



Mary Sheffield, Mayor
 City of Detroit
 February 18, 2026

Dear Mayor Sheffield,

We write in the conviction that public transit is one of the most important tools to help the City of Detroit rise higher. As you emphasized in your campaign, improving Detroit Department of Transportation (DDOT) bus service is a critical step towards greater opportunity for Detroiters.

We applaud your campaign goal to **accelerate implementation of DDOT Reimagined to be achieved before 2030**, prioritizing 10-minute frequencies on key routes, reducing waiting times, and improving reliability. As we helped DDOT develop the DDOT Reimagined plan, we look forward to supporting your team to create the roadmap to achieve implementation.

Our North Star goal for DDOT is to **double service over 2024 levels**, as envisioned in the DDOT Reimagined plan, **before the year 2030**, a period of time which coincides with the four years of your mayoral term. Under the plan, every bus route in the city would operate at least every half hour during weekday daytime service, with many routes running every 15 minutes or better.

DDOT has made progress towards this goal over the past two years, but there is still a long way to go. As found in the major recent study “Transportation Insecurity in the Motor City”, 36% of Detroiters are transportation insecure, twice as high as the national average. Additionally, as seen below, DDOT needs more drivers (transportation equipment operators, or TEOs) and more operable buses in order to provide the service envisioned in the DDOT Reimagined plan. The recent shortage of buses has also affected safety for riders and workers; operators have reported an increase of security incidents due to rider frustration with unreliable service.

	January 2024	January 2026	Required for DDOT Reimagined
Weekly DDOT Revenue Hours	14,560	*	28,056
Weekday Peak Vehicle Requirement	155	~180s	246
Active TEOs	375	522	815

**Data not yet available*

In order to continue growing the ranks of DDOT drivers and vehicles, and deliver the service Detroiters deserve, **we urge you to provide a full \$160 million in General Fund dollars for DDOT in the fiscal year 2027 budget**, up from \$137 million in the FY 2026 budget.

As part of this budget, we are also requesting funding for:

- **Borderless paratransit.** Detroit paratransit riders should not have to transfer at the city limit for trips to the suburbs, and vice versa.
- **A Transit Ambassador program**, consisting of unarmed community health workers trained in de-escalation and providing connections to supportive community resources. At least one ambassador should be focused on paratransit, including helping riders apply for and transition to the paratransit program.
- **15% shelter coverage at bus stops, and improved shelter maintenance.** Shelter coverage currently stands at just 5%, and a coordinated effort is required to ensure safe access to bus stops and shelters in the winter and inclement weather.
- **A zero-fare policy for students** (both grade school and college level), as well as a [zero-fare study](#) to determine the amount of subsidy that would be required for a system-wide zero-fare policy.

Lastly, we also **urge you to use your platform to support a plan for county-wide transit.**

We would also like to **request a meeting with the Mayor** to discuss ways we can amplify and support your efforts to achieve these priorities.

We look forward to a productive working relationship in the years to come, and please do not hesitate to get in contact!

Sincerely,

[Brother Cunningham, At-Large Activist](#)

[482Forward](#)

[Access, Equity and Leadership Collective](#)

[AFSCME Local 214](#)

[ATU Local 26](#)

[COTS](#)

[Detroit Community Technology Project](#)

[Detroit Disability Power](#)

[Detroit Greenways Coalition](#)

[Detroit Justice Center](#)

[Greater Detroit Agency for the Blind & Visually Impaired](#)

[Michigan Elder Justice Initiative](#)

[Michigan United](#)

[Sierra Club Michigan Chapter](#)

[Transportation Riders United](#)

[Warriors on Wheels of Metropolitan Detroit](#)

[We the People Action Fund](#)

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DDOT Fare Study Considerations

Fare-Free Transit: Examples from Other Cities