

Navigating Detroit's Future: Master Plan Updated



During a presentation at the March 19th, 2024, District 4 meeting, Julie Connochie, from the Planning and Development department, revealed that the City of Detroit is embarking on a significant journey—the update on its Master Plan Policies. But what exactly is a Master Plan? A Master Plan is a road map that pans out the course for the city's evolution. The Master Plan encompasses a wide range of policies, serving as a guide for future development. It's a vision for years to come. Designed to empower communities, the Master Plan assists residents, businesses, and organizations in envisioning Detroit's growth. It's a collaborative effort that considers diverse perspectives. Don't confuse it with a framework. While a framework addresses immediate issues, the Master Plan is all about the long-term vision. It sets the stage for sustainable progress. The planning process that began in Fall of 2023 is projected to cost \$993,000.

To ensure a robust and inclusive process, the City will establish a Master Plan Advisory Group. This diverse group of Detroit residents—spanning different ages, races, affiliations, and districts—will play a pivotal role in shaping the city's destiny.

Applications are now open for those who want to contribute to Detroit's future. If you're passionate about your city, consider joining the Advisory Group. Apply by April 19, 2024, using this link:

<https://app.smartsheet.com/b/form/0a996be26bf74b3abb8fedee5c1f7551>.

Why YOUR Involvement Matters

The influence of master plans on neighborhoods is profound, directly shaping our daily lives. These plans strategically position essential services—such as schools, libraries, parks, healthcare facilities, and retail centers—near residential areas, enhancing our quality of life. They also play a crucial role in determining infrastructure decisions, including road networks and public transportation. Utilities are integral components of master plans, shaping how we move, connect, and access resources.

The master plan serves as a blueprint for local zoning decisions and land use development. Depending on its intentions, it can either preserve or displace communities. Imagine waking up to a transformed landscape—perhaps solar farms replacing outdated utility lines. The master plan is more than words on paper; it's a narrative. Residents and stakeholders should actively shape this narrative, ensuring it aligns with community needs. Don't be a passive observer, participate in district meetings, contribute your insights and influence the future direction of your community.

For additional details and the master plan update timeline, visit Plandetroit.com. Let's collectively shape Detroit's destiny!

Did you Know?

Before the 2009 Master Plan of Policies, Detroit did not have a comprehensive master plan that addressed land use, development patterns, transportation, public facilities, and utilities. During that time, the city confronted significant challenges, testing the resilience of both the community and its residents. Economic segregation, inequalities in wealth, and urban disinvestment plagued neighborhoods, leaving vacant lots and buildings without clear development plans. These struggles prompted the urgent need for a Master Plan—a critical milestone aimed at fostering a more prosperous City of Detroit.



BUILDING D4 COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER

Who is responsible for the Master Plan Update

To gain insight into a Detroit’s vision, it’s essential to understand the people working behind the scenes. The SmithGroup, headquartered in Detroit, Michigan, leads the charge in shaping Detroit’s vision for the next 15 to 20 years. Renowned for their expertise in urban planning, architecture, and design, SmithGroup has left its mark on several significant projects in Michigan. Notably, the iconic Guardian Building in Downtown Detroit boasts stunning Art Deco architecture. Additionally, the McNamara Terminal at Detroit Metro Airport exemplifies innovative design and efficient passenger flow. Collaborating with MSU, SmithGroup transformed 6,500 square feet of existing space into an innovation hub for learning and technology. These projects exemplify commitment to cutting-edge design.

Mass Economics, based in Cambridge, England, is a research and consulting firm that focuses on urban economic growth and equity. Notably, they developed a comprehensive industrial strategy for the City of Detroit. This report identified key employment districts and explored opportunities within Detroit’s primary industrial sectors, including automotive, metals, transportation, logistics, and construction. Their central objective is to promote sustainable economic development.

The Center for Community Progress, based in Flint, Michigan, is a national nonprofit committed to tackling vacant properties and rejuvenating communities. They played a crucial role in supporting the Blight Elimination Bill, securing over \$75 million in grant funding. Their primary focus lies in demolishing blighted residential homes, as well as commercial and industrial structures that are beyond rehabilitation. This effort can contribute to the revitalization of communities.

Public Sector Consultants (PSC), headquartered in Lansing, Michigan, played a pivotal role in developing the Detroit Riverfront Conservancy’s major construction phase. This project aimed to complete a 3.5-mile river walk along the Detroit River. Additionally, PSC evaluated a capital investment program focused on mitigating the impact of soaring rent prices and ensuring housing stability. They also significantly contributed to identifying recommendations for a 50-year strategic plan to enhance Michigan’s infrastructure. PSC’S accolades reflect their commitment to sound policy, rigorous research, and community well-being.

Noell Consulting Group, based in Atlanta, Georgia, is actively involved in updating the City of Detroit Master Plan. Their expertise spans various areas, including urban rentals, for-sale communities, and transit projects. Detroitography specializes in creating maps of Detroit. As expected by the name, they are based right in the heart of Detroit, Michigan. In collaboration with the community’s aspirations, their expertise will contribute to the development of a master plan that will serve as a blueprint for Detroit future endeavors.



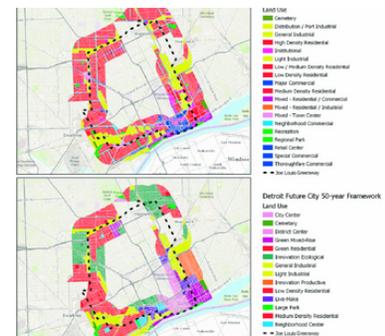
Art-Deco interior of the Guardian
(Photo credit: Helmut Ziewers)



McNamara Terminal at Detroit Metro Airport



Detroit Riverfront Conservancy



Detroit Master Plan and Detroit Future City 50-year Framework Projections, with Joe Louis Greenway. (Photo Credit: Detroitography)

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www.buildingd4community.org

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BUILDING D4 COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER

Empowering Mapleridge Community

The Mapleridge community faces various challenges that impact residents' quality of life and contribute to negative perceptions. Among these challenges, trash and illegal dumping stand out as significant issues. To maintain the cleanliness of our neighborhood, a collective effort is crucial. City services, local schools, residents, business owners, and law enforcement agents must actively participate in addressing these concerns.

When outsiders observe communities lacking visual pride in their surroundings, it can affect their perception. While it may not be fair, the prevailing thought is, "If you don't care, why should we?" Neglected vacant or occupied areas can inadvertently encourage criminal activity. Therefore, keeping our streets clean is not only an aesthetic goal but also a critical public safety and crime prevention strategy. In addition to urging law enforcement to enforce fines for littering and illegal dumping, community members should take responsibility by:

- Regularly sweeping sidewalks and berms.
- Placing trash cans out no more than one day before scheduled pickup.
- Promptly removing trash bins from the streets after collection.
- Encouraging neighbors to follow the same practices and assisting those who need help.

Many residents are already contributing to this effort, and we appreciate their commitment. This marks the beginning of a renewed narrative: "We Care." Furthermore, some residential properties have worn-out trash cans, which hinder their movement to and from the curb. Given the city's budget adjustments for trash services, it's reasonable to ask council members if replacing old cans with new ones (without upfront charges). After all, we pay taxes, and this initiative will encourage responsible disposal practices and cleaner streets. Business owners also play a vital role in maintaining our community's appearance.

Responsibility of Business Owners in Our Community

Business owners play a crucial role in maintaining our communities. When you notice stores with overflowing trash bins in their designated areas, it's essential to address this issue. The litter from these bins can spread throughout the community, affecting its appearance and cleanliness. Business owners should diligently maintain their trash areas daily, and law enforcement should enforce fines when necessary.

Additionally, sidewalks and parking lots must remain free of debris, trash, and broken glass. Beyond creative solutions like urban gardens and community spaces to combat illegal dumping, accountability is key. We need to reshape the narrative and influence how others perceive our community. By setting a precedent against illegal dumping—both external and internal—we can make a positive impact.

Everyone must contribute. Doing your part will lead to the desired change. Moreover, it will encourage law enforcement to address casual littering, trash cans left on the streets, and cars parked on grassy areas more effectively. Let's work together for a cleaner, safer community!

Sign up to receive free reminders about trash, bulk and recycle collection. Just text your address to 313-800-7905.

Mapleridge Waste Pick-up Schedule

Provider

Gfl (844)464-3587

Garbage Pickup

Picked up Weekly on
Wednesdays
Next pickup Day
April 3rd

Curbside Recycle

Picked up weekly on
Wednesdays.
Bulk

Bulk items are picked up bi-weekly on Wednesdays.

Yard Waste

From April 3rd to December 22nd
Yard waste is collected bi-weekly.

Placing items at Vacant lots and homes is prohibited. Avoid being ticketed by follow city guidelines.



BUILDING D4 COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER

Impact of Local Organizations

Local organizations, including the Denby Neighborhood Alliance, actively contribute to community well-being. Denby Alliance collaborates with other local affiliates to address community needs. Recently, they secured a \$700,000 grant, for community-led violence intervention through the Shotstoppers program.

One promising initiative is the community police program, which relies on resident involvement. Participants receive a stipend to patrol neighborhoods in their vehicles, reporting suspicious behavior, blighted sites, cars parked on grass, and neglected trash cans. The Denby Alliance closely collaborates with the 9th precinct, holding monthly meetings to update the community on progress. Their wrap-around services aim to make the community police program sustainable and enhance community involvement.

In addition, Strength in Unity Neighborhood Association of Mapleridge Community, established in June 2023, has made significant strides to influencing community involvement by hosting various events year-round. The organization has developed a vacant home committee that has closed down 3 problematic houses within Mapleridge Community. The troubled houses are now Plexi glassed and await auction for rehabilitation and monitored by strength in unity. The association meets monthly, canvassing the community twice a month, and actively manages the upkeep of these properties until they are sold by the Detroit Land Bank.

Camp Restore a faith-based organization within Mapleridge Community, contributes to the revitalization of Mapleridge community During the summer, they engage mission children from various states in volunteerism. Volunteers stay in dorm-like accommodations at the Mt. Calvary Lutheran Church. Residents such as Kesha Rand and Donny Jones have benefited from gardening and cleaning projects carried by Camp restore. They also offer free literacy programs out of their newly renovated community house that is open to all residents.

Building D4 Community, a community-based organization founded in March 2022, has made a significant impact in the Mapleridge Community during its relatively short existence. Their mission revolves around preserving affordable single-family homes. To achieve this, they purchase properties, rehabilitate them for occupancy, and acquire houses from the City of Detroit Demo-list through the Detroit Land Bank. These homes are then rented out at rates below the market value, specifically targeting working-class families. The organization's focus area for saturation is the Mapleridge community, where they have already acquired 15 properties and continue to expand. Currently, 80 percent of their inventory is occupied. In addition to their housing efforts, Building D4 Community also established the Strength in Unity Association, and serves as a funding source for their events and programs. They also created a newsletter to facilitate communication and share important information with other communities and local/state bodies. Presently, they reach around 200 recipients via email and distribute 500 printed copies. Their future goal is to expand their reach to 500 email recipients and 1000 printed copies.

These organizations, along with their affiliates, exemplify the strength of community collaboration and grassroots initiatives in driving positive transformations. To learn more about these organizations: www.Denbyneighborhoodalliance.org, www.Detroitcamprestore.org, www.Buildingd4community.org.



Denby Neighborhood Alliance hosting a community event at Skinner Park



Strength in Unity Community meeting attended by community members



Active members of Camp Restore Detroit at MT. Calvary Church

**Deadline to Apply
for FEMA Disaster
Assistance for
2023 Storms
extended to May
8, 2024
FEMA.GOV**

You can go in-person to one of these Disaster Recovery Centers:
Kemeny Rec. Center, 2260 S. Fort St.
Butzel Family Center 7737 Kercheval

- Tuesday 4/2 9am-6:30pm
- Wednesday 4/3 CLOSED
- Thursday 4/4 - 1PM-6:30PM
- Friday 4/5 - 9am-6:30pm
- Saturday 4/6 9am-6:30pm

BUILDING D4 COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER

Strength in Unity Neighborhood Association...

April is abuzz with exciting events in the Mapleridge community. We're kicking off Earth Month with a community-wide cleaning project. If you'd like your street to be part of this cleanup effort or wish to volunteer for any of our events, please reach out to Ms.

Bobbie at 313.575.2182. Take a look at all the April happenings below.

Additionally, we're thrilled to announce that our monthly meetings are now back in-person, right here in the heart of Mapleridge. First Class Events has generously donated space for us at 14408 Gratiot Ave, Detroit, MI 48205. These meetings are open to the entire community, and we warmly encourage residents and stakeholders to attend.

Scan the QR code with the camera on your phone to get more details.

Street Spring Cleaning



Chess Camp



Chess Tournament



ALL PROCEEDS WILL GO TOWARDS THE REHABILITATION OF OUR COMMUNITY SPACE DONATED TO US BY B04C

PREORDER MAR 20TH-APR 3RD • PICK UP APRIL 6TH AT 2PM - 4 PM AT 15017 FLANDERS DETROIT 48205

\$10 PER TUB

FLAVORS TO CHOOSE FROM: BUTTER, CARAMEL, WHITE CHEDDAR, BBQ, CHEDDAR CHEESE

ALL ORDERS MUST BE PAID AT THE TIME OF ORDERING ALL ORDERS ARE PICK UP ONLY

TO PLACE A ORDER TEXT (586)582-2096 CASH APP \$BD4C

INCLUDE NAME, POPCORN FLAVOR, QTY, FOR CASH APP

VISIT US ONLINE AT WWW.BUILDINGD4COMMUNITY.ORG



Ms. Bobbie
Volunteer Coordinator

Monthly Community Meeting

- Every 3rd Wednesday @ 6pm
- In-person Location 14408 Gratiot 48205
- Parking Lot is off Lappin
- Entry door is from the parking lot
- ZOOM Meeting ID: 879 6559 3277

Scan this code to subscribe to our email list.



Why do you volunteer? We want to hear from you. Send in a letter along with a picture of you in active service, sharing your reasons for volunteering. We will share your letter and photo in our next issue. Send to: volunteer@buildingd4community.org

Follow us on instagram:
[@strength_in_unityd4](https://www.instagram.com/strength_in_unityd4)



BUILDING D4 COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER

ISSUE 5 APRIL/3/2024
FEBRUARY 2024 EVENTS & PROGRAMS



Michael LoGreco

Michael LoGreco, a lifelong resident of Detroit's east side, is an invaluable asset to our organization. His warm interaction with children during events and his unwavering willingness to lend a hand on diverse projects make him a true blessing. The kids affectionately refer to him as the 'popcorn guy' because he consistently volunteers for the popcorn station at nearly every movie night. We extend our heartfelt appreciation to all the men who actively contribute to our community, and Michael exemplifies that commitment. Thank you, Mike!

Send flyers in PDF form for local events to post in this section for free to: bd4newsletter@gmail.com



Public Meeting Schedule

DATE	LOCATION
FEBRUARY 20th, 2024	NORTHWELL RECREATION CENTER
MARCH 20th, 2024	FARWELL RECREATION CENTER
APRIL 6th, 2024	NORTHWELL RECREATION CENTER
MAY 4th, 2024	FARWELL RECREATION CENTER
JUNE 15th, 2024	NORTHWELL RECREATION CENTER
JULY 6th, 2024	FARWELL RECREATION CENTER
AUGUST 20th, 2024	NORTHWELL RECREATION CENTER
SEPTEMBER 17th, 2024	FARWELL RECREATION CENTER
OCTOBER 5th, 2024	NORTHWELL RECREATION CENTER

ALL meetings are held from 2 PM - 4 PM
reparations@detroitmi.gov



NEW BUSINESSES

- FIRST CLASS EVENTS 14408 GRATIOT
- SAVOY RESTAURANT 17131 E. WARREN
- MORNINGSIDE CAFE 16369 SUITE C E. WARREN
- NEIGHBORHOOD GROCERY 500 MANISTIQUE
- TERRI'S CAKES 16311 E. WARREN
- E'SHROOMED FARMS 16555 HARPER

Nominate a Community Member.

Send your submission to: BD4NEWSLETTER@GMAIL.COM. Include a photo and a short paragraph highlighting their contributions to the community.

BE A PART OF THE CHANGE!

Keep up with us:

@BUILDINGD4COMMUNITY
 @STRENGTH_IN_UNITYD4



DFTJ- The LVT Property Tax Plan May Return

Last Fall, a strong citizen's effort by Detroiters for Tax Justice (DFTJ) blocked the Land Value Tax (LVT) bill in Lansing that would have given the Mayor of Detroit the power to raise or lower property taxes on owners based on his opinion of their land use. The mayor has repeatedly said that he wants to double taxes on some businesses to drive them "to the suburbs." The City can then take their properties. Using taxing increases to overtax and seize land is unconstitutional and unethical.

We visited all 110 offices in the House several times and showed each legislator how this was very unconstitutional. Detroit Reps Donavon McKinney, Abraham Aiyash, Lori Stone, Kimberly Edwards and Veronica Paiz did not support the bill on October 11 and the bill lost 60 to 50. This despite intense lobbying by the City and Speaker Joe Tate. Also opposing the effort then was Councilmember Mary Waters, who distributed a letter stating opposition from some City Council members.

But it appears that the City is going to try to revive the bill in the near future. We will again be opposing it.

In our past effort, we showed through research that the justifications used by the City were not truthful or accurate. The City promised tax cuts if this was passed because Detroit voters also have to approve it if the bill passes in Lansing. But it turns out that the savings promised by the City would be small in most cases. DFTJ predicted last year that even those small cuts would not occur because the Mayor's people would increase our property assessments that would keep our taxes at the same level. And sure enough, they have announced big assessments that raise our taxes this year, a burden that is likely to continue in coming years.

DFTJ recommended to the Mayor that if he really wants to cut residential costs for us, he cut the "drainage fees" that he illegally created in 2016 and has increased 450% since then. A two-thirds cut in that fee would save residents more than the promised cuts under the LVT. The Mayor was not interested.

DFTJ has also called for a halt to the Mayor taking money from our taxes meant for our schools, libraries, parks, City operations and school debt fund and giving it to downtown billionaires with no repayment. This is done under the table. DFTJ has the documentation.

Finally, we oppose the over-assessing homes to raise our taxes again this year. We are now owed a billion dollars in reimbursements. The Mayor has no plan for that.

By Russ Bellant. For questions or to address neighborhood meetings: russbellant@gmail.com

Detroit Solar Farm Location Finalists Not Yet Selected

As of the writing of this newsletter the final six neighborhood locations for the Detroit residential solar farm project have not been selected. Nine finalists were announced on November 15, 2023. At that time the city stated that the final five to six locations would be announced in March of 2024. Two of the nine finalists are located adjacent to Mapleridge - Gratiot/Findley and Houston-Whittier/Hayes. Under this program, five to six 20+ acre sites within residential neighborhoods will be converted to solar panel farms which will be owned by the city and leased to DTE. Electricity generated by these farms will go into the DTE electrical grid for distribution throughout the DTE service area. The city claims that these farms will generate an amount of electricity equal to the electricity used annually by 127 city buildings and has touted the program as a major blight reduction opportunity. Importantly, the city will receive the continual Federal solar energy credits and the resulting savings on its electricity costs. The city has stressed that it will only select neighborhoods that strongly support the solar farms for inclusion in the program. In return for supporting solar farm placement in the neighborhood, homeowners living in the immediate vicinity the farm locations will be eligible for one time home energy improvement grants of approximately \$15,000 to \$25,000 for new windows, energy efficient appliances and roofs. The City estimates that fewer than 600 homes will be eligible for this benefit.

The solar farm program has been controversial for a number of reasons. Many neighborhoods, such as Mapleridge, decided not to submit bids because of the significant neighborhood disruption and serious questions about safety, day to day management and transparency concerns. Others have questioned the compatibility of solar farms with residential communities, especially with so much vacant industrial property in the City potentially available for solar development. Energy activists have argued for a more equitable and equally effective City solar program using community solar arrays and individual home rooftop arrays to meet the City's renewable energy objectives. Under these programs, individual community members would own the property on which the solar panels were located and could directly and continually obtain long term benefits through lower electricity bills, ownership of the Federal solar energy credits, and the sale of energy into the DTE grid. Homes with the solar arrays and home energy improvements would presumably increase in value, helping lift the whole neighborhood. However, DTE has consistently opposed bills in the State legislature that would allow community solar programs, saying they are unnecessary and inefficient. For now, it appears the Detroit residential solar farm program will proceed as planned as we await selection of the six solar farm locations.

State House District Maps Approved for 2024 Elections

A three-judge federal court panel has affirmed new boundaries for Michigan State House districts as redrawn by the Michigan Independent Citizens Redistricting Commission (MICRC). The MICRC was ordered to redraw its proposed district map after it was determined in a lawsuit brought by several Detroit citizens that the initial MICRC map diluted Black voting power in more than a dozen metro Detroit legislative districts. The new approved map, known as the Motown Sound FC E1 map, ended up redrawing 15 districts. While the group that brought the original lawsuit still has some concerns about the new district map not adequately providing for the greatest number of Black majority House seats, they are satisfied that the redrawn map will yield a greater opportunity for Detroit voters to elect a candidate of their choice in seven Detroit area house districts. For the most part, the Mapleridge community is now located in House District 12. District 12 also includes other Detroit neighborhoods south to I-94, west to Gratiot, east to Kelly, and north to 8 Mile, as well as significant sections of Eastpoint and St. Clair Shores. It is important for Mapleridge and the other Detroit communities to participate actively in the House candidate selection process for both parties and of course to vote in the 2024 elections! The MICRC will now focus on redrawing six State Senate districts that were also successfully challenged in the litigation as inappropriately diluting Black voting power. The outcome of this redrawing will also be very important for Detroit and Mapleridge.

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- Articles are Digital & Print
- Options fit Budget & Communication Needs

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Half Page: Customize a impactful half page article. Perfect for Key information.

Pop-up Ads: opt for a space large enough for a impactful message throughout our newsletter.

Pricing Options

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Half Page: \$30 monthly

Pop-up Ads: \$15 monthly

***Prices are grandfathered in for contracts formed before our next distribution increase.**

Distribution Channels

Emails: Digital distribution is approximately 200 emails.

Printed Copies: Current Distributions are at 500 printed copies directly to Mapleridge residents.

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All funds raised will be used for printing costs and to expand our distribution reach.