

Cozen Cities - August 28, 2024

Labor & Employment

BALTIMORE – City Council Investigates DPW Working Conditions

Baltimore City Council members criticized Department of Public Works (DPW) officials over unsafe workplace conditions following the death of a sanitation worker, demanding accountability and immediate improvements.

BOSTON – Boston Hotel Workers Vote to Strike

As many as 4,500 hotel workers at 35 hotels in Boston and Cambridge are prepared to strike after their contracts expire on August 31, following a strike authorization vote that received 99% approval. If the strike occurs, it would be the first citywide hotel strike in modern history.

CHICAGO – No Progress in Contract Negotiations Between Pace, Public School Paratransit Drivers

Nearly 800 drivers employed by SCR Medical Transportation walked out, limiting service for those with disabilities, including rides for Chicago Public Schools students.

LOS ANGELES – Mayor Bass Signs New Executive Directive in Support of Entertainment Industry

Los Angeles Mayor Karen Bass pledged the City's renewed support for the entertainment industry by issuing her eighth executive directive to streamline and focus City department processes for local film and television production.

MINNEAPOLIS – City Leaders, Workers March to Establish MLSB

City leaders and workers held a march earlier this month in support of the establishment of a Minneapolis Labor Standards Board (MLSB) that would study new requirements for businesses in industries such as restaurants and hospitality.

Policy & Politics

CHICAGO – How Did Chicago Fare During the DNC?

After more than a year of buildup to Chicago's Democratic National Convention (DNC), delegates from across the country and journalists from around the world descended on the city for the historic nomination of Vice President Kamala Harris in the 2024 presidential race.

DETROIT – Reparations Task Force Seeks Public Input for Recommendations to City Council

Detroit's reparations task force is seeking input from Detroiters about how to address past harms to Black residents through housing and economic development. The task force aims to finalize its report and recommendations to address systemic racism toward Black Detroiters by early next year.

LOS ANGELES – Who's Running for L.A. City Council?

LAist has published an overview of the L.A. City Council races in Districts 2, 10, and 14, as well as issues for the upcoming general election.



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Related Practice Areas

- Government Relations - Cozen

MINNEAPOLIS – Minneapolis City Council to Weigh Cannabis Regulations

As Minnesota moves closer to cannabis licensing, and businesses opening in the Twin Cities, the City of Minneapolis is weighing cannabis regulations.

PHILADELPHIA – Controller's Office Recommends "Streeterly" Application Process Reforms

A report published by the City Controller's Office recommends that the City simplify the "streeterly" application process, reducing fees, and reevaluating parking policies to improve the program's effectiveness and accessibility.

RICHMOND – Mayoral, Council Candidates Share Visions for the City

The Richmond Times-Dispatch has begun publishing profiles on the city's five mayoral candidates, starting with former head of the Richmond Henrico Health District Danny Avula and City Councilmember Andreas Addison (District 1). Meanwhile, 12 of the 18 City Council candidates shared their visions for the city's future at a Richmond Crusade for Voter forum.

RICHMOND – Government Watchdog Reports Have Not Been Posted Online in Past 5 Years

Despite city code requiring the publication of corruption investigation reports, Richmond's Inspector General has not posted any since 2019, citing legal advice and discretion, but the reports are now expected to be made available online following recent scrutiny.

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Council Member Facing Federal Bribery Charges

The D.C. Council has initiated an investigation into Councilmember Trayon White Sr. (Ward 8) following federal bribery charges alleging that he accepted \$156,000 in exchange for aiding companies in securing city contracts.

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Recall Efforts in Wards 1, 6 Fail

Recent efforts to recall D.C. Councilmembers Charles Allen (Ward 6) and Brianne Nadeau (Ward 1) failed to gather enough petition signatures to qualify for the ballot.

Public Health & Safety**BALTIMORE – Ongoing Lawsuit May Prevent Baltimore Area Addiction Treatment Center from Opening**

Baltimore is engaged in a legal battle with CMDS, a proposed 136-bed inpatient addiction treatment center to be located in Howard County, with disputes centered around zoning issues and allegations of racial bias and inadequate treatment plans.

NEW YORK – Health Department Combats Spread of West Nile Virus

The City is stepping up its efforts to combat disease-carrying mosquitoes with scheduled sprayings in Manhattan and Brooklyn next week.

PHILADELPHIA – New City Task Force Aims to Prevent Youth Crime

Philadelphia's new Parent and Guardian Engagement Task Force met for the first time this month, aiming to enhance parental involvement in their children's lives and explore solutions to prevent youth crime, with a focus on after-school programs and extracurriculars.

PHILADELPHIA – Mental Health "Urgent Care" to Open in September

A first-of-its-kind walk-in mental health clinic offering same-day services for non-crisis patients will open on North Broad Street in Philadelphia next month, aiming to reduce unnecessary visits to

emergency rooms and crisis centers.

RICHMOND — Homelessness Increases in Great Richmond Area

Homelessness in the Greater Richmond region has increased to 585 people in 2024, up from 486 in the previous summer, according to a recent report by Homeward, a nonprofit in Richmond dedicated to ending homelessness.

RICHMOND — Right-to-Counsel Program for Evictions May Become Statewide Model

Richmond's pilot right-to-counsel program for evictions, which provides legal representation to tenants facing eviction, is gathering data on its impact, and could potentially inspire similar initiatives across Virginia or even a statewide program.

SEATTLE — City Council Approves Reduced Funding for Student Mental Health Services

The Seattle City Council approved \$12.5 million in funding for student mental health services, following backlash against Mayor Bruce Harrell's proposal to reduce the originally promised \$20 million to just \$10 million.

Real Estate Development

BOSTON — Gillette Moves Forward with Manufacturing Plant Transformation

P&G Gillette is moving forward with plans to transform its South Boston manufacturing campus into a mixed-use, publicly accessible space. The company submitted a Letter of Intent to the City of Boston's Planning Department, outlining the redevelopment of the 31-acre site between the South Boston and Fort Point neighborhoods to include a waterfront park, along with residential, lab, office, and retail spaces.

NEW YORK — Mayor Adams Mandates Review of City Land for Potential Housing Development

New York City Mayor Eric Adams issued Executive Order 43, mandating city agencies to review city-owned and controlled land for potential housing development.

PHILADELPHIA — City Releases Proposed Center City Arena Impact Studies

This week, Philadelphia released long-awaited impact studies on the proposed downtown Sixers arena, highlighting economic benefits while also raising concerns about traffic and gentrification.

RICHMOND — City Center Development Project May Be Heading for a Vote

The Richmond City Council may vote this fall on a development agreement for the City Center project, a proposed plan to redevelop 9.4 acres of downtown, including the demolition of the Richmond Coliseum and the addition of a 500-room hotel.

SEATTLE — Developer Pauses Construction of Downtown Residential Tower Due to Safety Concerns

Kevin Corbett, CEO of Plus Investment (USA), has indefinitely paused the construction of a 46-story residential tower near Pike Place Market due to concerns of crime in the area.

WASHINGTON, D.C. — City Hires Venue Management Company to Conduct RFK Stadium Feasibility Study

D.C. hired ASM Global, a top venue management company, to study the feasibility of redeveloping RFK Stadium and relocating the Washington Commanders there. This is the second RFK-related study D.C. has funded in a year, as the city explores options for bringing the team back despite financial challenges.

Taxes & Spending

BALTIMORE – City EV Purchase Consistent with Carbon Neutrality Goal

The City of Baltimore is planning to spend up to \$5 million to purchase Tesla electric vehicles (EVs) for government employee use. Mayor Brandon Scott intends for Baltimore to achieve carbon neutrality by 2045.

CHICAGO – Chicago DNC Host Committee Says It Raised Record \$94M

The local host committee for the Democratic National Convention in Chicago said on Wednesday, August 15 it had raised \$94 million for the four-day event, a record for a nominating convention for either party.

CHICAGO – Pay Now, Save Later

Budget whiz Ralph Martire has a plan to close Chicago's \$34 billion pension gap.

LOS ANGELES – Marginalized Communities Vote to Allocate \$5.4M to Select L.A. Organizations

More than a dozen community organizations will get a slice of \$5.4 million in funding from the city of Los Angeles thanks to a pilot program that gives historically marginalized communities more say in how city funds are spent in their neighborhoods.

MINNEAPOLIS – Mayor Unveils 2025 City Budget, 8.1% Tax Levy Hike

Minneapolis could see a big tax hike as part of Democratic Mayor Jacob Frey's nearly \$1.9 billion budget proposal. Frey unveiled the budget which includes two bumps to the tax levy: 8.1% in 2025 and another 9.8% in 2026.

SAN DIEGO – City Secures \$33.7M from State for Affordable Homes in San Ysidro

The State of California's Strategic Growth Council (SGC) has awarded \$33.7 million in competitive grant funding from the Affordable Housing and Sustainable Communities (AHSC) program to Hitzke Development Corp. and Casa Familiar for their Avanzando housing project in the San Ysidro district of San Diego.

SAN DIEGO – Budget Experts Call for Comprehensive Plan to Deal with Homelessness

The rare overview of local finances across multiple agencies comes as the City Council prepares to take up Mayor Todd Gloria's controversial shelter lease proposal.

Transportation & Mobility

CHICAGO – O'Hare Plans to Sell \$1B in Bonds as Terminal Project Moves Ahead

The city of Chicago plans to sell \$1 billion in bonds to pay for the massive terminal rebuild and expansion at O'Hare International Airport.

DETROIT – City Makes Progress on Construction of \$160M DDOT Coolidge Terminal Complex

The 200,000 square-foot, three-building terminal complex will provide a base for operations, maintenance, and storage for Detroit's Department of Transportation (DDOT).

LOS ANGELES – Port of L.A. Commission Shakeup Continues to Draw Fire from Dockworkers, Locals

Leaders of the International Longshore and Warehouse Union blasted the call to not renew Commissioner Diane Middleton for another five-year term on the five-member panel during public remarks at the regular harbor commission meeting.

LOS ANGELES – July Shipments Hit All-Time Record at Port of Los Angeles

Cargo numbers in July set a new record at the Port of Los Angeles with a surge of nearly 939,000 container units, the most recorded in the port's 116-year history.

NEW YORK — City Council Approves Bronx Metro-North Rezoning

The New York City Council approved the Bronx Metro-North Stations rezoning, which will add about 7,000 new residential units and invest in infrastructure and community improvements in East Bronx neighborhoods.

PHILADELPHIA — Council President Johnson Urges Gov. Shapiro to Address Public Transit Funding Deficit

Philadelphia City Council President Kenyatta Johnson (District 2) penned a letter to Pennsylvania Governor Josh Shapiro urging him to address the Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority's (SEPTA) \$240 million deficit, as current state funding falls short.
