

Alert

November 17, 2023



Cozen Cities - November 17, 2023

Gig Economy & Technology

CHICAGO — Harris School Introduces New Technology, Society Initiative

The University of Chicago Harris School of Public Policy is introducing the Harris Technology and Society Initiative, a two-pronged strategy that leverages evidence and analysis to inform technology governance and harnesses technology to address societal challenges.

DETROIT — GM Pauses Production of Cruise Origin Built in Detroit Amid Safety Investigation

Weeks after the California Department of Motor Vehicles pulled General Motors' (GM) permit to operate Cruise Origin robotaxis in San Francisco due to a pedestrian-involved accident, the company paused production of the autonomous vehicles.

LOS ANGELES — L.A. City Council Calls for More Self-Driving Car Regulations

A Los Angeles City Councilmember has introduced a motion to establish regulations for self-driving cars operating within city limits.

SAN DIEGO — San Diego Moves to Relax Strict Rules on Scooters, Hoping to Lure Back Operators After Exodus

Under a new proposal, San Diego would retreat from a rule that forces scooter companies to install speed-throttling technology that slows them on sidewalks.

Labor & Employment

CHICAGO — Ten-Day Paid Leave Plan Passes City Council

Mayor Brandon Johnson landed his latest progressive victory a couple of days later than expected after a parliamentary maneuver by Council opponents delayed a vote originally set for November 7.

CHICAGO — Biden Migrant Work Permit Clinic Launches in Chicago

The first of the White House-sponsored work authorization clinics in Chicago launched November 10, giving 150 migrants a one-stop shop where attorneys can help fill out applications and federal workers can begin processing them on-site.

Policy & Politics

BALTIMORE — Baltimore General Election Results 2023

Baltimore voters re-elected incumbent City Councilmembers Jacob Dittrich and Florence Hayman and elected newcomer Jason Harvey. Five candidates, including three incumbents and two



Rose Christ

Co-Chair, New York Practice, Cozen O'Connor Public Strategies

rchrist@cozen.com
Phone: (212) 883-2248
Fax: (646) 880-3654



John F. Dunn

Member

jdunn@cozen.com
Phone: (312) 382-3165
Fax: (312) 382-8910



Joseph Hill

Managing Director, Cozen O'Connor Public Strategies

jhill@cozen.com
Phone: (215) 665-2065
Fax: (215) 665-2013



Katie Schwab

Co-Chair, New York Practice, Cozen O'Connor Public Strategies

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challengers, were in the race for three four-year terms.

BALTIMORE — Baltimore City Council Members Disappointed Over Mayoral Veto, Send Letter To Mayor Brandon Scott

Following Baltimore Mayor Brandon Scott's veto of a City Council-approved redistricting map, a majority of councilmembers **accused** the mayor of ignoring community input and failing to be transparent during the redistricting process.

BOSTON — Boston General Election Results 2023

All four new progressive candidates backed by Mayor Michelle Wu were **elected** to Boston City Council in the first election since she became mayor.

CHICAGO — Alderman Ramirez-Rosa Survives Censure Attempt, Mayor Johnson Casts Deciding Vote

Following Alderman Carlos Ramirez-Rosa's (Ward 35) tumultuous actions on the City Council floor last week, the Alderman apologized to his colleagues and resigned as Zoning Committee Chair and Mayor Brandon Johnson's floor leader, helping him survive a **censure** vote.

CHICAGO — Shouts, Tears, Boos From Crowd Force Recess of City Council Committee Meeting During Heated Migrant Debate

Mayor Brandon Johnson's allies tried on November 7 to **approve** their own, softer version of a non-binding referendum on Chicago's burgeoning migrant crisis, but failed after being shouted down by an angry crowd that was forcibly removed from City Council chambers.

NEW YORK CITY — New York General Election Results 2023

The New York City general election campaign season **revealed** some political shifts in the City, suggesting a resurgence of moderate and conservative voices. The incoming Council will have six Republicans and 45 Democrats.

PHILADELPHIA — Philadelphia General Election Results 2023

Last Tuesday was a historic election for Philadelphia in a number of ways, including the city electing its **first woman mayor**, Cherelle Parker; members of the **Working Families Party** winning the City Council's two minority party-reserved at-large seats, **leaving** Councilmember Brian O'Neill (District 10) as the body's lone Republican; and the Council welcoming three newcomers, including its first **South Asian American** and **LGBTQ+** members.

PHILADELPHIA — Voters Make Office for People With Disabilities Permanent

Last week, Philadelphia voters **approved** a ballot measure to make the Philadelphia Office for People With Disabilities, created by a 2017 Mayor Jim Kenney executive order, permanent.

PHILADELPHIA — Mayor-Elect Parker Announces Transition Team, Priorities

During a press conference on November 9, Mayor-elect Cherelle Parker announced her transition team and top priorities.

RICHMOND — City Councilor Jones to Resign Following Election to Virginia General Assembly

Following his election to the General Assembly, Richmond Councilor Mike Jones (District 9) **announced** that he will resign his seat next month.

RICHMOND — Richmond Voters Turn Down Proposed Casino Again

Last week, Richmond voters **rebuffed** a \$562 million casino plan for a second time, taking thousands of promised jobs and millions in potential revenue for child care off the table.

RICHMOND — Richmond Mayor Stoney Planning Bid for Virginia Governor

Richmond Mayor Levar Stoney is reportedly considering a run for governor of Virginia in 2025. An announcement is expected before the end of the year.

Public Health & Safety

BALTIMORE — Survey Results Reveal Residents' Opinions of Baltimore City Police

A new survey shows that 80% of respondents believe that Baltimore has a high crime rate, with around 59% believing that police do not help reduce crime at all. While violent crimes like homicide have been trending downward, other crimes like auto theft have been on the rise.

CHICAGO — Biden Loans \$336 Million to Chicago to Replace Lead Water Pipes

Biden-Harris administration is loaning Chicago \$336 million to help the city replace 30,000 lead service lines, the largest number in the country.

CHICAGO — Mayor Johnson Appoints New CDPH Commissioner

Mayor Brandon Johnson announced the appointment of esteemed public health leader Dr. Olusimbo “Simbo” Ige, MD, MS, MPH to serve as Commissioner of the Chicago Department of Public Health (CDPH).

PHILADELPHIA — Roosevelt Poplar Elected to Lead Police Union

Roosevelt Poplar, longtime vice president of the Fraternal Order of Police Lodge 5 (FOP), was unanimously elected to succeed John McNesby, who accepted a position with the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency.

PHILADELPHIA — Newly Re-Elected Councilmember Lozada Advocates for Stronger Law Enforcement in Kensington

Councilmember Quetcy Lozada (District 7) is advocating for Philadelphia police to more aggressively enforce drug laws in Kensington, a neighborhood widely known for being one of the nation’s largest open-air opioid markets.

SAN DIEGO — San Diego Closer to Zero Waste Goal, Still Behind Schedule

San Diego has made progress toward its zero waste goal by diverting 71% of its waste from landfills last year, the highest diversion rate on record. But the city is still behind schedule, having missed its goal of 75% diversion by 2020.

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Mayor Bowser Declares Emergencies on Youth Violence, Opioid Crisis

D.C. Mayor Muriel Bowser declared public emergencies in response to the rise in youth violence and opioid overdoses. The move comes a week after D.C. City Council passed a measure urging Mayor Bowser to do so.

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Gun Violence Bill Criticized as Return to “Stop And Frisk”

D.C.’s U.S. attorney is asking the City Council to give police and prosecutors more power to fight back against gun crime. But critics warned of a return to the days of "stop and frisk" during recent hearings on the so-called “ACTIVE Amendment of 2023.”

WASHINGTON, D.C. — D.C. to Provide Tracking Tags to Combat Car Theft

D.C. Mayor Muriel Bowser announced a new program that will provide free tracking tags for residents in certain neighborhoods to put on their cars, making them easier to locate if they get

stolen.

Real Estate Development

BALTIMORE — Mayor Scott Announces Plan to Revitalize Baltimore

During the Downtown Partnership of Baltimore's annual meeting, Mayor Brandon Scott announced a long-term plan to revitalize Baltimore City called Downtown Rise.

CHICAGO — “Bring Chicago Home” Referendum Clears City Council

Chicago voters will decide in March 2024 whether to [pass](#) a binding referendum, known as “Bring Chicago Home,” which would authorize the City Council to raise the real estate transfer tax on high-end property sales to confront burgeoning problem of homelessness.

LOS ANGELES — L.A. Mayor Karen Bass Signs Directive to Streamline Housing Projects

Less than a week after Los Angeles Mayor Karen Bass’ invitation-only “fireside chat” with developers at the Urban Land Institute’s conference, she [announced](#) Executive Directive 7, an initiative to slash city hall red tape in developing housing for all income levels.

PHILADELPHIA — Proposed Charter Amendment Would Offer Legal Protection to RCOs

Philadelphia City Council is [considering](#) a charter amendment that would grant Registered Community Organizations (RCOs) legal protection from the City for their involvement in zoning matters.

RICHMOND — Richmond City Council Holds Meeting on Plans for Affordable Housing Development, Year-Round Homeless Shelter, Cultural Space

Richmond City Council [held](#) a special meeting to consider an ordinance that would allow the City to build an affordable residential development in Richmond’s Southside, as well as a homeless shelter and cultural space.

SAN DIEGO — San Diego’s Real Estate Director Out as City Executives Announce Sudden Departmental Consolidation

Penny Maus, hired just two years ago to oversee the city of San Diego’s vast real estate holdings, is [out](#) amid a sudden move to consolidate her department with the city’s economic development division.

SEATTLE — County May Consider Reparations for Past Housing Discrimination

A member of King County Council is [proposing](#) that the County Executive look into potential forms of reparations for those impacted by discriminatory real estate practices, such as racially restrictive covenants and redlining.

Taxes & Spending

BALTIMORE — Proposed Measure Would Tax Baltimore’s Nonprofit Hospitals, Universities

Johns Hopkins University, the University of Maryland Medical Center, and 13 other nonprofit organizations owning billions of dollars of property in Baltimore City may have to [pay taxes](#) on their land for the first time if a newly proposed ballot measure makes it into law.

CHICAGO — Mayor Johnson’s \$16.6 Billion Budget Set for Final Vote

Mayor Brandon Johnson’s proposal to spend \$16.6 billion in 2024 is [set](#) for a final vote after clearing two City Council committees with little opposition and no controversy.

CHICAGO — CPD Superintendent Snelling Vows to Rein in Police Overtime Spending

After spending \$126.5 million on overtime for members of the Chicago Police Department (CPD) during the first six months of 2023, the department remains on track to end the year with a total police overtime bill of more than \$250 million — \$150 million more than City Council had initially budgeted for 2023.

SEATTLE — King County Considering Ballot Measure for Decarbonization, Conservation

King County Council will explore a 2024 ballot measure to raise \$1 billion over a six-year period for decarbonization, conservation, and environmental disaster preparation.

Transportation & Mobility

BOSTON — Commute Times Have Surged in Last 1.5 Years

Commute times for those who take the Red Line have increased by 25 minutes since May 2022. The average platform wait has also surged from just under six minutes to 11.5 minutes. This is a particular issue for those who work in Kendall Square, a life sciences hub in Boston.

CHICAGO — CTA Stations Near Offices Have Seen Fewer Riders Return Than Those Located Near Parks

The Chicago Transit Authority (CTA) is facing a fiscal cliff exacerbated by fewer train and bus riders, and a new analysis points to some ways the city could bring back more transit customers, and which stations might be keeping the most.

DETROIT — Detroit Shortlisted in \$9 Million Global Challenge to Drive Innovation in City Mobility

Detroit has been announced as one of 10 cities on the shortlist for the \$9 million Sustainable Cities Challenge.

DETROIT — Mayor Duggan, DDOT Officials Break Ground on New \$150 Million Coolidge Terminal Complex

On November 9, Mayor Mike Duggan joined officials from the Detroit Department of Transportation (DDOT), Detroit Building Authority, and other state and local partners to kick off the demolition of the DDOT's massive former Coolidge Terminal and replace it with a new \$150 million state-of-the-art terminal complex.

PHILADELPHIA — SEPTA, PPA Using AI to Ticket Cars That Illegally Block Bus Lanes

The Southeastern Public Transportation Authority (SEPTA) will be using cameras outfitted with artificial intelligence (AI) to determine if a vehicle is parked illegally at a bus stop or in a bus lane and transmit the license plate to the Philadelphia Parking Authority (PPA) for ticketing.

PHILADELPHIA — City Relocates Unpopular Curbside Bus Station

The City of Philadelphia relocated the unpopular 6th and Market Street carrier bus station, which impeded local bus routes, to a new temporary location at Spring Garden Street and Christopher Columbus Boulevard.

RICHMOND — Richmond to Install New Speed Cameras

As part of a multi-pronged approach to address frequent speeding and other road safety concerns, Richmond's Department of Public Works is installing speed cameras throughout the city.

SEATTLE — Light-Rail Route Planned for West Seattle

Seven years after its inception, the light-rail map expanding transit options to West Seattle is taking shape. Three new train stops on the peninsula are expected to open in 2032, two years after the original target date.

WASHINGTON, D.C. – D.C. Revises Plan to Issue \$200 Tickets to Drivers Who Block Bus Lanes

The District Department of Transportation is proposing to cut the fine for motorists who block bus lanes from \$200 to \$100 and will begin enforcement in January.

WASHINGTON, D.C. – New D.C. Bills Seek Stiffer Punishments for Dangerous Drivers

D.C. City Council's Transportation and Environment and Public Works Committees are considering four new pieces of legislation that involve license points and suspensions for reckless driving.
