



A NEW WAY FORWARD: TRANSPARENCY & ACCOUNTABILITY IN CITY GOVERNMENT

Dearborn Heights,

Accountability should not be optional; it should be the standard. As your next mayor, I am committed to restoring trust between our city government and the people it serves. That starts with ending business-as-usual governance: closed-door decisions, rushed approvals, and contracts with no public explanation. We deserve better.

Over the last few years, Dearborn Heights residents have watched city funds flow into contracts with outside attorneys, consultants, and repeat vendors, at times without competitive bidding or community input. Public city council meeting minutes show approved vendor payments exceeding thousands of dollars without first receiving or reviewing detailed, itemized invoices showing what the payments were for. Budgets are amended without explanation. Key service contracts are tabled, deferred, or rushed through special meetings with minimal notice. These practices don't reflect a healthy, transparent democracy.

The following policy platform lays out my action plan to ensure real-time access to city decisions, fiscal clarity in every department, and meaningful resident oversight. My team and I built this framework on best practices from cities across Michigan and supported by the very financial records and motions passed by our city council.

As the only campaign with a clear vision and plan to run a truly transparent and cooperative local government, I welcome your feedback and hope to earn your support to be Dearborn Heights' next mayor.

Let's make city government work for the people again. Let's move *A New Way Forward*, together.

In service,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Hussein Anani". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a horizontal line extending from the end.

Hussein Anani

1. PUBLISH THE TRANSPARENCY PORTAL

The Problem:

Today, most residents have no access to the city's spending, contracts, or council voting records outside of attending meetings or digging through several PDFs. Over the last few years, the city council approved large vendor payments with limited public explanation. There is no central platform where residents can readily verify these payments, track budget performance, or monitor contract terms.

How We Pay for It:

We will reallocate funds to develop a city-run digital dashboard, modeled after portals in [Ferndale](#), [Royal Oak](#), and [Ann Arbor](#). Much of the required data already exists in city finance software (BS&A). We simply need the will to make it public.

Our Solution:

- Create a **Dearborn Heights Transparency Portal**: A centralized website showing budgets, expenditures, contract history, and department metrics in real time.
 - Post **monthly reports on vendor payments and GL accounts**: Each report will include summaries of council-approved claims and links to scanned invoices.
 - Publish a searchable **City Council Voting Record Database**: Allowing residents to track how their representatives vote on every item.
-

2. ESTABLISH AN ACCOUNTABILITY AUDIT SYSTEM

The Problem:

City departments often request budget amendments without a performance review or public-facing status report. There is no doubt that Dearborn Heights needs a system to measure performance, not just spending.

How We Pay for It:

We will require all departments to produce bi-annual reports using existing staff and software. No new hires needed. We will publish results via the Transparency Portal and allow public comment at designated accountability hearings.

Our Solution:

- Launch a **Bi-annual Departmental Performance Audit Program**: Departments will set clear goals and report their results bi-annually in public hearings.
- Tie capital spending to **public benchmarks**: This means, for example, creating and sharing public implementation timelines and success metrics with the public.

- Require all new contracts over \$25,000 to include **public reporting clauses**: This means contractors must report information requested by the city, including—but not limited to—timelines, performance outcomes, and how funds are used.

3. MAKE CITY HALL TRULY PUBLIC

The Problem:

Residents are left out of major decisions too often. Whether it's development zoning, flood mitigation planning, or budget reallocations, the process can feel closed-off and inaccessible.

How We Pay for It:

We'll use city-owned spaces and minimal staff time to host regularly scheduled public forums, town halls, and citizen budget workshops.

Our Solution:

- Launch rotating **Bi-Annual Town Halls** in each city district with bilingual accessibility and open Q&A sessions.
- Create a **Participatory Budgeting Pilot Program** to let residents vote on a portion of discretionary funds.
- Establish a **Public Comment Hotline** and online portal for residents to submit proposals and concerns.

THE PATH FORWARD

Too often, city government has acted behind closed doors. But in a democracy, the people are not outsiders, they are the *owners* of their government. In my administration, transparency will not be a buzzword. It will be the **daily operating principle** of every department, every council meeting, every dollar spent.

With *A New Way Forward*, we will:

- Build digital tools to give residents real-time access to their government;
- Prohibit insider deals and enforce fair bidding standards; and
- Ensure every neighborhood has a voice in how money is spent.

We don't need to wait for Lansing or Washington to restore trust. We can do it right here, right now, in Dearborn Heights with *A New Way Forward*.

Hussein Anani

Candidate for Mayor, City of Dearborn Heights