

Cozen Cities - June 19, 2024

Gig Economy & Technology

CHICAGO — City Council Plans to Turn City Data Pain Into Tax-Revenue Gain

Alderspersion Gilbert Villegas (Ward 36), who chairs the City Council's Committee on Economic, Capital & Technology Development, proposes 8% of the City's new data spending go to vendors who are required to store the information in Chicago facilities.

Labor & Employment

CHICAGO — Mayor Johnson's Paid Leave Policy Effective July 1; Minimum Wage, One Fair Wage, Fair Workweek Also in Effect

Chicago Mayor Brandon Johnson and the Chicago Department of Business Affairs and Consumer Protection announced the scheduled annual increase in Chicago's minimum wage, implementation of the Paid Leave and Paid Sick and Safe Leave Ordinances, and a scheduled enhancement of the Fair Workweek Ordinance requirements.

CHICAGO — Chicago Teachers Union Presents Demands Before First-Ever Public Bargaining Session with Public Schools

The Chicago Teachers Union presented its demands for "Green Schools" last week ahead of a historic contract bargaining session with Chicago Public Schools, the first of its kind to be open to the public.

LOS ANGELES — City Council Ends COVID-19 Vaccine Mandate for City Employees

More than a year after the Los Angeles City Council lifted the City's declaration of emergency related to the coronavirus, council members ended the policy requiring municipal employees to be vaccinated for COVID-19.

MINNEAPOLIS — Police Union Approves Tentative Contract Agreement for 21.7% Pay Raise Over Three Years

The agreement secures officers a 5.5% pay bump starting July 1, a 2.5% raise on January 1, 2025, and another 3.5% jump next summer, city officials confirmed. It also includes a large amount of pro-rated backpay, equating to a 21.7% increase over three years for veteran cops.

Policy & Politics

CHICAGO — O'Hare Expansion, La Salle Street Makeover Take Giant Steps Forward as City Council OKs Financing

Mayor Johnson received the go-ahead to issue up to \$3 billion in bonds to bankroll the next phase of the Chicago O'Hare International Airport makeover and nearly \$160 million in bonds to build housing units inside two La Salle Street office buildings.

CHICAGO — More Than Half of Migrants Forced to Leave City Shelters Immediately Returned

Approximately 55% of the more than 900 migrants evicted from City shelters had nowhere else to



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go, and continue to live in City facilities. Recent point-in-time counts show the city's homeless population has increased threefold, owing largely to an increase in the number of migrants.

LOS ANGELES — City Council Votes to Add LAPD Disciplinary Reform to Ballot

Continuing its effort to advance government reforms, the Los Angeles City Council voted to place a question on the November general election ballot about proposed changes to the City's police disciplinary review process.

MINNEAPOLIS — Minneapolis Schools Pass Gender Inclusion Policy

The Minneapolis School Board has implemented a new policy that aims to create learning environments that value students' gender expression. This will ensure access to restrooms and locker rooms that align with the student's gender identity.

NEW YORK — Proposed Broker Fee Reform Bill Garners Hundreds of Public Testimonies at City Hall

The New York City Council held a hearing regarding the FARE Act, a proposed bill that would require those who hire brokers to pay the broker fees in a rental real estate transaction.

PHILADELPHIA — City Council Passes Eviction Legislation

The Philadelphia City Council passed a bill requiring eviction contractors with the Landlord & Tenant Office to obtain a City license prior to conducting evictions. The measure was deemed necessary after a series of violent altercations broke out between deputy officers and tenants last year.

Public Health & Safety

BALTIMORE — Scathing City Opioid Report Prompts Urgent Calls for Action

Neighborhood leaders implored Baltimore officials to immediately address the citywide opioid crisis following a Baltimore Banner/New York Times report that revealed twice as many people died in Baltimore due to opioid use in 2018 through 2022 than in any other large U.S. city.

CHICAGO — CPD Releases New Drafts of Crowd Control, Arrest, Protest Policies Ahead of DNC

The Chicago Police Department (CPD) is already training officers for the Democratic National Convention (DNC), but now, with less than 10 weeks to go before delegates flood the Windy City, the department is asking the public to weigh in on new crowd control and arrest policies.

DETROIT — Health Inspection Rating Signs Coming to Detroit Restaurants

It will soon be easier to see which Detroit restaurants are meeting health department standards, as the Detroit City Council approved the "Dining with Confidence" ordinance.

PHILADELPHIA — L&I Delayed on Building Repairs

The Department of Licenses and Inspections (L&I) blames lack of staffing and inadequate resources for falling behind on building demolitions and renovations. The department has identified 4,000 City-owned buildings in need of repair, 120 of which require urgent attention.

Real Estate Development

BALTIMORE — Fells Point Bar Owners Concerned About Illegal Alcohol Sales

Bar owners in Baltimore's Fells Point neighborhood used a conversation with the City's liquor board about changes to city liquor licensing as an opportunity to call on the Baltimore Police Department (BPD) to step up enforcement against illegal alcohol sales.

PHILADELPHIA — West Philly Affordable Housing: A New Budget Centerpiece

A last-minute addition to the FY25 City budget appropriates \$14 million for a West Philadelphia affordable housing project. The 70-unit development in University City will replace the demolished University City Townhomes at 39th and Market Streets.

RICHMOND — Affordable Housing Coming to the City's Southside

Richmond began demolitions of Oak Grove Elementary School to erect a new affordable apartment complex. Residents who expressed health and safety concerns about the old, rat-infested elementary school building anticipate that the new apartments will bring about positive change in the neighborhood.

RICHMOND — New Visitor Center in the Works

Richmond Region Tourism plans to open a new visitor center in the Valentine Museum. The agency champions the historic landmark as an optimal tourism hub, as it saw more than 25,000 guests in 2023, half from out of town.

ST. PAUL — Increased Vacancies Could Worsen Downtown St. Paul's Troubles

When downtown St. Paul's largest landlord put its entire portfolio up for sale last month, it revealed that the City's already delicate office market is in an even more dire condition than many realized. The situation might soon get worse, because the neighborhood's biggest user of office space, the state of Minnesota, has a plan to move many of its 6,000+ workers out.

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Study Reveals Economic Benefits of Bringing NFL Stadium back to D.C.

D.C. Mayor Muriel Bowser's administration conducted a study assessing the economic benefits of bringing the Washington Commanders back to the site of the former RFK Stadium, finding that soccer, baseball, hockey, and basketball produce \$5 billion in annual commercial activity, and reintroducing football could raise revenue by \$1.36 billion.

Taxes & Spending

BOSTON — Mayor Wu Vetoes Cuts to First Responders Funding

Boston Mayor Michelle Wu vetoed the City Council's efforts to cut funding from the City's police and fire departments, the same veto she exercised last year. The City Council requires a two-thirds majority in order to override a veto.

CHICAGO — City Council Examines Mayor's Plans to Quickly Spend COVID Relief Money

Mayor Johnson was questioned on his long term plans for a guaranteed income program that relies on expiring federal funds.

CHICAGO — Facing Shortfall of Nearly \$400M, CPS Pushes Back Budget Release to July

The Chicago Public Schools (CPS), which had been set to release its full district budget for the 2025 fiscal year last week, has announced it will now publish that spending plan next month.

MINNEAPOLIS — City Council Members Pitch FY25 Budget Recommendations

City Council members in a Budget Committee meeting discussed their individual recommendations for the FY25 budget with plans to submit their proposals to Mayor Jacob Frey's office later this month.

LOS ANGELES — Mayor Bass Signs City Budget to Bring More Angelenos Inside, Implement Responsible Budgeting

Los Angeles Mayor Karen Bass signed the City of Los Angeles' budget for the 2025 fiscal year. According to Mayor Bass's office, the budget prioritizes people over empty desks and provides raises while focusing on hiring for positions that keep Angelenos safe and deliver critical services.

PHILADELPHIA — City Council Passes \$6.37B FY25 Budget

During its last regular meeting before summer recess, the Philadelphia City Council unanimously passed the FY25 City Budget, as well as a flurry of other legislation.

SAN DIEGO — Mayor Gloria Signs FY25 “Protecting our Progress” Budget

Mayor Todd Gloria signed into law the FY25 “Protecting Our Progress” budget that the City Council voted unanimously to approve last week.

SEATTLE — Amendments to Proposed Seattle Transportation Levy Total \$1.5B

A Seattle City Council member introduced \$100 million in amendments to the proposed Seattle transportation levy, centering on accelerating safety and climate initiatives as well as aiding freight and cargo mobility.

WASHINGTON D.C. — City Council Passes \$21B FY25 Budget

The D.C. Council voted unanimously to approve the FY25 budget, eliminating a \$700 million budget gap and restoring capital for an RFK Stadium youth recreation center and a new jail. The new budget also increases property tax on residential dwellings above \$2.5 million, payroll tax for paid family leave, and sales tax.

Transportation & Mobility

BALTIMORE — Port of Baltimore Back Open

Last week, Maryland Governor Wes Moore and U.S. Secretary of Transportation Pete Buttigieg announced the reopening of the Port of Baltimore, which closed in March when a container ship struck the Francis Scott Key Bridge, causing the bridge to collapse.

BOSTON — MBTA Board of Directors Approve Record Breaking Budget

The Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority's (MBTA) Board of Directors ruled unanimously in favor of a \$3.02 billion budget for fiscal year 2025, making this the first ever to exceed \$3 billion. With this enhanced budget, the board aims to improve the MBTA's services and expedite the ongoing repair campaign.

CHICAGO — CTA Chief Predicts Service Will Return to Pre-Pandemic Levels in 2024

The Chicago Transit Authority (CTA) recorded an average of one million weekday riders in May for the time since the COVID-19 pandemic decimated ridership.

DETROIT — Detroit to Launch Free Autonomous Shuttle for Elderly, Disabled Residents

Detroit is launching a free autonomous shuttle for seniors and those with disabilities next week as part of a pilot program to help them get to stores, doctor appointments, or social and recreational events.

DETROIT — Detroit People Mover to Receive New Rail Cars from Toronto Transit Commission

The Detroit City Council approved a resolution on \$38.5 million in funding for the People Mover, covering a five-year \$6.5 million operating subsidy and \$6 million for train car acquisition and preparation for the 2.9-mile loop.

LOS ANGELES — L.A. Harbor Commission Approves \$2.6B Port of LA FY25 Budget

The Los Angeles harbor commission approved a \$2.6 billion Port of LA budget for the upcoming fiscal year, with spending set to go toward ongoing environmental initiatives and waterfront access improvements, among other expenditures.

NEW YORK — Gov. Hochul Announces Indefinite Delay on Congestion Pricing Plan

New York Governor Kathy Hochul recently announced an indefinite delay of the \$15 dollar fee for daytime automobile commuters, a policy that many see as a way of reducing traffic in New York City.
