



Detroit Department of Transportation

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To: Council Member Latisha Johnson, District 4

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

Date: April 8, 2025

Re: Responses to 2025-2026 DDOT Budget Questions

Please find below responses to your questions sent on 3/20/2025, regarding the Fiscal Year 2026 Proposed Budget for the Detroit Department of Transportation.

1. How do you plan to close the gap between AM and PM on-time pullouts to ensure that you are adhering to the DDOT schedules on all shifts?

DDOT has taken a deeper focus around researching the root causes of what factors can cause our coaches to leave out the yards late. We had our data teams pull the top 10 routes with the lowest on-time performance (OTP) percentage, and we have started working with those operators, and with Vehicle Maintenance, to develop action plans for correction.

a. Will this require additional hiring or funding to bring our DDOT buses into a state of good repair?

The Mayor's proposed budget for FY26 provides funding to support efforts to increase vehicle availability within our current fleet and provides additional drivers and maintenance staff to support increased service levels in FY26.

2. How many bus shelters are in disrepair and where are they located?

DDOT defines bus shelters that are in disrepair as shelters that have structural corrosion, impact damage, or roof deficiencies. Currently, DDOT has 15 shelters that meet these conditions, all of which we have a plan in place. We will either maintain the shelter to ensure it is in a safe and stable condition or replace it altogether. The locations of the 15 shelters in disrepair are:

Stop ID	Intersection	Direction
6158	W Outer Dr and Coyle	WB
427	Jefferson and E Grand Bl	WB
9478	Larned and Shelby	EB
70001	Moross and Mack	WB
540	McNichols and Southfield	WB



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694	7 Mile and Pontchartrain	EB
922	State Fair & Woodward	EB
3367	St Antoine and Hancock	SB
6010	Greenfield and Mackenzie	SB
6250	Trumbull and Ash	NB
9842	Warren and Radnor	EB
178	Gratiot and E Grand Bl	WB
802	Woodward & Manchester	NB
1255	Gratiot and E Outer Dr	NB
4738	Morang and Kelly	NB
5921	Warren and Grand River	WB

a. Is there a plan to build more bus shelters? If so, how many and where?

Yes, DDOT has a plan to build a significant number of bus shelters. DDOT is in the construction and installation process for our Phase I advertisement bus shelter project, which will add 36 shelters to the system, and replace 24 citywide. In District 4, DDOT has installed one bus shelter, with seven more planned to be installed by June 30. DDOT is in the site selection process for our Phase II 100 bus shelters project. This involves an extensive analysis which is described in greater detail below.

The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) mandates that transit agencies employ an equitable location selection process for asset placement, prohibiting discrimination based on race, color, or national origin, as per the Civil Rights Act of 1964. DDOT does this using a points system. The scoring is based primarily on the average daily boardings recorded at the location, with additional points assigned to locations with lengthy wait times; concentrations of vulnerable users; transfer points between routes; integrations with streetscapes or recreational facilities; community requests; and existing bus shelter locations. The minimum threshold to warrant a bus shelter is 15 total points.

Additionally, DDOT evaluates the site conditions to determine suitability. Site suitability assessments are conducted to determine if there is sufficient space to safely anchor a shelter while maintaining all clearances required by City, County, or State regulations dependent on jurisdiction, along with federal ADA standards. For the Phase I – 60 advertisement bus shelter projects, many locations were unsuitable due to restrictive state regulations for advertising on Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) right-of-way.

If a location is viable, the typical timeline from request to shelter installation is 3 to 4 years. This timeline includes analysis based on the points system, in-person site surveys of locations with points to warrant a shelter, procurement of design contractor, NEPA and SHPO Section 106



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analyses, site design, permitting, procurement of construction and installation contractors, installation, and inspections throughout the process. Lastly, some sites DDOT initially determined as viable, for unforeseeable reasons, are rejected in the permitting process.

b. Do you have the funding needed to keep these shelters safe and accessible?

Currently, DDOT is utilizing the approved FY25 funding to the best of its abilities. We are thankful for the proposed FY26 budget increase, which will better allow DDOT to maintain and better equip our shelters to be safe and accessible to all. This underscores additional need for resources following our major replacement and installation projects: Phase I - 60 advertisement bus shelters, and Phase II - 100 bus shelters citywide.

There are several situations that result in unsafe bus shelters such as components that deteriorate or shelters that are damaged due to an incident. For regular maintenance DDOT's field technician is tasked with assessing shelters, maintaining them, and removing them as needed. DDOT's technician is also responsible for other duties, such as maintaining bus stop signs and poles, and managing inventory of spare parts. When larger tasks are needed, such as utilizing DDOT's boom truck for moving bus shelters, our field technician has to request assistance from another city department, as it cannot be safely done alone.

DDOT could invest more staff time to complete required federal Title VI analyses which determine bus shelter locations and federal funding sources for bus shelters.

DDOT also has a significant number of destroyed bus shelters compared to other transit agencies. This is a problem DDOT is actively working to mitigate in the future, with the safety of our bus riders in mind. To replace most of these destroyed shelters, DDOT must use City funding. DDOT uses Federal funding to purchase new bus shelters, but this funding is not available as an option to replace bus shelters destroyed before the end of their useful life.

3. There have been multiple reports of DDOT accidents, some of which result in injuries or fatalities.

a. What is the process for disciplining these employees?

Our Safety Division has created a Preventability Rating Committee (PRC) board which reviews DDOT accidents. Upon the conclusion of the PRC reviewing an accident, if it is deemed to be preventable, Safety will issue recommendations to the employee's supervisor (terminal or maintenance superintendent) that are consistent with the applicable collective bargaining agreement and work rules.



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DDOT Operations then takes all factors into consideration when applying corrective discipline and follows the department's accident policy.

- b. Are DDOT drivers, especially those involved in these accidents, required to take any kind of driver safety training? If not, how much funding would be required to instate such a program?**

Yes, all drivers are required to have training related to preventable accidents. DDOT training division (OTC) facilitates classroom and real-time coach operation technical training to assist with this.

4. We understand that DDOT buses are equipped with cameras.

- a. Is this true for all DDOT buses in the fleet and are they all operational?**

Currently, there are 10 cameras (average) installed on each DDOT bus, and there are currently 194 buses in service. Out of the 1940 cameras in service, there are 56 bus cameras that have received camera maintenance alerts recently. These alerts let the Vehicle Maintenance team know that the camera has a connection issue. We are working on having these cameras serviced, and this should be completed within the next month.

It should also be noted that DDOT is in the process of acquiring a new camera system. DDOT is currently in the evaluation phase of this project, which is being handled by the Office of Contracting & Procurement (OCP). Once the contract is in place, maintenance can coordinate to complete the retrofit installation between 6-8 months. Our goal is to have this completed by the end of 2025.

- b. How long are these recordings stored, and do you have adequate funding to ensure proper storage of recordings and that all buses have working cameras?**

Since assuming video extraction and retention duties from Transit Police, the DDOT Safety Division has worked on redundant preservation using protected cloud-based platforms. A definitive retention schedule has not been established but, ideally, three (3) years is customary for files that are not associated with litigation. Our IT Department has expressed that storage is limited and has advised that servers with larger memory capacity be purchased.

5. Last year, City Council approved an increase in wages for DDOT. How has this impacted the number of drivers for DDOT and how has this impacted the availability and timeliness of buses?



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The previous increase has greatly helped DDOT attract new drivers. Last year, DDOT had approximately 350 active operators (drivers) where we now have a steady increase of active operators which will allow us to improve our service delivery. With our current training classes, we anticipate an even further increase.

6. We understand that bus availability is one of the largest contributors to on-time pull outs and that many DDOT buses are out of commission.

a. On average, how many DDOT buses are inoperable and how many are running at any given time?

DDOT Maintenance has an average of 194 buses available for service on a weekly basis. On average, 51 buses receive day-to-day repairs (repairs consist for regular preventative maintenance and wear-and -tear repairs) weekly, and we have an average of 44 buses out of service for major repairs weekly.

b. How much additional funding would be required to perform all necessary repairs and maintain the DDOT fleet at full capacity?

The FY 2026 Mayor Recommended Budget includes the funding needed for DDOT to continue progress toward outstanding major repairs and work to get the fleet back to 240 buses or higher available for service each day – which would meet the industry standard for available compared to buses undergoing preventive maintenance or other repairs.

7. City Council recently approved a resolution in support of DDOT reimagined. If provided the additional funding (\$150 million) requested this fiscal year, what improvements or changes do you anticipate being able to accomplish this year?

The FY 2026 Mayor Recommended Budget for DDOT includes a supplemental increase that would allow for a continued increase of TEOs to support increasing service by up to 5% each quarter. Those changes will be based on the framework in DDOT Reimagined, with adjustments and additional public input based on current conditions and priorities. While the Mayor Recommended Budget amount and associated service changes are aggressive, we feel this is also an attainable incremental step to continue impactful increases in service to, and beyond, pre-pandemic service levels that build toward the ultimate vision of DDOT Reimagined. Due to the nature of transit service regulations and the time and development process of increasing drivers, maintenance workers and supporting functions, the proposed budget increase represents the most service DDOT can implement in a way that maintains the top priorities of reliability and safety.



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- 8. Is the Department looking at ways to improve the DDOT app and website efficiency?**
- a. Does the current app offer any type of correspondence indicating whether a driver will be late or if the bus will not show up?**

Yes, the DDOT Bus Tracker app allows customers to track the actual real-time locations of buses in service. There is a “Stop Times” feature that displays predicted arrival times for a selected bus stop, and there is also a “Real-Time Map” feature that shows the current location of every bus in service on a selected route. Both features are informed by the real-time locations of specific DDOT buses, and the bus numbers are visible in the app.

If a bus is running behind schedule, that will be reflected in its position on the map and its arrival time estimate for the bus stop. If a bus is not in service at all, it will not show up on the map or the arrival time estimate. DDOT will be examining additional tools and techniques through marketing and communications functions to inform customers of delays or detours in real time, with a continued focus on a positive customer experience using DDOT.