

Cozen Cities - May 4, 2023

Gig Economy & Technology

BALTIMORE — City Council to Consider Limiting Facial Recognition Technology

Baltimore District 8 City Councilmember Kristerfer Burnet has introduced legislation that would limit the use of facial recognition technology. The goal of the two bills is to protect privacy and promote transparency and accountability.

CHICAGO — Chicago's Tech Workforce Expanding, But Not as Fast As in Other Cities

Chicago's technology workforce expanded in 2022, but still has room to grow. Technology employment in the Chicago area grew 1.4% from 2021 to 2022, per data in the Computing Technology Industry Association's 2023 State of the Tech Workforce report.

Labor & Employment

BALTIMORE — CUB Safety Report Makes Demands Better Equipment, More Training for Workers

The City Union of Baltimore (CUB) released a safety report last week that documents Maryland Occupational Safety and Health (MOSH) violations, worker deaths, and injuries on city worksites over the last decade. In the report, officials stress the need for better equipment and increased safety training.

CHICAGO — City Records Highest Return-to-Office Numbers Since Beginning of Pandemic

More Chicago workers are back in the office now than at any time since pandemic lockdowns turned downtown into a ghost town, according to data from real estate technology firm Kastle Systems, which analyzes building security card swipes.

DETROIT — Detroit Focuses Efforts On Hiring Formerly Incarcerated People

A number of formerly incarcerated residents — “returning citizens,” in the city’s parlance — have received job training through Detroit at Work programs like Skills for Life, then gone on to work for the city or other outside organizations.

LOS ANGELES — Port of L.A. and Long Beach Labor Negotiations Reach Tentative Agreement

The union representing workers at the ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach, two of the busiest ports in the nation, said April 20 it has reached a tentative agreement with the Pacific Maritime Association (PMA). The collective bargaining agreement being negotiated covers more than 22,000 longshore workers at 29 U.S. West Coast ports.

NEW YORK — Unemployment Gap Widening Between Black, White New Yorkers

According to a new report, the unemployment rate for Black New Yorkers for the first three months of 2023 rose to 12.2% — much higher than the national average — while the unemployment rate for white New Yorkers fell to 1.3%.

SAN DIEGO — San Diego’s Labor Force Grows as Gen Z, Retirees, New Residents “Living Their Best Life” Look For Jobs



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Related Practice Areas

• Government Relations - Cozen

Significantly more people have rejoined the labor force in San Diego County in recent months, helping employers in the tight job market. The region's jobless rate was 3.7% in March, the same as the previous two months, said state labor officials April 21. It was lower than the statewide rate of 4.8% and higher than the nationwide average of 3.6%.

Policy & Politics

BALTIMORE — Mayor Scott Ousts Chief of Staff, Communications Director

Baltimore Mayor Brandon Scott has fired his Chief of Staff, Chezia Cager, and spokesperson, Cirilo Manego. The staffing shake-up is the latest in an administration that has experienced relatively high turnover.

BOSTON — City Council's Most Conservative Member Not Seeking Reelection

Frank Baker, Boston's most conservative member of the City Council, announced that he would not seek a seventh term on the Council.

CHICAGO — Mayor-Elect Johnson Reveals His Transition Team

Mayor-elect Brandon Johnson unveiled his full transition team on April 27, with just over two weeks before he officially takes office in Chicago. The list of committee and subcommittee co-chair appointments included a number of notable names, fellow city leaders, and activists.

DETROIT — Detroit City Council Mulls Gun Ban in Popular Downtown Spots After Shootings

Detroit City Council will weigh a proposal to ban guns in popular parts of downtown after a spate of six shootings over the weekend. Councilwoman Mary Waters announced April 18 that she's introducing a measure that would create gun-free zones in Greektown, the Riverfront, Hart Plaza, and Spirit Plaza.

NEW YORK — Rowan Wilson Confirmed As Chief Judge

Rowan Wilson has been confirmed as the first Black judge to lead the New York State Court of Appeals.

PHILADELPHIA — First Opinion Poll of 2023 Election Cycle Shows Five-Way Statistical Tie Among Democratic Mayoral Candidates

An independent opinion poll conducted by Committee of Seventy and partner organizations shows that the top five Democratic candidates are in a statistical tie, with 20% of those surveyed still undecided.

PHILADELPHIA — End of April Brings Two High-Profile Mayoral Endorsements

Former City Councilmember At-Large Derek Green, himself a former mayoral candidate, endorsed former District 9 City Councilmember Cherelle Parker for mayor, while former Governor of Pennsylvania and Mayor of Philadelphia Ed Rendell has thrown his weight behind former City Controller Rebecca Rhynhart.

Public Health & Safety

BALTIMORE — Baltimore City School-Based Violence Intervention Strategy Making Incremental Progress

Baltimore City leaders recently provided an update on its Community Violence Intervention Ecosystem program aimed at reducing incidents of teen violence, which has shown a 19% reduction in homicides and an 18% reduction in nonfatal shootings.

BOSTON — Food Waste Curbside Collection Program to Expand

Mayor Wu announced that beginning in July, the city will be expanding its food waste curbside collection program, from servicing 10,000 households to 30,000 across the city. Residents will be

able to compost food waste in city-provided bins, which will then be sent to composting sites.

CHICAGO — Mayor-Elect Johnson Claims Mandate to Reshape Public Safety, Pledges to Partner With General Assembly

Mayor-elect Brandon Johnson on April 19 claimed a mandate to reshape public safety, delivering a full-throated defense of his promise to take a new approach to crime and violence while offering to partner with state lawmakers during an address to an unusual joint session of the Illinois House and Senate.

DETROIT — “One Detroit” Initiative Announced To Help Prevent Violent Crime

Federal and local law enforcement, along with a group of community leaders, announced on April 19 a partnership to combat and prevent violent crime in Detroit. The initiative, dubbed “One Detroit,” builds off of existing partnerships and brings more community members to the table with the goal of balancing enforcement, prevention, and outreach.

LOS ANGELES — L.A., Long Beach Again Ranks As Most Ozone-Polluted Region in U.S.

The Los Angeles-Long Beach metropolitan area was again the most ozone-polluted region in the nation — with Western states also continuing to outpace the East in terms of poor air quality — according to an annual air-quality report by the American Lung Association.

SAN DIEGO — San Diego Saw 7.5% Decrease in Major Crimes Last Year, Police Say

Crimes across San Diego, including homicides, rapes, and thefts, fell by about 7.5% in 2022, but violent crime, largely fueled by a jump in robberies, still inched up.

SEATTLE — Voters Approve Tax to Support Crisis Care Centers

Kings County voters approved a measure instituting a tax on property owners, which will fund mental and behavioral health services. Each crisis center will contain an urgent care clinic, an observation unit, and a short-term stabilization unit for stays of up to 14 days, with the first slated to open in 2026.

SEATTLE — New Public Drug Use Legislation Proposed

Seattle City Council has introduced a bill proposing that the city make the public use of drugs a misdemeanor, in efforts to curtail the use of drugs on public transit and in city parks.

Real Estate Development

NEW YORK — “PlaNYC” Strategic Climate Plan Released

The Adams administration has released “PlaNYC,” the city’s strategic climate plan, with a focus on retrofitting homes, building green, and reducing building emissions.

RICHMOND — Richmond City Council Blocks South Richmond Affordable Housing Development

Richmond City Council has voted to block a proposed affordable housing project for South Richmond, objecting primarily to the location of the proposed development. The news comes soon after the City’s official declaration of a housing crisis.

SAN DIEGO — San Diego City Council Approves New Rental Protections in Initial Vote

The San Diego City Council passed an ordinance proposed by San Diego Mayor Todd Gloria and City Council President Sean Elo-Rivera providing protections to renters from eviction as long as they continue to pay rent and comply with their lease.

SEATTLE — Social Housing Developer to Receive \$200,000 in Funding

The city’s new social housing developer will receive \$200K in state funding, a “drop in the bucket” for overall expected costs, to begin building the agency.

Taxes & Spending

BALTIMORE — Baltimore City Council to Consider Creating Reparations Commission

The Baltimore City Council Economic and Community Development Committee has [voted in favor](#) of creating a city reparations commission, which would design and implement a system to distribute funds to communities that have been subject to high levels of drug enforcement.

DETROIT — District Detroit Project Wins Nearly \$615 Million in Tax Incentives From State Board

Michigan's economic development board on April 25 [approved](#) a nearly \$615 million transformational brownfield plan for the \$1.5 billion District Detroit development by Olympia Development and The Related Cos.

LOS ANGELES — Mayor Karen Bass Unveils Nearly \$13 Billion Spending Plan for L.A.

A day after Mayor Karen Bass gave her first State of the City Address she [unveiled](#) a nearly \$13 billion spending plan proposed to meet many of the goals she outlined in the speech, focused on three things – efforts to help the city's homelessness crisis, public safety and helping the overall city get to the "new LA."

RICHMOND — Meals Tax Audit Reveals Potentially Millions of Dollars in Lost Revenue

A recent audit of Richmond's meals tax [has revealed](#) that the City is losing potentially millions of dollars in revenue due to understaffing, outdated business directories, and software limitations. The tax on prepared food and drinks purchased at city businesses goes toward city services.

SAN DIEGO — City Council Discusses Mayor Gloria's \$5.12 Billion Budget, Focus on Equity

The San Diego City Council on April 24 heard the presentation of Mayor Todd Gloria's proposed Fiscal Year 2024 \$5.12 billion [budget](#), with the body's members focused on equity in various departments and addressing homelessness.

Transportation & Mobility

DETROIT — DDOT Plans Service Changes, Better Schedules to Boost Bus Service in Detroit

The Detroit Department of Transportation is [planning](#) to roll out numerous changes beginning April 24 that the city says will boost service and better align bus timetables with actual travel times.

LOS ANGELES — State Awards More Funding for L.A. Area Transportation Projects

Metro has been [awarded](#) \$95 million for upgrades to stations and other infrastructure used by the K and C Lines, including the extension of passenger platforms to accommodate three-car trains at the Aviation/LAX, Mariposa, Douglas, and Redondo Beach Stations.

PHILADELPHIA — PPA Cracks Down on Bike Lane-Blocking Vehicles

This week, the Philadelphia Parking Authority (PPA) [began cracking down](#) on vehicles that block bike lanes in Center City, University City, and South Philadelphia with its strengthened bike lane enforcement unit.

SAN DIEGO — San Diego City Council Approves \$22.5 Million Widening of SR-56 Freeway

The San Diego City Council on April 24 voted unanimously to [spend](#) \$22.5 million to widen a 2-mile stretch of the SR-56 freeway in Carmel Valley with new HOV lanes. The project, which has been planned for decades, was protested by climate activists who argue it will be a major setback in the city's quest to zero out its greenhouse gas emissions over the next 12 years.

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Mayor Bowser, City Council Argue Over Metro for D.C., K Street Transitway Projects

D.C. Mayor Muriel Bowser held a rally opposing Metro for D.C., the program City Council voted through in 2022 that would make the city's bus service free, arguing that it would detract from K Street Transitway, a separate transit project aimed at rejuvenating downtown. Funding for the project was not included in the mayor's most recent budget.
