



**DETROIT CITY COUNCIL – DISTRICT 5
OFFICE OF COUNCIL MEMBER
MARY SHEFFIELD**

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Council Member Mary Sheffield to Host Forum to Discuss Senior and Low Income Housing in District 5 in an Effort to Stave Off Gentrification

Detroit – In March of this year, Council Member Mary Sheffield will host a “Conversation with the Councilwoman” entitled “Seniors Matter” to address several concerns seniors and low-income housing residents have expressed about their living conditions and the future affordability of their residence. The discussion will be part of Councilwoman Sheffield’s plan to get ahead of the impending gentrification of Detroit, especially in District 5.

“Dating back to when I was campaigning for office, I have been inundated with complaints about the conditions in senior buildings and worries about the future of affordable senior and low-income housing in District 5.” It was at that time I knew, win or lose, I could not sit idly by and watch Detroit become gentrification’s next victim like Chicago, Manhattan, and Washington D.C..” said Councilwoman Sheffield.

In recent months, Council Member Sheffield stepped up her engagement of the seniors and residents in subsidized housing. In every meeting she held, without exception, residents expressed the same concerns with respect to cleanliness (especially bed bugs and mold), safety and impending conversions to market-rate rentals. In a number of instances, management has been utilizing some of the tricks of the gentrification trade such as refusing to fix, renovate, heat, cool, and maintain clean and healthy conditions. Deplorable conditions, the lack of communication with residents, and concerns with the overall safety of residents is driving Council Member Sheffield’s decision to host a meeting.

“With 26 Senior buildings and a number of other low-income residential complexes in District 5, it is incumbent upon me to tackle these issues head on.” I recognize the value of the residents who have stayed by the City’s side through the worst of times and I’m simply saying gentrification will not happen on my watch,” exclaimed Council Member Mary Sheffield.

The “Seniors Matter Conversation with the Councilwoman” will include representatives from Detroit’s Housing and Revitalization Department (HRD), the Michigan State Housing Development Authority (MSHDA), the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), The Detroit Housing Commission, the Detroit Police Department and other agencies/organizations to address concerns and speak to the issues. Council Member Sheffield is looking forward to an informative and fruitful discussion which can help inform future policy decisions and prioritizes inclusion in the City of Detroit.

Anyone interested in participating as a presenter or participant should call Council Member Mary Sheffield’s office at (313)224-4505 to pre-register. Once the date and venue is solidified registered participants will receive the details via email.

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Council Member Mary Sheffield represents the 5th District, which covers the lower eastside, downtown, the riverfront and central portions of Detroit. She is the chair of the Neighborhood and Community Services standing committee and a member of the Planning and Economic Development standing committee. She was first elected to office in 2013 and is the youngest person ever elected to City Council in the history of Detroit.