

Cozen Cities - June 5, 2024

Gig Economy & Technology

BALTIMORE – Visiting Tech Companies Want to Expand Baltimore Presence

The latest Techstars Equitech Accelerator brought several innovative companies to Baltimore, with founders expressing their commitment to expanding their presence in the city and deepening local business ties.

SAN DIEGO – Hundreds of EV Chargers Coming to City-Owned Parking Lots

The San Diego City Council approved an agreement to install electric vehicle (EV) chargers in approximately 100 City-owned parking lots, with the first phase of installation to occur over the next two years.

SEATTLE – The F Suite, Seattle Tech CFO Group Poised to Merge

The F Suite and the Seattle Tech CFO Group announced that they will be merging to form the largest organization of senior tech chief financial officers (CFOs) in the United States.

Labor & Employment

LOS ANGELES – Mayor Bass, SBA Administrator Guzman Launch Women's Business Center in South L.A.

Los Angeles Mayor Karen Bass and U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) Administrator Isabel Casillas Guzman launched the first federally recognized Women's Business Center at the Vermont Slauson Economic Development Corporation in South Los Angeles to help small businesses start, grow, and develop in the city.

PHILADELPHIA – City Council to Investigate Back-to-Office Policy

The Philadelphia City Council plans to evaluate the impact of Mayor Cherielle Parker's proposed back-to-office policy on the City workforce.

SEATTLE – City Council Postpones Vote on Delivery Driver Wage Adjustment

The Seattle City Council postponed a vote on a proposed ordinance that, if passed, will decrease the minimum wage for app-based delivery drivers from \$26.40 to \$19.97 per hour.

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Restaurant Workers Talk Service Fees

Service fees in D.C. restaurants, introduced following a law to raise tipped workers' minimum wage, have caused friction between diners confused by added costs and owners needing to cover higher wages. Restaurant workers are weighing in.

Policy & Politics

BALTIMORE – City Board of Elections Certified 2024 Primary Election Results



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

kschwab@cozen.com
Phone: (212) 883-4913
Fax: (646) 880-3652

Related Practice Areas

- Government Relations - Cozen O'Connor Public Strategies

The Baltimore City Board of Elections certified the 2024 primary results after delays for audits, concluding a two-week election process that included closely contested local races and an initial reporting error.

CHICAGO — Mayor Johnson Announces New External Relations Managing Deputy

Mayor Johnson announced the appointment of Kennedy Bartley into the new position of Managing Deputy for External Relations.

LOS ANGELES — Councilmember Harris-Dawson Confirmed City Council President

The Los Angeles City Council has confirmed the nomination of President Pro Tempore Marqueece Harris-Dawson as the incoming council president in a unanimous 14-0 vote. He will start his term September 20.

MINNEAPOLIS — Police Union Reaches Tentative 3-Year Contract Agreement with City Hall

The union representing Minneapolis police officers has reached a tentative agreement with the City for a new labor contract. The agreement now faces a vote by the Minneapolis Police Federation and requires approval by the City Council.

NEW YORK — City Council Introduces Bill to Hold NYC DOT, PARKS Jointly Responsible for Tree Care

The New York City Council proposed a bill that would require the New York City Department of Transportation (NYC DOT) and the city's Parks Department to implement and maintain tree guards on trees throughout the city.

RICHMOND — Office of Elections Announces Polling Site Changes

Richmond's Office of Elections announced changes to polling sites ahead of the upcoming June primary due to outside factors, like summer school or building renovations.

RICHMOND — Upcoming School Board Election Could Shift Dynamics

With five candidates running unopposed and several members resigning to seek positions on different City bodies, the upcoming election for the nine-seat Richmond School Board has potential to shift board dynamics.

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Incumbent Council Members Win Primaries; Ward 7 Race Too Close to Call

Incumbent D.C. City Council members Trayon White Sr. (Ward 8), Robert White Jr. (At Large), and Janeese Lewis George (Ward 4) won their respective primary races, while the Ward 7 contest — which will determine the successor to outgoing Councilmember Vincent Gray — remains too close to call.

Public Health & Safety

BALTIMORE — How Baltimore Became the Overdose Capital of the U.S.

Baltimore is experiencing an unprecedented overdose crisis — driven largely by the increased prevalence of synthetic opioids and stalled City leadership — with nearly 6,000 deaths in six years, a rate far exceeding that of other large U.S. cities and comparable past drug epidemics.

BALTIMORE — City Officials Implement Strategies to Decrease Youth Violence

Baltimore officials are advancing violence intervention programs in schools, expanding group violence reduction strategies, and addressing drug dealing concerns, with a focus on social media's role in conflict prevention. The City has also implemented a summer youth curfew for the second consecutive year.

BOSTON — Mayor Wu Vows Renewal of ShotSpotter Technology Contract

Mayor Michelle Wu stood alongside Boston's police commissioner in renewing the City's \$782,000 contract with SoundThinking, a public safety technology company with products including a gunshot detection system.

CHICAGO — City Council Votes to Retain ShotSpotter Surveillance System

The Chicago City Council approved a measure that could keep the ShotSpotter gunshot detection system in town, potentially upending Mayor Brandon Johnson's plan for the City to end its \$49 million contract with ShotSpotter's parent company SoundThinking this September.

LOS ANGELES — L.A. Metro Grapples with Safety Concerns Amid Violent Crime Streak

The Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (L.A. Metro) continues to struggle to prevent violent crimes aboard its buses and trains, as a stabbing in Lynwood marked the latest in a string of brutal attacks.

PHILADELPHIA — City Council Makes EDP Permanent

The Philadelphia City Council voted last week to remove the end date for its nationally recognized eviction diversion program (EDP), making it permanent.

SAN DIEGO — City Leaders Respond to Homelessness Report

Local officials expressed cautious optimism about new statistics showing only a small rise in homelessness throughout San Diego. The annual point-in-time count found more than 10,600 homeless people in January, a 3% increase from last year. The previous tally recorded a 22% jump.

Real Estate Development

BALTIMORE — JPMorgan Chase to Invest \$8.45M to Reduce Baltimore Vacant Properties

JPMorgan Chase is investing \$8.45 million in Baltimore's vacant homes crisis, providing grants to nonprofits and developers to stabilize housing, promote affordable homeownership, and revitalize commercial areas as part of a larger \$20 million commitment to underserved neighborhoods.

CHICAGO — As Office Vacancies Rise, Developers Aim to Restore Loop's Vibrancy

Four years since the COVID-19 outbreak led to a rise in remote work, the work-from-home trend shows no signs of slowing, pushing downtown office vacancies higher.

CHICAGO — City Council Advances Extra-Dense Downtown Housing Ordinance

A measure that would allow developers to provide more residential units in Chicago's largest buildings was approved in committee last month after a competing proposal to restrict the extra density to existing buildings was shot down.

DETROIT — City Struggles to Revitalize Areas Beyond Downtown

Detroit Design District is the kind of reclamation project that should be happening all across the city, not just in the Downtown area that has been the focus of stakeholders in recent years, according to local real estate brokers, developers, and urban planners.

NEW YORK — "City of Yes" Progresses to Final City Council Vote

New York City Council committees advanced Mayor Eric Adams' revamped zoning plan to a full City Council vote. If passed, the plan would bolster small business opportunities in residential

areas, spawn more affordable housing options, and support city-wide sustainability efforts.

SEATTLE — Major Commercial Retail Spaces Entering Market Prompt Uncertainty

Fueling fears of uncertainty for the future of Seattle retail, the Coliseum Building will join the Pacific Place Mall and the Meridian Complex, among a list of other prominent Seattle locations changing ownership.

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Residents, Businesses Pitch Chinatown Revitalization

D.C. residents and business owners are calling for City support to revitalize Chinatown by addressing issues like rent and parking to attract business and transform the neighborhood into a thriving Asian American and Pacific Islanders (AAPI) hub.

Taxes & Spending

BALTIMORE — City Reallocates \$68M in ARPA Funds to Meet Deadline

Baltimore is reallocating nearly \$68 million in federal American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds to meet an end-of-year obligation deadline, redirecting money from various departments to projects such as public spaces, schools, and fire safety improvements.

BOSTON — Business Leaders Stress Potential Consequences of Mayor's Commercial Tax Plan on City Residents

Community business leaders warn residents that Mayor Wu's proposed commercial tax hikes will further deplete property values and leave homeowners vulnerable to higher taxes in the future.

CHICAGO — CPS Releases Schools Budget Under New Funding Formula

Chicago Public Schools (CPS) unveiled its FY25 schools budget last week, the first to do away with enrollment-based budgeting and take on a new need-based formula.

DETROIT — Mayor Duggan's Land Value Tax Proposal in Limbo; November Ballot Prospects Iffy

Michigan House Speaker Joe Tate said he is committed to lowering Detroit property taxes, but the fate of Mayor Mike Duggan's proposed overhaul remains in legislative limbo nearly eight months after bills to authorize a vote stalled in the chamber.

LOS ANGELES — City Council's \$12.8B Budget Includes Spending Cuts, Avoids Layoffs

The Los Angeles City Council passed a \$12.8 billion FY25 budget last week — roughly 2% less than the current fiscal year's budget — as officials reined in spending to deal with what they foresee to be a multi-year budget deficit.

MINNEAPOLIS — Nights Out Fueling Downtown Recovery More Than In-Office Work, Data Show

Cell phone activity data shows a pandemic comeback is happening in fits and starts — and mostly at night — as entertainment draws crowds formerly issuing from work.

MINNEAPOLIS — City Faces \$21.6M Budget Hole

Expected worker pay raises — and the end of federal COVID-19 funds — are driving a budget gap that could lead to a steep hike in property taxes.

PHILADELPHIA — FY25 Budget Will Not Include Wage, Business Tax Cuts

The Philadelphia City Council announced last week that Philadelphia's FY25 budget will not include cuts to wage or business tax rates, with efforts to include them having been abandoned to align with Mayor Cherrille Parker's budget priorities. The Philadelphia Inquirer has [more](#).

RICHMOND — Guaranteed Income Pilot Program Shows Promise

A study of Richmond's guaranteed income pilot program has shown promise, with payments benefiting employed low-income residents directly and providing opportunities for financial stability and advancement.

SAN DIEGO — City Kicks Off Summer Tourism Season, Eyeing \$1B in Tax Revenue

Last year, approximately 31.8 million visitors to San Diego spent \$14.3 billion dollars — a record high that generated more than \$1 billion in tax revenue.

WASHINGTON, D.C. — City Council Greenlights Tax Hikes in First FY25 Budget Vote

The D.C. City Council has preliminarily approved a \$21 billion FY25 budget that includes tax hikes to offset program cuts proposed by Mayor Muriel Bowser. Further revisions are expected before the final vote later this month.

Transportation & Mobility

CHICAGO — CTA Chief Gives Defiant Speech as City Council Mulls Call for His Firing

Under fire from the City Council pushing for his ouster, Chicago Transit Authority (CTA) President Dorval Carter defended himself, arguing his personal background and long career at the agency are critical to navigating its litany of challenges.

CHICAGO — Major Construction At O'Hare to Start Next Year

Although airlines and the City reached an agreement to move ahead on the next phase of the terminal expansion and rebuild at O'Hare International Airport, the heavy lifting is not likely to begin until next year.

LOS ANGELES — Longshore Training Facility Opens in Port of L.A.

In response to anticipated technology changes, officials from the Pacific Maritime Association and the International Longshore and Warehouse Union joined together last week to open a new Maintenance and Repair Training Center at the Port of Los Angeles.

PHILADELPHIA — SEPTA Board Greenlights Bus Revolution

The Board of the Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority (SEPTA) approved its "Bus Revolution," a comprehensive bus-route overhaul following years of research, extensive public input, and revisions, with the goal of full implementation by 2025.
