

# City of Detroit

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CITY COUNCIL

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MARY SHEFFIELD  
CITY COUNCIL PRESIDENT  
DISTRICT 5

## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Gary Brown, Director, Detroit Water & Sewerage Department  
**FROM:** City Council President Mary Sheffield  
**DATE:** March 30, 2023  
**RE:** Detroit Water & Sewerage Department Budget Questions FY23-24

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1. Many of our residents have been plagued with basement backups due to the major flooding during rainy seasons. What measures have been taken to prevent flooding like this in the future? What is the average repair time for a basement back up?
2. Please share the sewer cleaning and maintenance schedules. How often should sewer cleaning be done and who verifies that these services are completed?
3. Over the past year, residents reported hundreds of broken fire hydrants. While most of them have been replaced, I would like to know how we got to this point in the first place. What happened or didn't happen, and what will be done to prevent this from occurring again?
4. Please share details of the most recent seawall analyses as well as the upcoming plans regarding seawalls.
5. What is the procedure when residents report sinkholes in their neighborhoods? What is the average turnaround time on this service? How many positions are allocated for sinkhole repairs?
6. What impact will the upcoming lead line replacements on residents? Is there an estimated period that residents will be without water/sewer service while these lines are being replaced? How are residents being notified of nearby line replacements that may affect them?

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7. Regarding the DWSD Lifeline Plan, please share an estimate on how many Detroiters are eligible for this program. I would also like to know what percentage of those eligible have enrolled in a lifeline plan. What public outreach is done to make sure that all possible Detroit are aware of this program regardless of whether they are subscribed to city correspondence?
8. One of the goals of your department is to increase the use of the customer self-service portal for payments. Are there plans to migrate other services online? If so, how will the FTE position allocation change?
9. Please provide details on the following budget allocations:
  - a. \$4.2M in proposed “Miscellaneous Revenue.” Requesting details on what transactions fall under this category.
  - b. \$30M increase in WDWSD-R Improvement and Extension proposed expenditures.
  - c. \$30M increase in WDWSD-R Improvement & Extension proposed revenues.
  - d. All details on major changes in FTE position details.
10. What was your total surplus and unused funds in FY2023?
11. How many staffing vacancies did you have in your department in FY2023? What measures are being taken to fill these vacancies?
12. Please share any State, FEMA, ARPA, or grant funding that you received in FY2023, as well as what you expect to receive in FY2024.
13. Are there any efforts to make your department’s practices more sustainable?