500K dollars more than the contractual services themselves.*

*Understanding the importance of engagement and awareness of Detroit businesses, the Media Services Department implements a strategic, organized and planned procurement process. All Media Services contracts are required to submit a marketing plan prior to being approved for bid or for the bid to close.*

*We currently have one contract out for bid with marketing starting this Sunday and another contract preparing for bid with marketing starting when the bid opens. The current bid is for maintenance of the 13<sup>th</sup> floor server. While we do not expect any service interruptions, we want to ensure that if we do have an occurrence, we can immediately respond and have a contract in place. The upcoming bid is for Audio/Visual Support services. These contracts will be bid small tier and large tier to allow for opportunities for smaller businesses to successfully bid. I would like to note that these are open and upcoming bids so public discussion is limited and interested businesses are encouraged to contact the Office of Contracting and Procurement.*

*While I am proud of our progress, there is still more work to be done to fully implement our digital engagement strategy. We are moving into the next phase of our digital engagement strategy with an improvement in campaign planning and program coordination and outreach. Within the next 60 days, we are prioritizing the hiring of a program coordinator to work with our digital media manager to align our continuous campaign messaging. The program coordinator will also conduct continuous outreach to local schools, universities and filmmakers to provide free programming distribution.*

*The Media Services FY26 Budget creates both the External Services and Digital Media Divisions as previously described and eliminates 4 positions. Two positions have been eliminated for efficiency. The duties of the communications manager II have been transitioned to both the project manager and the social planner IV with both positions taking on additional responsibilities within the department. The duties of the administrative specialist 3 have been transitioned to the project manager. This position only existed due to the long-term absence of a Media Services Director and staff to support the planning and coordination of the State of the City. We now have adequate staff to support this project in-house and no longer have a need for that position. Two positions have been eliminated following the operational assessment. Operational review of the positions revealed that there was not enough daily tasks or workflow to support the existence of these positions in the department. As a result of the restructure, we have seen an increase in salary and wages for most staff and assurance that all Media Services Staff have benefits. Additionally, we have seen 8 new management positions created to enhance oversight, operational efficiency and employee growth, 5 of those employees have been elevated from within Media Services or another city department. Additionally, we have created new and exciting employment opportunities for film, marketing and creative professionals which are not always easy to access with competitive wages, especially in government.*

*With the support, leadership and guidance of Deputy Mayor Melia Howard and the Office of Talent and Development, this year Media Services is prioritizing professional development, addressing burnout and working to create a workplace that prioritizes performance and people.*

*With a budget that is 92% driven by the cost of employees, our greatest resource in our staff. They are what make Media Services move and shake, so we are taking time this year to establish a culture of growth, workplace satisfaction and employee well-being. Studies show that when employees have a positive workplace, performance improves. For Media Services this means enhancement in content quality and content output. This effort is being led by Deputy Director McElroy and our Executive Assistant Shartrese Roberson. We currently have 86 talent and development courses assigned, 11 professional development workshops scheduled and 84 leadership development days scheduled. We also hosted our first Media Services Open House with over 50 attendees interested in employment and/or networking with Media Services.*

*Finally, I would like to acknowledge and thank the entire Media Services Department. Throughout my presentation, I acknowledged our management leading our teams daily. However, it is all of the Media Services Employees that contribute daily to not only departmental success but their talent can be seen city-wide and globally. I appreciate your dedication, your trust and your commitment to our department. Also, Happy Birthday to an amazing creative talent in our department, creation specialist, Rebecca Smith.*

*Thank you to this honorable body for your time and I am excited for your questions.*

*Jasmine Barnes, Director*

*Media Services*

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