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TO: Detroit City Council

FROM: David Whitaker, Director 
Legislative Policy Division

DATE: July 2, 2026

RE: Follow up Questions on DLBA Development Activities

The Legislative Policy Division (LPD) has been requested by Council Member Mary Waters to provide a response to questions presented as a follow up to prior report on Detroit Land Bank Authority (DLBA) development activities. LPD notes that the information needed to answer the questions presented are within the DLBA. LPD has requested the DLBA's assistance in providing the answers and has attached the DLBA's response to the follow-up questions.

If we can be of further assistance, please call upon us.



TO: David Whitaker, Legislative Policy Division
FROM: Tammy Daniels, CEO, Detroit Land Bank Authority
DATE: June 15, 2026
RE: Responses to Councilmember At-Large Mary Waters' Request for Information on Detroit Land Bank Authority Development Activities

In response to your questions regarding DLBA Development Activities, the DLBA submits the following responses.

1. What specific pre-development or site preparation services will DLBA provide?

Response: The DLBA is expanding its Pre-Development Program, in which it bundles multiple lots together and conducts many different predevelopment services such as quiet title, rezonings, lot combinations, survey, and environmental site assessments, as well as providing additional information such as utility hookup cost. The DLBA is looking to expand these services in direct response to market dynamics that make it difficult for new construction on property in Detroit, whether by CDCs, nonprofit or private-sector developers. Indeed, the DLBA is often asked if it could do more pre-development and site preparation work to property ready for development.

2. What fees or charges will DLBA assess for these services?

Response: The pre-development program is currently in a grant-funded pilot phase and so, per the terms of the grant agreement, the DLBA will not charge CDCs or other developers for these grant-funded services.

3. How were these fees determined, and how do they compare to rates charged by CDCs, nonprofit developers, and private-sector providers?

Response: CDCs, nonprofit and private-sector developers are in the business of doing their *own* development; they are not generally in the business of doing the labor-intensive work of pre-development or site preparation for hire for *other* developers. The DLBA's fees for pre-development or site preparation services must ensure that its costs are recouped in providing these optional services. This fiscally responsible approach is especially critical given the elimination of the city subsidy for the DLBA.

4. Will DLBA's provision of pre-development services create a competitive advantage over CDCs and other land-use organizations?

Response: As discussed above, there is no competition. CDCs and other land-use organizations are generally not in the business of providing the labor-intensive work of pre-development services for other developers. If others were already addressing this need, then the DLBA would not hear from CDCs, nonprofit and private-sector developers about the need to do so. If anything, the DLBA's provision of pre-development services will create a competitive advantage *for – not over –* CDCs and other land-use organizations by making more land available and allowing them to focus on development. That is why pre-development services was included in the DLBA's Next Five strategic plan created through extensive community outreach and input, particularly among CDCs, nonprofit and community-based organizations.

5. How will DLBA ensure that its new services do not duplicate or undermine work currently being performed by community-based organizations?

Response: As discussed above, the DLBA's expansion of pre-development services is not duplicative of anything currently being performed by community-based organizations because such organizations are generally not in the business of providing the labor-intensive work of pre-development services for other developers. These services will not undermine work currently performed by community-based organizations, but rather allow them to focus more on development. That is the consistent feedback we've received from our meetings with local CDCs and CLTs in recent months.

6. Does providing pre-development services align with DLBA's primary mission of returning vacant land and property to productive use through sale and redevelopment?

Response: Yes.

7. What resources, staffing, and funding will be required to support these services?

Response: The DLBA does not yet know the full scope of resources, staffing, or funding required to support the larger demand for pre-development and site preparation services. That is part of the lessons to be learned by the pilot program underway to expand these offerings.

8. Could the expansion into pre-development activities divert resources away from DLBA's core responsibilities of property disposition and land sales?

Response: No. The provision of pre-development and site assembly services is central to the DLBA's core responsibilities of property disposition and land sales – especially now given the evolution of its inventory such that the vast majority is vacant land with only a very limited (few hundred) structures remaining. All of this is due to the DLBA's past

successes in getting structures redeveloped and selling side lots and neighborhood lots. As its inventory evolves and the market shifts, the DLBA must adapt in order to continue to meet the moment and fulfill its core responsibilities and mission.

9. What measurable outcomes or public benefits are expected from offering these services?

Response: As part of the DLBA's newly expanded Pre-Development Program, it has put together twenty-five (25) assemblages in six predevelopment areas throughout the city thus far. As part of this program, the DLBA bundles multiple lots together and conducts many different predevelopment services such as rezonings, lot combinations, survey, and environmental site assessments, as well as providing additional information such as utility hookup cost. Once this program is at full steam, the DLBA hopes to list between 5-10 assemblages for redevelopment each month, based on market demand for these predevelopment bundles.

10. Has DLBA consulted with CDCs, developers, and community stakeholders regarding the potential impact of these services on existing redevelopment efforts?

Response: Yes. Please see, for example, the DLBA's Next Five strategic plan, which was created through extensive community outreach and input, particularly among CDCs, nonprofit and community-based organizations, and which calls for the DLBA to expand pre-development services.