

# Alert

November 20, 2024



## Cozen Cities - November 20, 2024

### Gig Economy & Technology

#### DETROIT – City Becomes Largest U.S. City to Accept Cryptocurrency Payments

Detroit residents will have the option beginning in mid-2025 to make payments with the digital currency through a secure platform managed by PayPal. City leaders hope the move will help attract and retain tech startups.

#### NEW YORK – FAA Grants NYPD Approval for Drone Program

New York City officials announced that the New York Police Department (NYPD) has received Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) approval to launch drones remotely from a central hub. This first-of-its-kind program will cover three boroughs and five precincts.

### Labor & Employment

#### DETROIT – Stellantis Cutting 400 Jobs at Detroit Warehouse

Earlier this month, Stellantis NV announced plans to cut about 400 union workers at an east Detroit warehousing facility early next year, opting instead to transition operations to a third-party.

#### PHILADELPHIA – Union Strikes Threaten to Disrupt City Services

Three major Philadelphia unions representing public transit operators and municipal workers are threatening simultaneous strikes, which could halt or hinder City services, transit, and disrupt daily operations.

### Policy & Politics

#### BALTIMORE – Mayor Scott's Historic Win Sets Stage for Continued Progress in Baltimore

Brandon Scott's reelection marks the first time in two decades that Baltimore has elected a mayor to a second term, giving him a rare opportunity to continue and expand on the initiatives he began in his first term, such as crime reduction, and equitable community investment. Mayor Scott will be working closely with newly elected City Council President Zeke Cohen.

#### BOSTON – Mayor Wu Allays Fears Over Mass Deportations

Boston Mayor Michelle Wu reassured residents that the City's laws, specifically the Boston Trust Act, protect immigrants by prohibiting local law enforcement from participating in federal deportations based solely on immigration status, despite President-elect Donald Trump's promise of mass deportations in his second term.

#### DETROIT – Mayor Duggan Won't Seek Fourth Term



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#### Related Practice Areas

- Government Relations - Cozen O'Connor Public Strategies

Detroit Mayor Mike Duggan announced last week that he will not seek a fourth term. Mayor Duggan did not endorse a candidate to replace him or discuss his next political steps.

#### LOS ANGELES — L.A. Releases Draft of Sanctuary City Ordinance

After more than a year, the draft language for Los Angeles' sanctuary city ordinance has been released, which would prohibit any city resources or personnel from being used to help federal enforcement of immigration laws.

#### MINNEAPOLIS & ST. PAUL — Council Creates New Labor Standards Board

The Minneapolis City Council approved a new Labor Standards Board of workers and employers to recommend pay, safety, and equity regulations, pending Mayor Jacob Frey's signature.

#### NEW YORK — Council Passes Legislation Banning Broker Fees

The New York City Council passed a bill requiring landlords rather than renters to pay broker fees. The legislation is set to take effect in as early as 180 days.

#### PHILADELPHIA — City Council Considers Repealing "Resign-to-Run" Rule

The Philadelphia City Council is debating the repeal of the longstanding "resign-to-run" rule, which mandates City officials resign before campaigning for higher office, marking the fourth effort in two decades to remove the policy.

#### PHILADELPHIA — Mayor Parker Braces for Second Trump Term

Philadelphia Mayor Chelle Parker is cautiously preparing for President-elect Donald Trump's second term, focusing on safety, federal funding uncertainties, and balancing local priorities with a potentially uncooperative Trump Administration.

#### RICHMOND — Dr. Danny Avula Wins Mayoral Race, Promises Reforms, Public School Investment

Dr. Danny Avula, a pediatrician and former state vaccination czar, was elected Richmond's 81st mayor. Mayor-elect Avula plans to prioritize public schools, affordable housing, and city government reform and will work with a majority veteran City Council with three new members.

#### WASHINGTON, D.C. — Mayor Bowser Seeks Meeting with President-Elect to Discuss Federal Workforce, Downtown Revitalization

D.C. Mayor Muriel Bowser requested a meeting with President-elect Donald Trump to discuss collaboration on policy priorities, including federal workforce issues and revitalizing downtown D.C., despite challenges posed by the incoming Trump Administration's proposed staffing cuts.

#### Public Health & Safety

#### CHICAGO — City Set to Spend 21% More to Fight Homelessness

Chicago is set to spend 21% more in 2025 to fight homelessness than it did this year, as officials transition to a unified shelter system that will care for migrants as well as longtime residents who are unhoused.

#### CHICAGO — City Health Department Budget Set to Drop 16%

The budget for the Chicago Department of Public Health is set to shrink by 16% in 2025, as pandemic-era grants worth nearly \$140 million expire. The cuts are the second year of double-digit cuts to the department.

#### MINNEAPOLIS & ST. PAUL — MPD, NAACP Announce New Conflict Mediation Program

Last week, Chief of the Minneapolis Police Department (MPD) Brian O'Hara announced a partnership with the Minneapolis NAACP to provide conflict resolution services in disputes between neighbors amidst controversy over a reported harassment that ended in violence last month.

#### **MINNEAPOLIS & ST. PAUL — St. Paul Wipes Out \$37M in Medical Debt**

More than 32,000 St. Paul residents with unpaid medical debt ranging from \$268 to more than \$272,000 have had their debt erased thanks to a partnership between the City, Fairview Health Services, and the non-profit Undue Medical Debt.

#### **SAN DIEGO — Sheriff's Office Secures \$422K Grant to Combat Impaired Driving**

The San Diego Sheriff's Office was awarded a \$422,000 grant from the California Office of Traffic Safety to pay for an enforcement program's impaired driving checkpoints, patrols, and distracted driving enforcement. The program will run through September 2025.

#### **WASHINGTON, D.C. — DYRS Director Challenges Proposed 30-Day Treatment Plan Timeline in Reform Bill**

D.C. Youth Rehabilitation Services (DYRS) Director Sam Abed opposed a proposed reform that would require the agency to provide treatment plans for committed youth within 30 days, arguing that the timeline is unrealistic and would require more staff. D.C. Council members continue to push for improved outcomes and independent oversight of the agency.

### **Real Estate Development**

#### **CHICAGO — DOH Launches Program to Expand Affordable Home Ownership**

The Chicago Department of Housing (DOH) opened applications for the newly established Shared Equity Investment Program, designed to help homebuyers reduce the cost of purchasing housing and provide co-ops and community land trusts funding to increase the number of permanently affordable units.

#### **PHILADELPHIA — City Council Examines Sixers Arena Proposal**

The Philadelphia City Council is reviewing a proposal for a new Center City arena, hearing from the Parker Administration, representatives from the Philadelphia 76ers, and members of surrounding neighborhoods about the project's development, a \$50 million community benefits agreement, and potential financial impact on public transit.

#### **WASHINGTON, D.C. — Council Holds Hearing on Capital One Arena Deal**

The D.C. Council discussed Mayor Bowser's proposed \$800 million deal to purchase and renovate the Capital One Arena. Supporters cite potential economic benefits, while residents and business leaders raised concerns about the project's funding, labor agreements, and the impact on local communities.

### **Taxes & Spending**

#### **BALTIMORE — City Council Approves Property Tax Increase on Vacant Homes**

The Baltimore City Council passed a bill to increase the property tax rate on vacant homes, tripling the rate in 2026 and quadrupling it by 2027, as part of a broader effort to address the city's vacant housing crisis, with the bill awaiting Mayor Brandon Scott's signature.

#### **BOSTON — First-Time Study Reveals Boston Marathon Economic Impact**

The 128th Boston Marathon generated about \$509.1 million in economic impact, with 34,000

participants. For the first time, surveys included spectators, gathering responses from 5,900 participants and 3,500 spectators to better assess the event's overall financial contribution.

#### **RICHMOND — City Council Maintains Property Tax Rate**

The Richmond City Council *voted* to keep the real estate tax rate steady at \$1.20 per \$100 of assessed value for the year, while also approving Mayor Stoney's RVA Stay tax relief program, which includes a freeze for qualifying seniors and a one-time rebate for property owners.

#### **Transportation & Mobility**

##### **CHICAGO — CDOT Launches Smart Streets Pilot Program**

The Chicago Department of Transportation (CDOT) *announced* the launch of an initiative using camera technology to enhance enforcement of parking and standing violations in bus and bike lanes.

##### **MINNEAPOLIS & ST. PAUL — Metro Transit Announces Lower, Simplified Fares**

Metro Transit *announced* last week that it would be lowering fares effective January 1, 2025. The price changes, which include \$2 full-priced fares on light rail, are expected to draw an additional 926,000 rides in 2025, which is expected to offset some of the costs associated with lower fares. Metro Transit also *announced* a decrease in crime aboard buses and trains.

##### **NEW YORK — Gov. Hochul Announces Resumption of NYC Congestion Pricing**

New York Governor Kathy Hochul *relaunched* New York City's congestion pricing plan, set to impose a \$9 toll for most vehicles entering central Manhattan during peak hours. This follows a delayed version that proposed a \$15 toll, which was paused in June.

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