




# Detroit Department of Transportation

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**To:** Council Member Mary Waters, Member At-Large

**From:** Robert Cramer, Executive Director, Detroit Department of Transportation 

**Date:** March 25, 2025

**Re:** Responses to 2025-2026 DDOT Budget Questions

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Please find below responses to your questions sent on 3/18/2025, regarding the Fiscal Year 2026 Proposed Budget for the Detroit Department of Transportation.

**1. Please discuss how the department is planning for potential disruptions in federal support over the next several years.**

DDOT is closely monitoring the various programs that provide funding support for capital and maintenance programs. Working with other City departments, other transit agencies, our Federal Transit Administration staff, Michigan Department of Transportation, and other partner organizations, DDOT will fight to retain and attract as much funding as possible over the coming years. This could include evaluating and pursuing updated programs as they become available.

DDOT will continue to evaluate the changing landscape and engage other partners including the Regional Transit Authority and Michigan Department of Transportation to seek additional alternate funding to support ongoing needs.

**2. Please outline the department's plans for how service levels could be effectively doubled, through increases in staff and equipment, over the next five years, to give Detroiters the prompt, reliable service that would truly make DDOT a top-tier transit system.**

The FY 2026 Budget is based on increasing service by approximately 15-20% each year, including increases of 5% three or four times per year. This approach requires continual, steady increases in both vehicles available for service and TEO available to drive. Using this same rate of 15-20% each year over the next five years would result in an approximate doubling of service hours and miles on the road. Assuming drivers and vehicles could sustain that increase pace over five years it is feasible to achieve that scale of increase while maintaining reliable service.



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The ongoing challenge in this sustained, long-term improvement track will rely on increasing effort to keep the onboarding of drivers and mechanics that keeps up with turnover and retirements and have net increases on top of that. Running vehicles longer and accumulating more miles per year will mean additional maintenance time and cost and put more pressure on replacement and even expansion of the fleet.