



City of Detroit

CITY COUNCIL

MARY SHEFFIELD
CITY COUNCIL PRESIDENT
DISTRICT 5

MEMORANDUM

TO: David Bell, Director, Buildings, Safety Engineering, and Environmental Department

FROM: Mary Sheffield, President, Detroit City Council

DATE: July 18, 2025

RE: Request for Information on Vending Zone Changes and Longtime Vendor Access

I am writing to request information regarding any changes to vendor licensing requirements or permitted vending areas in and around Campus Martius over the past two years. My office has heard from vendors who report they are no longer allowed to operate in areas where they have vended for many years, in some cases over a decade. Many are concerned that they have been pushed out without notice or explanation.

To better understand the situation and identify how we can support these vendors, I would appreciate your help answering the following:

1. Vendor Licensing Changes

- a. Have there been any updates to vending zones, permit criteria, or location restrictions in the Campus Martius area since 2023?
- b. If so, when did these changes take effect, and how were vendors notified?

2. Event-Related Restrictions

- a. Did any of those temporary changes, such as those made during the 2024 NFL Draft, result in lasting impacts on vendors who previously operated in the area?

3. Grandfathering Longtime Vendors

- a. Is there an option for vendors who have vended consistently in this area for 10 years or more to be grandfathered into the current footprint?

- b. If not, could a process be developed to allow longstanding vendors continued access?
4. **Support for Displaced Vendors**
- a. What can the City do to help vendors who feel they have been displaced from the downtown vending community?
 - b. Are there any alternate locations, license options, or support resources available to them?

We want to ensure fairness and opportunity for all small business owners and long-standing vendors who contribute to the vibrancy of our downtown spaces. I appreciate any guidance that your team can provide, along with suggestions on next steps. If you have any questions, please contact Yvonne Ragland from my office at yvonne.ragland@detroitmi.gov.

Cc: Honorable Colleagues
City Clerk