

Memo



To: Latisha Johnson, District 4 Councilmember

From: Denise Fair Razo, Chief Public Health Officer, Health Department

Date: March 18, 2025

Re: Responses to 2025-2026 Budget Analysis

Please find below responses to your questions sent on March 7, 2025, regarding the Fiscal Year 2026 Proposed Budget for the Health Department.

1. District 4 residents that live adjacent to the Stellantis plant have continued complaining about environmental pollution. How is the Health Department working to assess the health impacts on residents near Stellantis and other industrial uses in communities across Detroit?

The Health Department is committed to ensuring all Detroiters have access to clean air and a healthy environment and we are actively working to assess and address the health impacts of industrial pollution. Our approach includes:

- **Community Health Assessments** – We are gathering health data collected from this assessment and will be working with BSEED to monitor air quality reports to evaluate potential health risks in impacted neighborhoods.
- **Environmental Monitoring & Advocacy** – We collaborate with state and federal environmental agencies (BSEED, EGLE, MDHHS) to ensure compliance with air quality standards and advocate for stronger pollution controls where needed.
- **Community Engagement** – We attend public meetings, conduct resident surveys, and work closely with community organizations to understand and respond to residents' health concerns.
- **Health Education & Resources** – We have hired three Community Health Educators to provide resources to residents regarding best practices to protect themselves from pollution-related factors and connect them with healthcare services as needed.
- - a. What is the financial burden to families living in high-pollution zones, and are there programs available to assist low-income Detroiters in paying these expenses?

The Health Department has not completed a cost analysis survey to determine the financial burden to families living in high-pollution zones. The Health

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Department does not have programs available to assist low-income Detroiters in paying these expenses.

- b. Has the Health Department previously done any health assessment surveys within communities that are adjacent to intensive industrial complexes?

The Community Health Assessment was completed in 2024 and over 6,300 surveys were collected from residents across the City of Detroit. As well, the Epi Team has partnered with the University of Michigan and the Detroit Hispanic Development Corporation to disseminate a before and after health impact survey to residents living near the construction area of the Gordie Howe Bridge.

2. Local health departments play a crucial role in promoting and protecting the health of the communities they serve. In recent years, we have experienced several once-in-a-lifetime extreme weather events. What is the health department doing to prepare for and respond to public health emergencies including natural disasters, disease outbreaks, and other crises?

The Detroit Health Department has strengthened its emergency response by appointing a Director of Emergency Preparedness, enhancing preparedness training, and updating response plans. We have improved data collection, expanded partnerships with healthcare providers, and revitalized our Public Health Operations Center. The CDC's Public Health Infrastructure Grant has allowed us to invest in communications and capacity building, ensuring a faster, more effective response to health crises like disease outbreaks and other emergencies.

To address extreme weather events, we've developed a robust Extreme Weather Response Plan in collaboration with Detroit Homeland Security and Emergency Management. This plan includes respite centers, overnight warming and cooling shelters, and coordinated communication efforts to keep residents informed and safe. By continuously improving our preparedness strategies, investing in infrastructure, and strengthening community partnerships, we remain committed to protecting Detroiters in times of crisis.

3. Last year we asked how the Health Department intended to address the STI issues in Detroit given that we had the highest syphilis rate in the state.
 - a. What strategies did you employ to address this issue?

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- i. **Targeted Community Initiatives** – DHD secured federal funding to develop a stakeholder-informed strategy addressing syphilis among BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and People of Color) women of childbearing age. We launched the *“We’re Just Girls”* program, an eight-week sexual health workshop for girls aged 13-24.
 - ii. **Pharmacy-Based STI Services** – Partnered with a local pharmacy through NACCHO’s *“Leveraging Pharmacies for STI Services”* project to offer syphilis and HIV testing, with immediate referrals to treatment by our Linkage Specialists.
 - iii. **Expanded Outreach & Prevention** – Provide free condoms, dental dams, and female condoms through community organizations, businesses, and mail distribution, while supporting the MDHHS *Stop Syphilis* campaign targeting high-risk areas.
 - iv. **Medical Provider Training & Screening Improvements** – Conducted 525 provider education sessions on STI prevention and treatment, implemented an EMR-based Best Practice Alert system for HIV, HCV, and syphilis screening with a local health system, and promoted routine syphilis testing during pregnancy.
 - v. **Public Awareness & Home Treatment Access** – Launched a media campaign using billboards and social media to promote syphilis testing and partnered with MDHHS to provide in-home nurse-administered syphilis treatment for pregnant women and their partners.
- b. How successful have your efforts been to educate the community and reduce STI rates?
- i. **We had multiple media campaigns using billboards and social media, which included messages on the importance of testing for syphilis. Through those efforts we have reached over 807,000 Detroiters based on the following metrics:**
 - 1. Delivered more than 7.65 million impressions to our targeted audience ages 15+ through paid social media, display and outdoor messaging.
 - 2. We reached 467,018 unique Detroiters through out of home advertising.
 - 3. More than 340,000 Detroiters were impacted through paid social media and digital advertising with our syphilis messaging which captured total number impressions and message delivery frequency.

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c. Do you require additional funding to continue this work or expand your reach and programs?

- i. **Our current funding is sufficient to sustain and continue these initiatives effectively. We remain committed to maximizing resources and partnerships to ensure ongoing success in addressing syphilis and other STI-related challenges in Detroit.**

4. What were the results from the 2024 Community Health Assessment and what goals have been identified?

The Community Health Assessment survey data collection phase was completed in December 2024. The focus groups responses have been completed at the end of February 2025. We will have the final report concluded and distributed by the end of June 2025 where we will begin the Health Improvement Plan phase to guide the Strategic Plan that will encompass priorities, goals, and objectives.

a. How many people completed the survey?

- i. **Over 6,300 survey responses were completed.**

b. What community outreach efforts did the Health Department engage in?

- i. **The Health Department utilized various outreach methods for data collection:**

- **Social Media posts**
- **Face to face meetings**
- **Associability at all Health Department events**
- **Distribution and collection at senior facilities**
- **Hanging door knockers in areas with low response rates**

5. How is the Health Department working to address social determinants of health, such as income, education, and housing, in its efforts to improve community health outcomes?

The Health Department has various programs that address factors that support better health outcomes such as:

- **Implementation of ride share services for clients seeking care at the health department, the satellite center, and medical appointments.**
- **HAPI provides rent payment services for people living with HIV to ensure equitable and affordable housing. SisterFriends partners with local shelters for women and their children to be placed.**
- **Many Health Department programs provide screening and prevention services in the school systems of DPSCD, charter, and parochial schools to ensure every child has an opportunity to thrive.**

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- The Health Department has referred clients to Detroit at Work and Michigan Works for clients who ask for employment assistance and provides Community Health Worker training for individuals who wish to enhance their skill set.