Report on Complaints Received by the Ombudsman's Office February 2024 - February 2025

March 31, 2025



BRUCE SIMPSON, CITY OMBUDSMAN "Improving Your Quality of Life On a Daily Basis"



COLEMAN A. YOUNG MUNICIPAL CENTER 2 WOODWARD AVENUE, SUITE 114
DETROIT, MICHIGAN 48226-3437
PHONE 313•224•6000 TTY:311
FAX 313•224•1911
OMBUDSMAN@DETROITMI.GOV

March 31, 2025

The Honorable Detroit City Council City of Detroit 1340 CAYMC Detroit, MI 48226

RE: Ombudsman Budget Analysis for FY 2025-2026

Dear Council Members:

I would like to thank your Honorable Body for giving me the opportunity to address the service delivery concerns and complaints of our citizens. This is the nineth report issued to your Honorable Body by this Ombudsman Office. This year we have processed 3,361 complaints. Of the 3,361 complaints, most of them have come from the Building and Safety Engineering and Environmental Department (BSEED) and the Detroit Land Bank Authority (DLBA).

The recommendations that I have provided to you in this report address public safety and revenue generation. With these recommendations and analysis of the budget, we attempt to speak to the concerns of the masses throughout our great City.

I submit this report on behalf of our residents, property owners, business owners and all persons who have contacted the Ombudsman Office during the time period of February 2024 through February 2025.

Respectfully submitted,

Bruce Simpson
City Ombudsman

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Section I: Complaints by Department,

Complaint Percentage by Department,

Cases by Open vs Closed,

Breakdown of Resolution Rate by Department,

Breakdown of Complaints by District, and

Ombudsman Recommendations,

Section II: Department Complaints by Council Districts & Maps

Maps: (Council Districts/2026 Council Districts)

Section III: Complaints by Zip Codes & Maps

Section IV: Community Engagement Summary

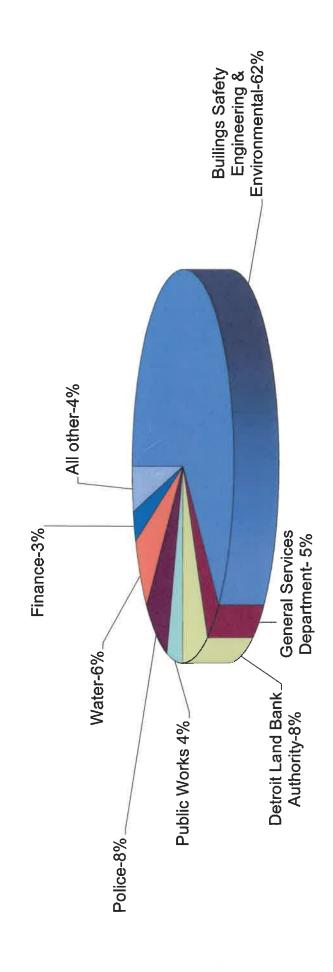
Section

1

Complaints by Department February 2024 - February 2025

Department	Complaints	Percentage
BSEED	2081	62%
Elections	2	0.06%
Finance	84	2.50%
Fire	4	0.12%
General Services	167	4.97%
Health	4	0.12%
Human Resources	1	0.03%
Law	7	0.21%
Municipal Parking	15	0.45%
Non Departmental & Non Jurisictional	21	0.62%
Pⅅ	2	0.06%
Police	252	7.50%
PLD	17	0.51%
Public Works	146	4.35%
Recreation	3	0.09%
DDOT (Transportation)	9	0.27%
DWSD (Water & Sewerage)	212	6.31%
DLBA	269	8.00%
Other	65	1.93%
TOTAL	3,361	

Ombudsman Complaints by Department



Breakdown of Resolution Rate by Department

	COMPLAINTS	CLOSED	PERCENTAGE
BSEED	2081	1423	68.00%
ELECTIONS	2	2	100%
FINANCE	84	48	57.00%
FIRE	4	2	50.00%
GENERAL SERVICES	167	163	98.00%
HEALTH	4	2	50.00%
HUMAN RESOURCES	1	0	0.00%
LAW	7	6	86.00%
MUNICIPAL PARKING	15	11	73.00%
NON DEPARTMENTAL & NON JURISDICTIONAL	21	18	86.00%
Pⅅ	2	0	0%
POLICE	252	174	69.00%
PLD	18	16	89.00%
PUBLIC WORKS	145	100	69.00%
RECREATION	3	2	67%
DDOT (Transportation)	9	3	33.00%
DWSD (Water & Sewerage)	212	159	75.00%
DLBA	269	241	90.00%
OTHER	65	34	52.00%
Total Resolution Rate			72%

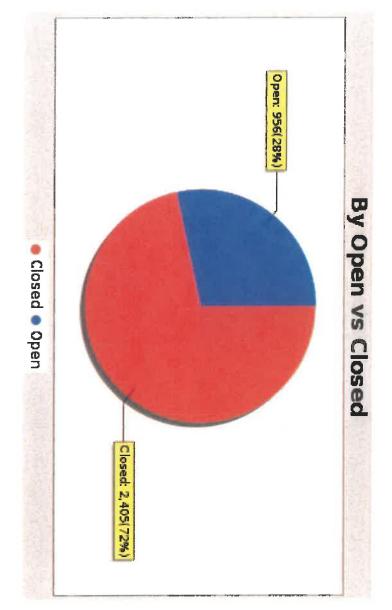
THIS DOCUMENT IS PROPERTY OF THE CITY OF DETROIT OMBUDSMAN AND CANNOT BE RELEASED, OR FURTHER DISSEMINATED, WITHOUT THE EXPRESS APPROVAL OF THE CITY OF DETROIT OMBUDSMAN.

Cases by Opened and Closed

28MAR2025

End Range: Start Range: 01FEB2024

28FEB2025



BSEED COMPLAINT'S; TOTAL= 288	ILLEGAL DUMPING	160
	ENVIRONMENTAL ENFORCEMENT/HIGH GRASS WEEDS	39
	DEMOLITION REQUESTED	30
	DEBRIS/BLIGHT INSPECTION	27
DLBA COMPLAINT'S; TOTAL= 49	DEMOLITION REQUESTED	17
	ILLEGAL DUMPING	15
	DEBRIS INSPECTION	10
DPD COMPLAINT'S; TOTAL= 35	ABANDONED VEHICLES/BOAT	7
	ILLEGAL PARKING	6
	BASKETBALL HOOP INSPECTION	2
DPW COMPLAINT'S; TOTAL= 24	SIDEWALK/STREET REPAIR	11
	POTHOLES	2
		5
DWSD COMPLAINT'S; TOTAL= 30	CATCH BASIN/SEWER	6
	BILLING/ACCOUNTING	5
	SINKHOLE REPAIR	4
GSD COMPLAINT'S; TOTAL= 28	REQUIRES REMOVAL/DEAD	11
	TRIMMING REQUESTED	11

BSEED COMPLAINT'S; TOTAL= 282	ILLEGAL DUMPING	131
	DEMOLITION REQUESTED	24
	HIGH GRASS/WEEDS	21
DLBA COMPLAINT'S; TOTAL= 34	DEMOLITION REQUESTED	11
	ILLEGAL DUMPING	11
	HIGH GRASS/WEEDS	2
DPD COMPLAINT'S; TOTAL= 36	ABANDONED VEHICLES/BOATS/TRAILERS	15
	ILLEGAL PARKING	5
	RESIDENTS PARKING ON LAWN	4
DPW COMPLAINT'S; TOTAL= 30	SIDEWALK REPAIR	14
	POTHOLE REPAIR	4
	STREET MAINTENANCE	4
DWSD COMPLAINT'S; TOTAL= 38	BILLING/SEWAGE OVERAGE/ACCOUNTING	10
	CATCH BASIN/SEWER	4
	SINKHOLES	3
GSD COMPLAINT'S; TOTAL= 27	REQUIRES REMOVAL/DEAD	11
	TRIMMING REQUESTED	9
	HGW VACANT LOTS	2

BSEED COMPLAINT'S; TOTAL= 534	DEMOLITION REQUESTED	216
	ILLEGAL DUMPING	157
	OPEN/DANGEROUS	29
DLBA COMPLAINT'S; TOTAL= 65	DEMOLITION REQUESTED	41
	ILLEGAL DUMPING	11
	OVERGROWN TREES	5
DPD COMPLAINT'S; TOTAL= 81	ABANDONED VEHICLES	24
	INOPERABLE VEHICLES	11
	ABANDONED BOATS	7
DPW COMPLAINT'S; TOTAL= 24	SIDEWALK REPAIR	10
DI W COMI EART 3, TOTAL- 24	TRASH NOT PICKED UP	5
	SPEED HUMP REQUEST	3
DWSD COMPLAINT'S; TOTAL= 26	BILLING/SEWAGE OVERAGE/ACCOUNTING	8
	SINKHOLE	2
GSD COMPLAINT'S; TOTAL= 39	TRIMMING REQUESTED	12
	REQUIRES REMOVAL/DEAD/FALLEN	11
	VACANT LOT CUTTING	9

BSEED COMPLAINT'S; TOTAL= 215	DEMOLITION REQUESTED	82
	ILLEGAL DUMPING	43
	ENVIRONMENTAL/DEBRIS/INSPECT./ENF.	21
DLBA COMPLAINT'S; TOTAL= 13	DEMOLITION REQUESTED	4
	HIGH GRASS/WEEDS	2
	BUY BACK PROGRAM	2
DPD COMPLAINT'S; TOTAL= 23	ABANDONED VEHICLES/BOATS/CAMPERS	14
	SQUATTER INSPECTION	3
DPW COMPLAINT'S; TOTAL= 14	SIDEWALK REPAIR	9
	TRASH NOT PICKED UP	4
DWSD COMPLAINT'S; TOTAL= 27	BILLING/SEWAGE OVERAGE/ACCOUNTING	9
	WATER SHUT OFF	2
	CATCH BASIN/SEWER/MANHOLE COVER	2
GSD COMPLAINT'S; TOTAL= 13	REQUIRES REMOVAL/DEAD/FALLEN	5
	TREE TRIMMING	2
	CUT VACANT LOT	2

BSEED COMPLAINT'S; TOTAL= 268	DEMOLITION REQUESTED/BUILDINGS DANGEROUS	105
	ILLEGAL DUMPING	73
	HIGH GRASS/WEEDS	40
DLBA COMPLAINT'S; TOTAL= 43	HIGH GRASS/WEEDS	12
	DEMOLITION REQUESTED	10
	ILLEGAL DUMPING	5
DPD COMPLAINT'S; TOTAL= 20	ABANDONED VEHICLES	8
	NEIGHBOR COMPLAINT/DISPUTE	2
	PARKING OBSTRUCTION	2
DPW COMPLAINT'S; TOTAL= 24	SIDEWALK REPAIR	7
	TRASH/BULK NOT GETTING PICKED UP	4
	STREET REPAIR	2
DWSD COMPLAINT'S; TOTAL= 34	BILLING/SEWAGE OVERAGE/ACCOUNTING	6
	SINKHOLE REPAIRS	4
	MAIN BREAKS/REPAIRS/DAMAGES	2
GSD COMPLAINT'S; TOTAL= 16	REQUIRES REMOVAL/DEAD/FALLEN	5
	TRIMMING	5
	HIGH GRASS/WEEDS	2
	·	_

BSEED COMPLAINT'S; TOTAL= 232	ILLEGAL DUMPING	95
	DEBRIS/INSPECT./ENF.	35
	HIGH GRASS/WEEDS	23
	DEMOLITION REQUESTED/BUILDINGS DANGEROUS	32
DLBA COMPLAINT'S; TOTAL= 36	ILLEGAL DUMPING/DEBRIS/BLIGHT	12
	DEMOLITION REQUESTED	8
	HIGH GRASS/WEEDS	7
DPD COMPLAINT'S; TOTAL= 31	ABANDONED VEHICLES	7
	SUSPECTED DRUG TRAFFICKING	5
	ILLEGAL PARKING	5
DPW COMPLAINT'S; TOTAL= 16	SIDEWALK REPAIR	5
	STREET REPAIR	2
	TRASH NOT GETTING PICKED UP	2
DWSD COMPLAINT'S; TOTAL= 26	BILLING/SEWAGE OVERAGE/ACCOUNTING	4
	WATER MAIN BREAK	2
	SHUT OFF REQUESTE	2
GSD COMPLAINT'S; TOTAL≈ 24	REQUIRES REMOVAL/DEAD/FALLEN	13
	TRIMMING	5
	OVERGROWN GRASS/WEEDS	4

BSEED COMPLAINT'S; TOTAL= 255	ILLEGAL DUMPING	94
	BLIGHT INSPECTION	57
	HIGH GRASS/WEEDS	27
	DEMOLITION REQUESTED/BUILDINGS DANGEROUS	24
DLBA COMPLAINT'S; TOTAL= 28	ILLEGAL DUMPING/DEBRIS/BLIGHT	13
	DEMOLITION REQUESTED	5
	TREE INSPECTION	2
DPD COMPLAINT'S; TOTAL= 26	ABANDONED VEHICLES	9
	SQUATTERS	4
	ABANDONED BOATS	2
DPW COMPLAINT'S; TOTAL= 13	SIDEWALK //STREET/REPAIR	6
	TRASH NOT GETTING PICKED UP	4
DWSD COMPLAINT'S; TOTAL= 30	BILLING/SEWAGE OVERAGE/ACCOUNTING	6
	LAWN RESTORATION	4
	BASEMENT FLOODING	2
GSD COMPLAINT'S; TOTAL= 20	REQUIRES REMOVAL/DEAD/FALLEN	11
	TRIMMING	3
	VACANT LOT CUTTING	3



COLEMAN A. YOUNG MUNICIPAL CENTER 2 WOODWARD AVENUE, SUITE 114
DETROIT, MICHIGAN 48226-3437
PHONE 313•224•6000 TTY:311
FAX 313•224•1911
OMBUDSMAN@DETROITMI.GOV

Ombudsman Recommendations

- Treasury/Assessors/HRD and Others
- Squatters
- Gas Stations/Convenience Stores
- Immigration
- Inspection/Code Enforcement on all City of Detroit Owned and Affiliated Properties

Treasury/Assessors/HRD and Others

Our residents deserve to have physical access to the Treasury Department, Assessor's Office and the Housing and Revitalization Department (HRD) and any other departments that have decided to close to the public on Fridays. Our residents and taxpayers have an expectation of a certain level of service and we have an obligation to meet that expectation. Not being physically available to the public is poor customer service. Most working persons take Monday or Friday off of work to handle their affairs at city hall. However, some of our departments are not available to them.

To HRD's credit, they do provide the telephone number to a hotline that can meet most of your needs. The customer service number 313-224-3560 for the Detroit Taxpayer Service Center (DTSC) is not available after twelve noon on Fridays.

Squatters

It is easier to hold someone accountable for stealing your vehicle, than it is to hold them accountable for stealing your home! We live in a time where deed and mortgage fraud is rampant. According to the Wayne County Mortgage and Deed Fraud Task Force, they have addressed, "13,013 inquiries, opened 2,343 cases, issued 1,172 search warrants, 505 arrest warrants, and achieved 347 convictions, with 393 stolen homes returned."

There are a number of factors that hinder both home owners and law enforcement from being able to effectively address squatters. For example, in the State of Michigan there is no penalty under the law for failing to file your deed. Almost anyone can file a quit claim deed. The process and the language surrounding the purchase and selling of a home has to be strengthened to thwart fraud. Lastly, this matter has to be a priority for our prosecutors.

"Improving Your Quality of Life On a Daily Basis"





We look forward to partnering with our Chief of Police in order to push for reform as it pertains to changes in policy, procedure and potentially legislation surrounding squatters. Squatters have been able to compromise legitimate homeowners for far too long.

https://www.waynecounty.com/elected/deeds/mortgage-deed-fraud-unit.aspx

Gas Stations and Convenience Stores

Every few years there is the loss of life or an act of violence that takes place at a local gas station or convenience store. We have noticed that these businesses are predominantly owned by non-Detroiters. The City of Detroit has just over two hundred active gas stations.

Socially, there is a disconnect between the ownership of these businesses and the communities that they serve. Due to that disconnect, we see vape pens and cigarettes being sold to our underage children. The general welfare of the patrons from the community is not taken into consideration. The relationship is purely transactional, and we believe that should be changed for the health and benefit of the community.

Economically, we are missing out on an opportunity to establish a new source of jobs for our residents. We are recommending the implementation of a program that will provide an incentive and financial support for Detroiters looking to own a local gas station or convenience store. The Detroit Economic Growth Corporation may be a suitable location for such a program.

Immigration

As Detroit continues to work toward population growth and attract new citizens, it is imperative that we establish a sustainable infrastructure to support our immigrant population. These lawabiding, legally recognized Detroit residents contribute immensely to our city's workforce, economic development, and cultural vibrancy. By ensuring that Detroit has the proper resources to assist them in overcoming language and cultural barriers, we are investing in a stronger, more prosperous Detroit for everyone.

The Office of Immigration Affairs should be made a permanent part of Detroit's infrastructure, ensuring continuity and stability for support services regardless of the political climate. By solidifying this office within our city's structure, we can guarantee that Detroit continues to be a beacon of opportunity for years to come.



Detroit's immigrant population has been a major driver of growth, not only in our city but across the state:

- Population Growth: Immigrants constituted approximately 6.9% of Michigan's population, accounting for 57.7% of the state's population growth over the past decade.
- Detroit's Demographics: Foreign-born individuals make up 6.8% of Detroit's population, underscoring the need for services that accommodate this demographic.
- Educational Needs: Many immigrant families contribute to our school system, where multilingual and culturally responsive education helps prepare the next generation of Detroiters.

Economically, Detroit's immigrant community plays a critical role in job creation, small business development, and tax revenue generation:

- Entrepreneurship: Immigrant entrepreneurs play a pivotal role in Michigan's economy, helping revitalize neighborhoods and create jobs.
- Labor Force Contribution: In Detroit's labor market, immigrants hold 12.5% of jobs while comprising 12.7% of the working-age population, filling essential roles in various industries
- Tax Contributions: In 2014 alone, immigrants contributed \$67.2 million to Social Security and \$17.6 million to Medicare, strengthening the very programs that support American workers and retirees.

Despite their contributions, we recognize that immigrants nationwide are under increasing scrutiny and significant challenges. As a city that values economic growth and fairness, Detroit must lead by example by ensuring that law-abiding immigrants have access to the resources they need to thrive. To do so, we must invest in:

- Housing Services Ensuring safe, stable living conditions for new residents.
- **Legal Representation** Providing assistance to navigate complex legal systems and protect rights.
- Workforce Development Connecting skilled workers with job opportunities and removing barriers to employment.
- **Economic Integration** Supporting small business owners and entrepreneurs as they contribute to Detroit's economic growth.

Our city's future depends on embracing new residents and ensuring they have the tools to succeed. By strategically investing in immigrant communities within the framework of Detroit's





broader economic and social goals, we are not only helping individuals thrive—we are ensuring Detroit's long-term prosperity and global competitiveness.

As the national conversation and tension related to immigrant issues continue to rise, Detroit has the opportunity to take a proactive approach in order to implement smart, responsible policies that align with both our economic interests and our city's legacy of resilience and inclusivity. We stand ready to ensure that all Detroiters—including those who have lawfully obtained their place in our community—have the resources they need to build a future here.

usafacts.org
bridgemi.com
census.gov
americanimmigrationcouncil.org
https://www.americanimmigrationcouncil.org/
https://www.bls.gov/regions/midwest/news-release/areaemployment_detroit.htm
https://research.newamericaneconomy.org/report/new-americans-in-detroit-2/

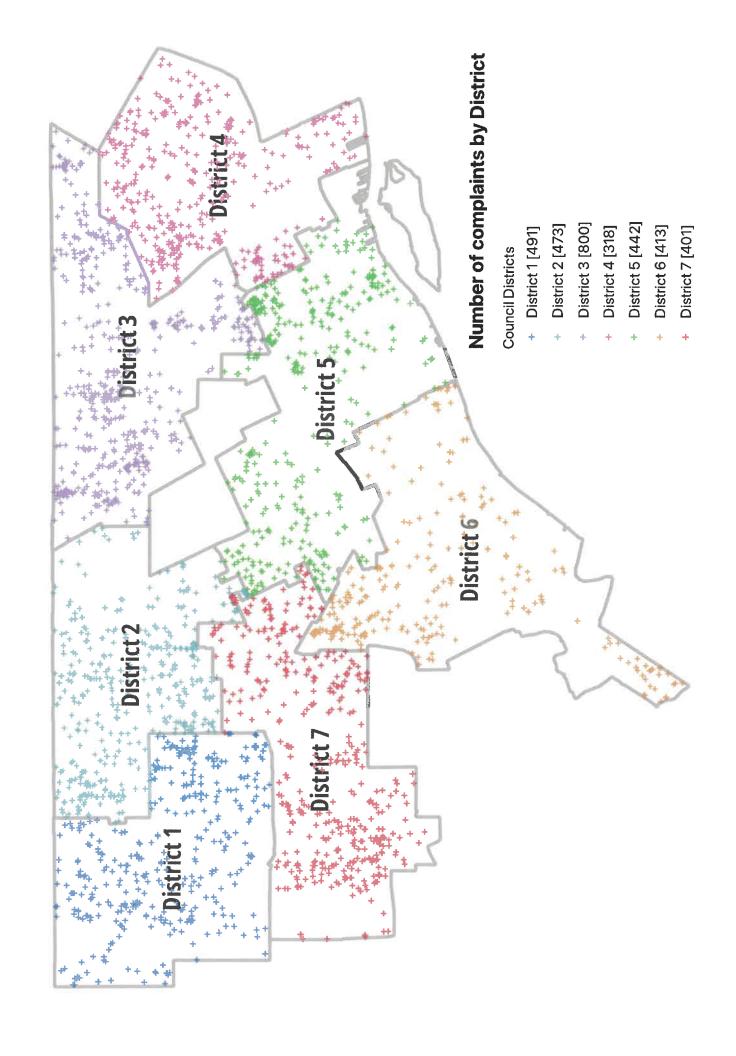
Inspection and Code Enforcement of all City owned and Affiliated Properties

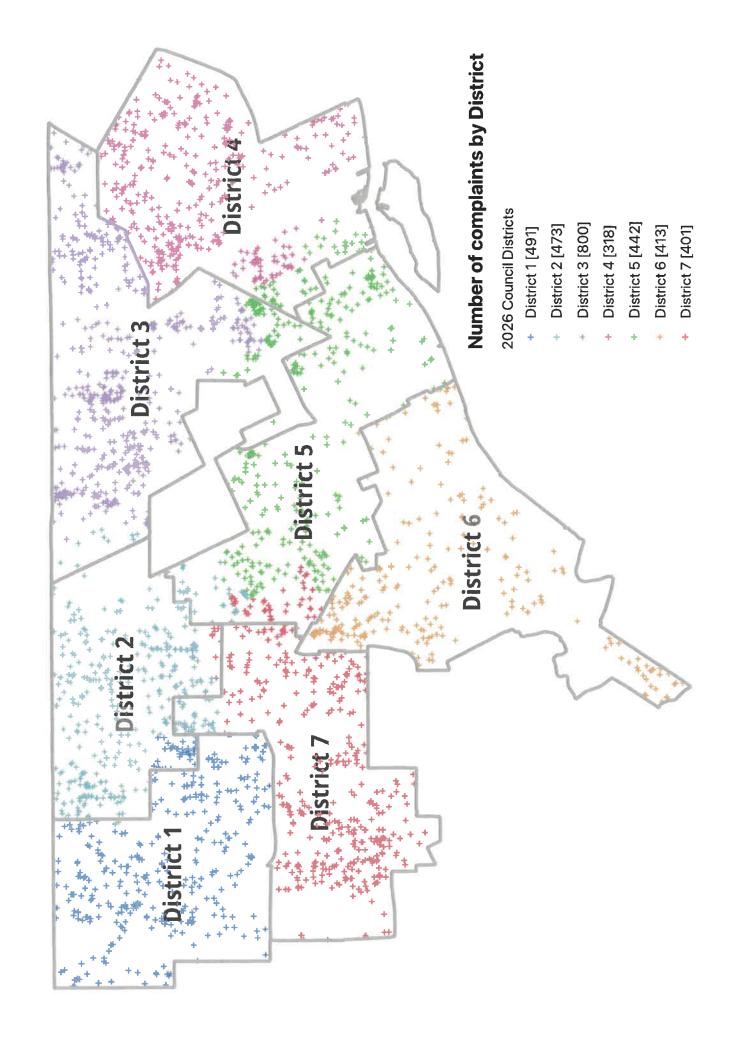
The Buildings Safety Engineering and Environmental Department (BSEED) has stated that they already perform the function of inspecting and providing code enforcement for city owned and affiliated properties. We contend that enforcement is still needed. There should never be an occasion where one of our vendors, affiliates or the city itself is not up to code.

Section 2

Complaints by District February 2024-February 2025

DISTRICT 1		491
DISTRICT 2		473
DISTRICT 3		800
DISTRICT 4		318
DISTRICT 5		442
DISTRICT 6		413
DISTRICT 7		401
[OTHER]		23
	TOTAL	3361





Section 3

Complaints by Zip Code February 2024 - February 2025

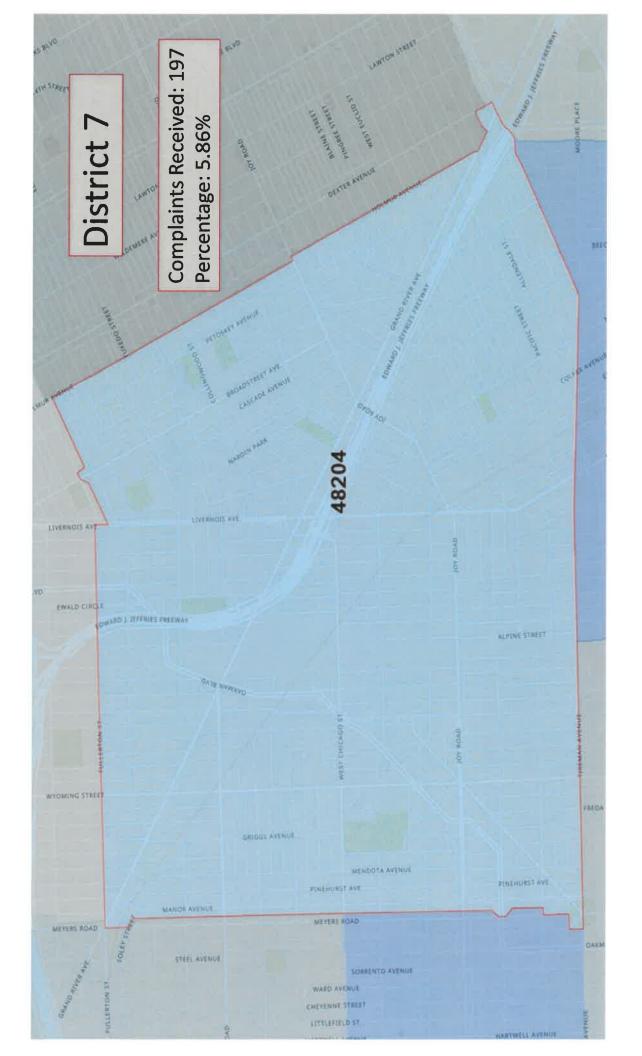
Zip Codes	Complaints Received	Percentage
48201	14	42.00%
48202	47	1.40%
48203	134	3.99%
48204	197	5.86%
48205	237	7.04%
48206	76	2.26%
48207	60	1.79%
48208	17	0.51%
48209	46	1.37%
48210	77	2.29%
48211	84	2.50%
48212	101	3.01%
48213	260	7.74%
48214	103	3.06%
48215	67	2.00%
48216	16	0.48%
48217	32	0.95%
48219	191	5.68%
48221	164	4.88%
48223	91	2.71%
48224	175	5.21%
48226	75	2.23%
48227	231	6.88%
48228	227	6.76%
48234	245	7.29%
48235	196	5.83%
48236	8	0.24%
48238	176	5.24%
48239	13	0.39%
OTHER	1	0.03%

Total 3361

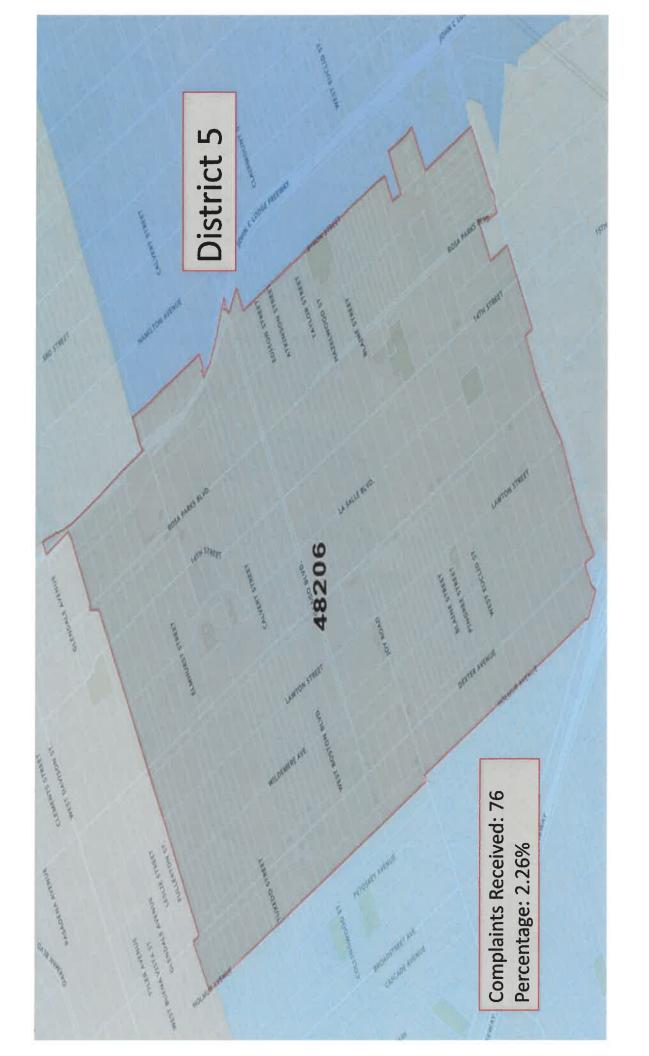










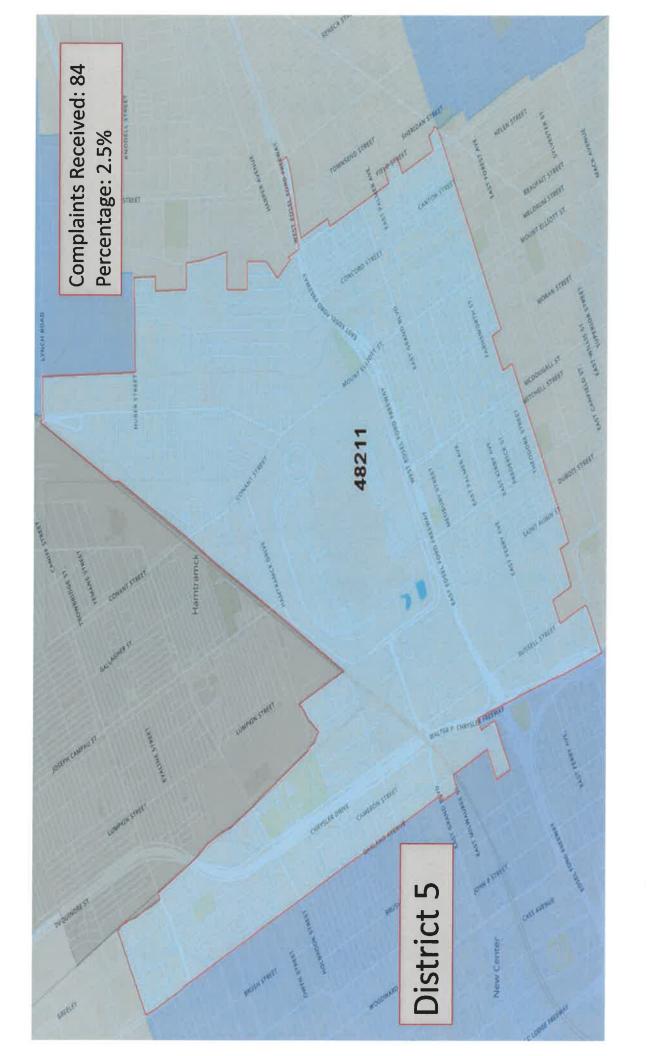




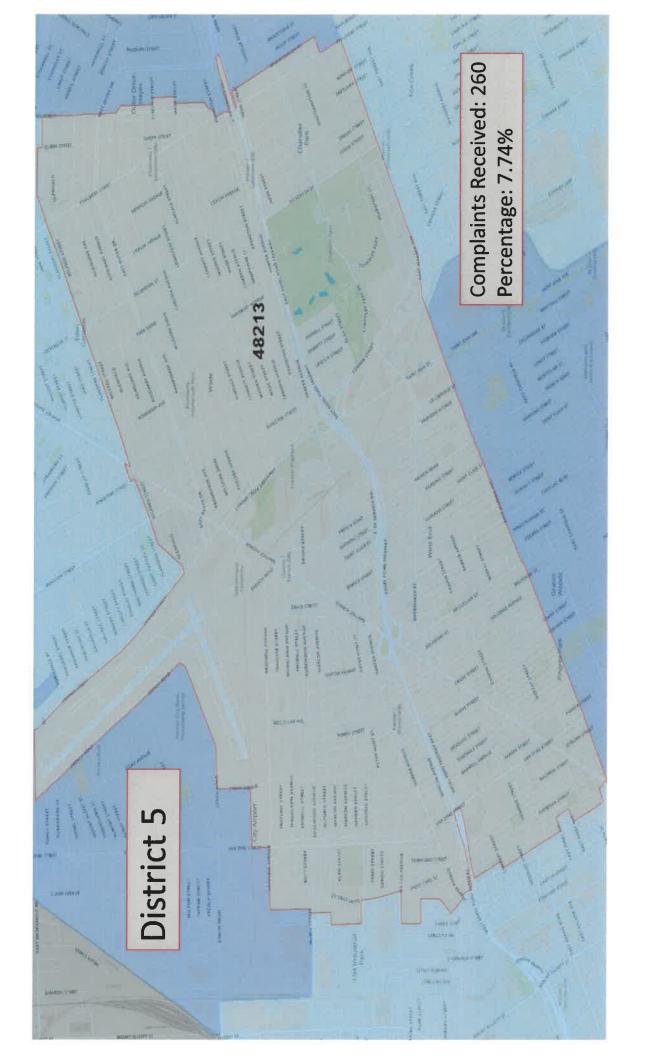




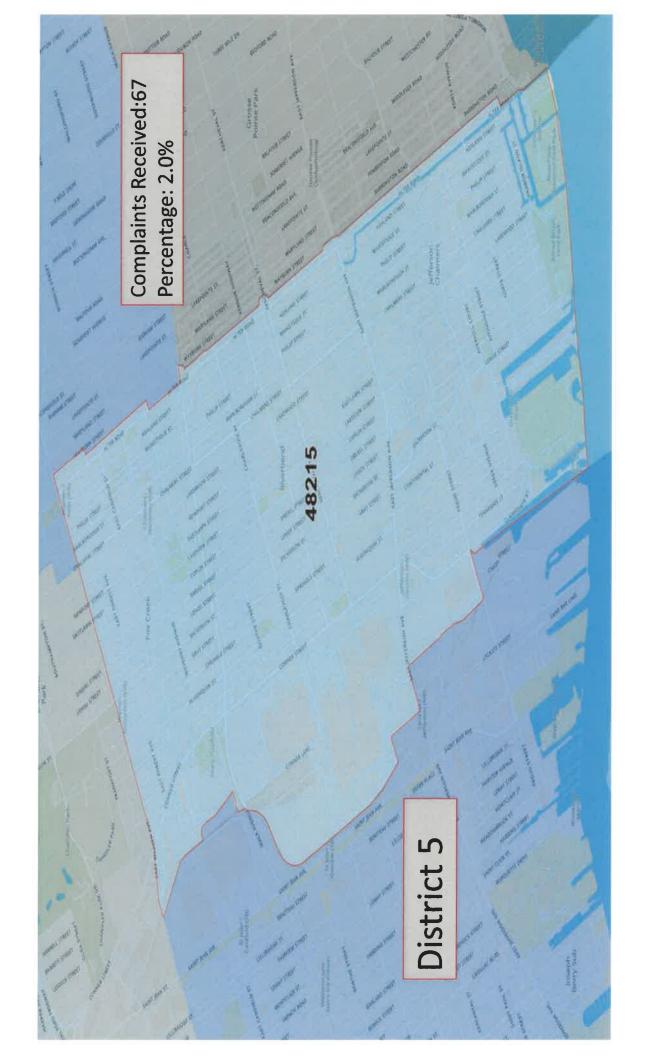


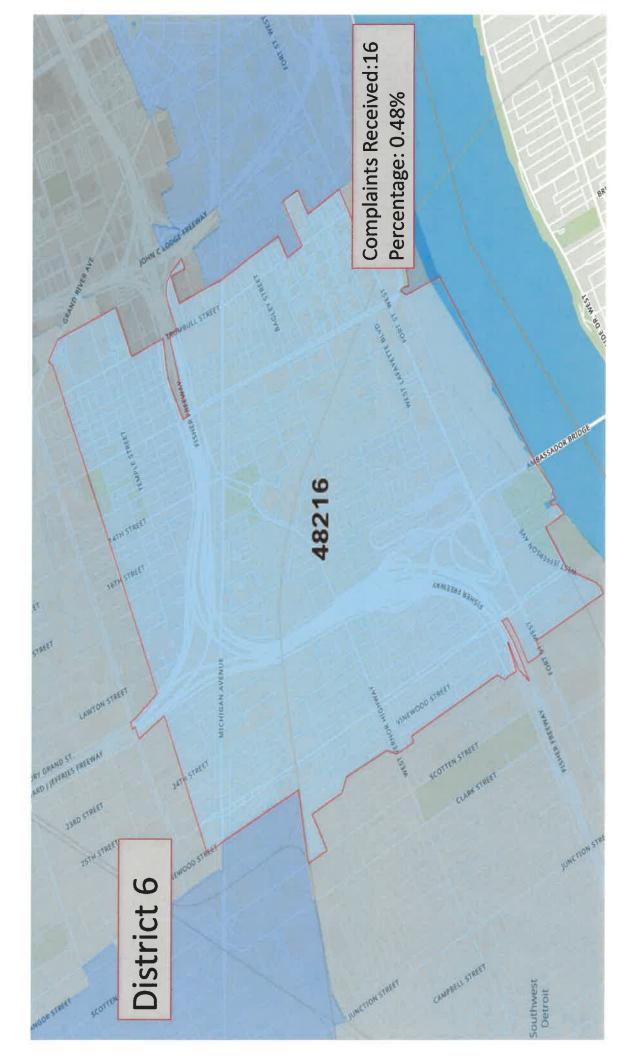


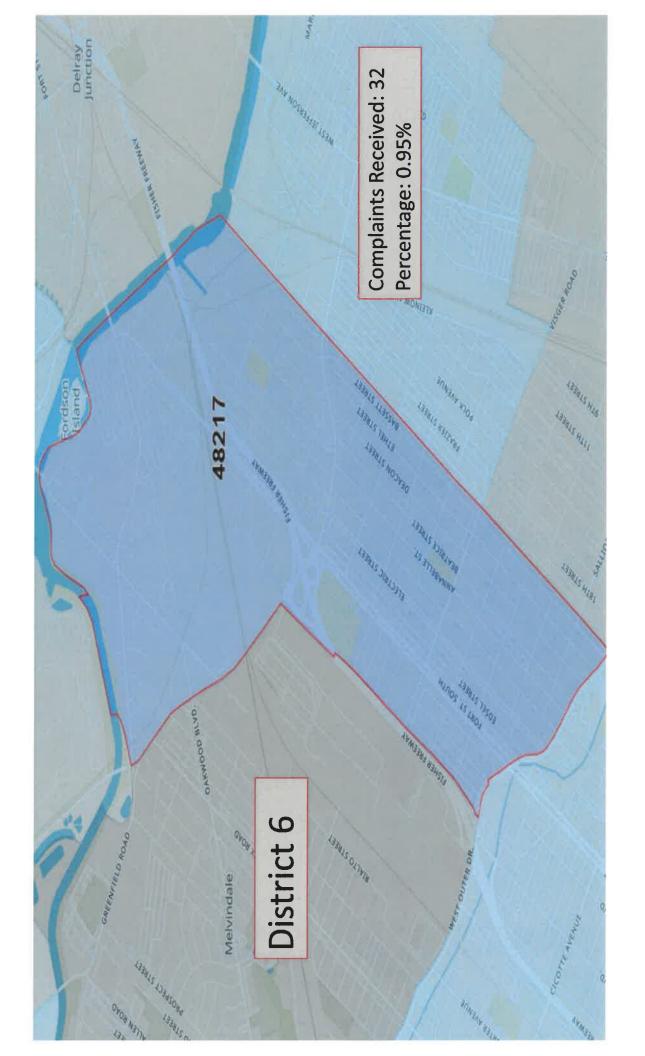






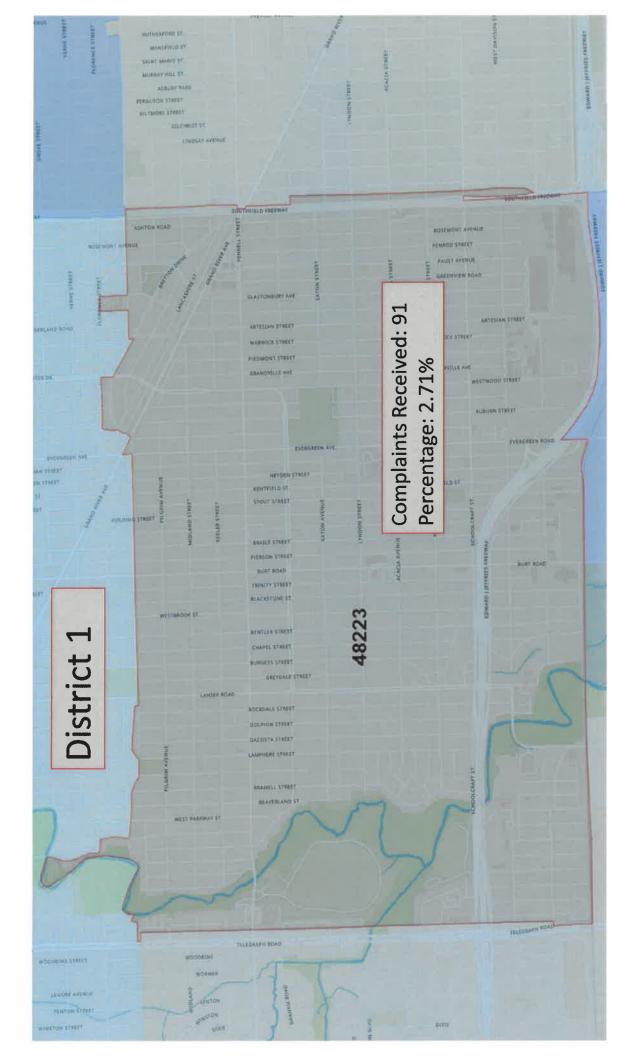




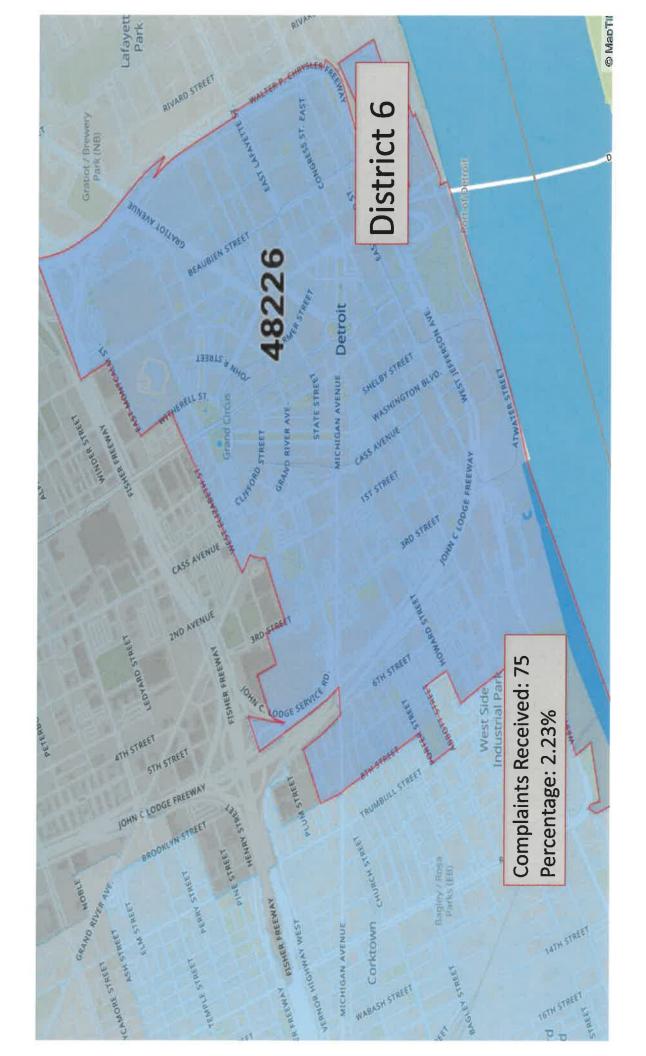


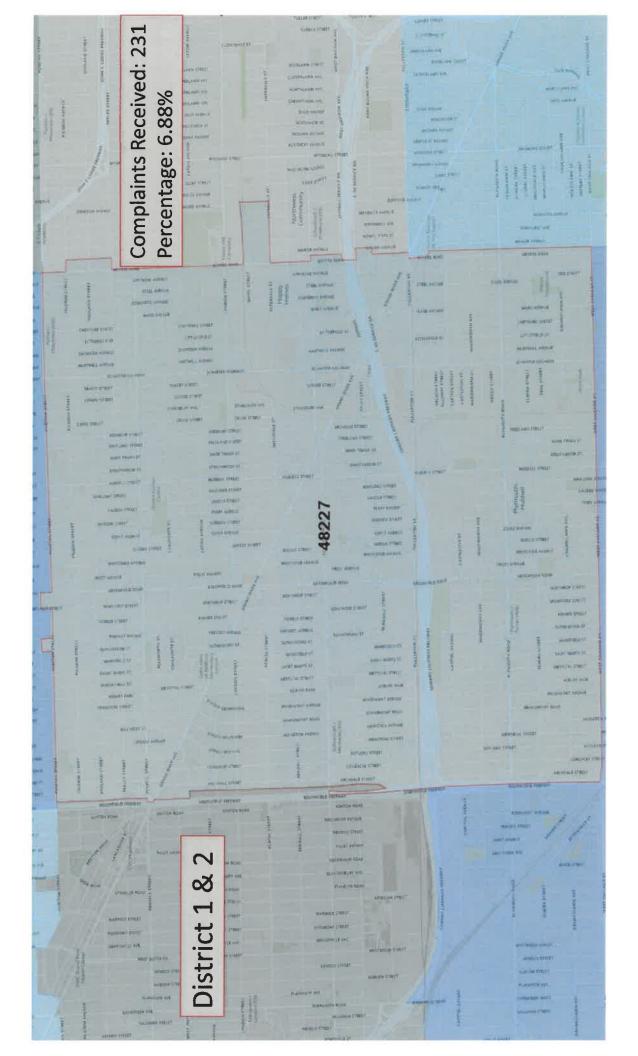


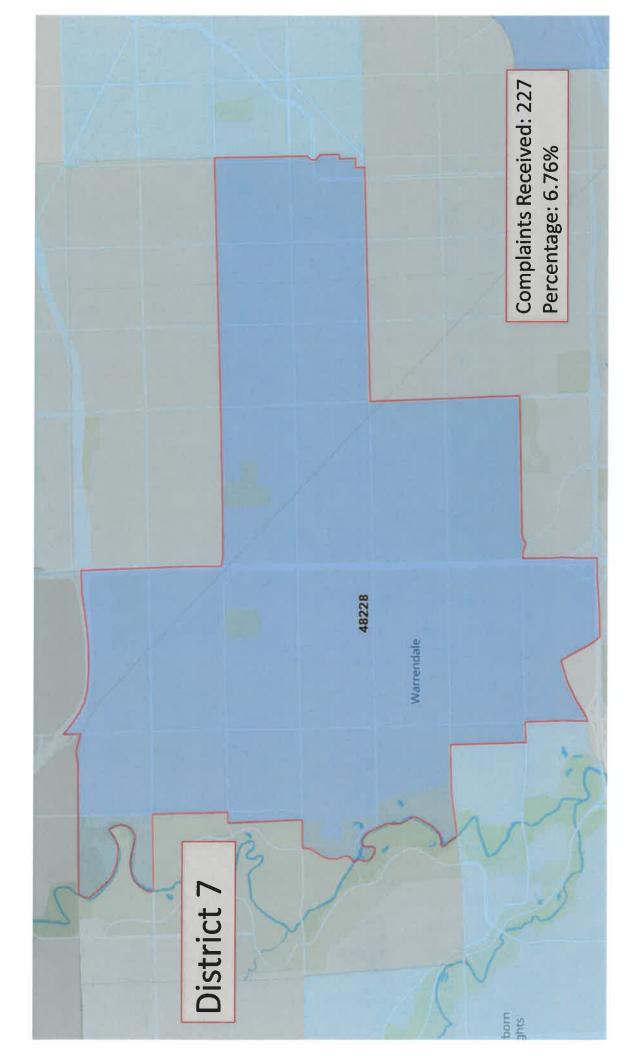


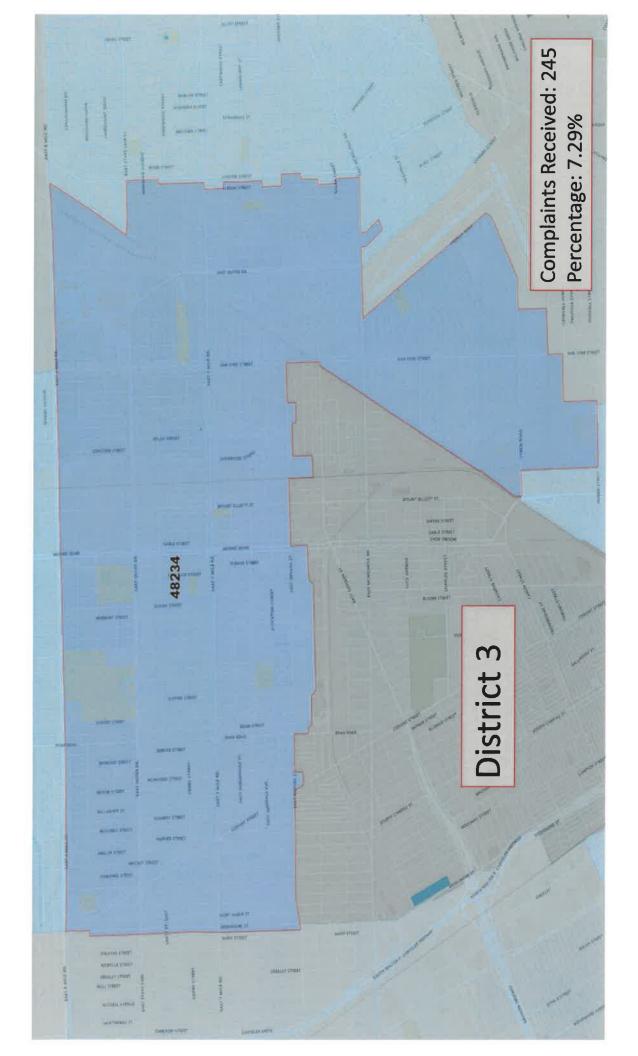








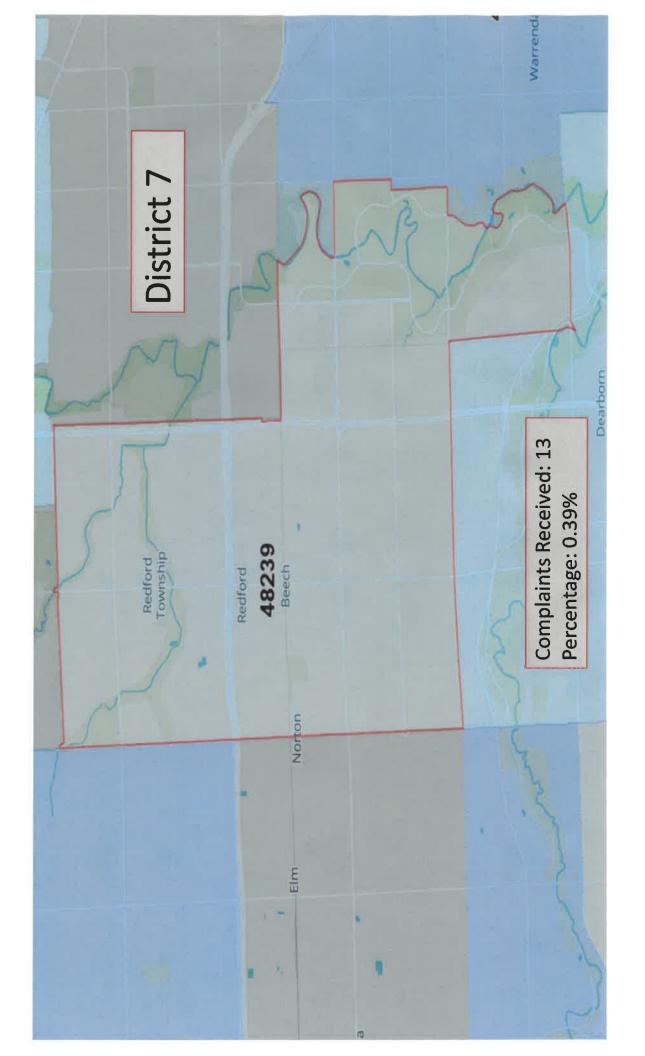














Section 4

