

Future framework for Detroit’s economic growth, land use, city systems, neighborhoods and civic engagement entail brighter plans for a revival of the city

Detroit’s determination

By Dayle Maas & Brigitte Smith
MANAGING EDITOR & PHOTO EDITOR

He lived. He learned. He left.

English teacher Geoffrey Young was born and raised on the Northwest side of Detroit.

“There were pockets of people with all this diversity in the area, which kind of made for a nice community. You’d run outside and Mrs. Boik would give me stuff from her pear trees, that kind of thing,” Young said. “Over time, as the economy shifted ... as people began moving out of the city and into the suburbs, like Dearborn Heights, then the nature of the community changed.”

This change occurred all over the city.

Motown is not the same center of music, cars and city life it used to be. This is seen in abandoned buildings like the Packard Plant and Michigan Central Station, the deserted and boarded up houses, the bankruptcy the city just declared, and as Young says, the migration of residents to surrounding suburban areas.

Yet, there is a coterie of people working to reassemble the shattered pieces of Detroit’s past.

Mayor Dave Bing said in his 2013 State of the City Address, “Despite our much-publicized financial issues, there is progress to report in the City of Detroit. The picture is not all doom and gloom. Everyday there are more signs of hope and possibilities.”

“Hope and possibilities” are recognized in organizations, business owners, residents and visitors alike.

Detroit resident Toby Barlow owns two businesses in the city, Nora and Signal Return. He encourages living, working and playing in the city, and he wants to see this city thrive.

“I really want more people seeing Detroit for what it is: the center of the region,” Barlow said via email. “To me, it would be great if more people were comfortable coming downtown and to midtown to shop and look around, too.”

Barlow is used to the “city life,” as he moved to Detroit from New York seven years ago.

“It would be great to have an increase in high density neighborhoods, a real walking and bicycling culture,” Barlow said. “It’s changed so much just in (the) time I’ve been here. I’m really curious to see what the next few years bring.”

These next few years could bring the change he is hoping for. The Detroit Works Project (DWP), an organization “introduced in 2010 as a process to create a shared, achievable vision for Detroit’s future” created a framework called Detroit Future City (DFC) to “improve quality of life and fiscal sustainability for Detroit and its residents,” according to the DWP’s website.

In 2010, community meetings were held to discuss the future of Detroit.

“The community made it clear that they wanted action now,” Detroit Future City Media & PR Consultant James Canning said. “The whole goal of those meetings was to create a strategy for the entire city to try to transform it, make it better, improve the quality of life.”

That strategy turned into the Detroit Strategic Framework, a part of the Implementation Office of DFC. This Framework is “a city-wide plan that reflects three years of intensive community-driven research, collaboration, analysis and development of shared vision for the City of Detroit,” the DWP website states.

The Framework is separated into five elements: economic growth, land use, city systems, neighborhood, land and building assets and a civic engagement chapter.

Dan Pitera, the Executive Director of the civic engagement team for the DWP joined this program to “connect the work directly to Detroiters and to connect the plan in a real way.”

“We, as Detroiters, are the ones implementing,” Pitera said.

He sees this as a challenge for Detroit. Pitera believes Detroiters think their work is independent, but he wants to show them “something greater can come if they work together.”

“What Detroit Future City attempts to do is become that guidebook for everyone in our community to figure out how to make decisions about neighbor-

hoods, jobs, economic developments, how to fix our city lighting systems or other city systems, what do with vacant properties like Packard Plant, like the Train Station, things like that,” Canning said.

Social Studies teacher Terri Steimer is a supporter of the city and its redevelopment but has her concerns.

“I’d just hate to see it turn into a wasteland where we just knock all these buildings down and do nothing about it,” Steimer said.

She also says pride is a major component in getting Detroit back on its feet.

“I think that the more people work and take pride in what they do for some sense of ownership, that that increases the value,” Steimer said. “If we lived in a community where half of it’s torn down, it looks like somebody’s got bad teeth, there’s missing teeth. It’s like ‘Yeah, why should I take care of my teeth? They look like crap anyway.’ And that whole idea is, again, if you don’t have pride in where you live.”

This pride may seep into the entire metropolitan area, as DFC and its goals are pushing to make Detroit a desirable city.

“It’s really important to see that the surrounding communities benefit from there being a strong Detroit, a strong urban core,” Canning said. “And so the more we can do to improve the quality of life in Detroit and for its residents and for its businesses,

it’ll not only respect the folks that live here, it’ll make a positive impact on them, but also those that visit and having that structure of Detroit will definitely trickle out into the surrounding communities, and it’ll improve what’s in their community.”

Detroit Works Project is not the only redevelopment movement; the Detroit Riverfront Conservancy, COBO Center, Hudson-Webber Foundation and organizations alike have already made substantial strides.

“My sense is that we are approaching some positive tipping points. There’s a great moment when you’re building a campfire, when you’re blowing on the coals and suddenly it just goes ‘Woof!’ and it all catches and beautifully glows,” Barlow said. “I think all the work that has been done by the foundation community, the large downtown business leaders like Dan Gilbert and GM, and the small business owners like Phil Cooley who owns Slows, Liz Blondy who owns Canine to Five and Paul Howard who owns Cliff Bell’s, will create a momentum that one day soon just goes ‘Woof!’ And then it will feel like a very different place.”

For more information go to www.detroitworksproject.com.



BRIGITTE SMITH

Technology bond to be voted on in February

By Katelyn Carney & Addison Toutant
ASSISTANT EDITOR & INTERN

It’s fifth hour, and senior Sarah Rustmann is dreading it. She knows she’ll have to face the wrath of technology again.

“With the slowness of the computers, it’s hard to finish projects and look up research faster, which means I have more work to do when I get home,” Rustmann said.

Because of the many issues that students and staff have experienced while using the system’s computers, the Grosse Pointe School Board voted at their Nov. 25 meeting to put a \$50 million technology bond on the Feb. 25 ballot. The tech bond would supply the school with newer computers and more updated software.

“I think that the tech bond is absolutely crucial. It is imperative that we pass the bond in order to move forward with 21st century teaching and learning in Grosse Pointe,” Principal Kate Murray said.

The tech bond was approved with a majority 5-1 vote. Trustee Cindy Pangborn was the only member opposed. By moving the issue from the voting period in November to the current voting period, the board is spending additional money on the election.

“I object to spending \$60,000.00 on an election when, if done on schedule, has no cost,” Pangborn said in an email. “I object to a February election when this community historically has been vocal against these special elections. Most of all, I think it is wrong to hold hostage our voters with an all-or-nothing proposal.”

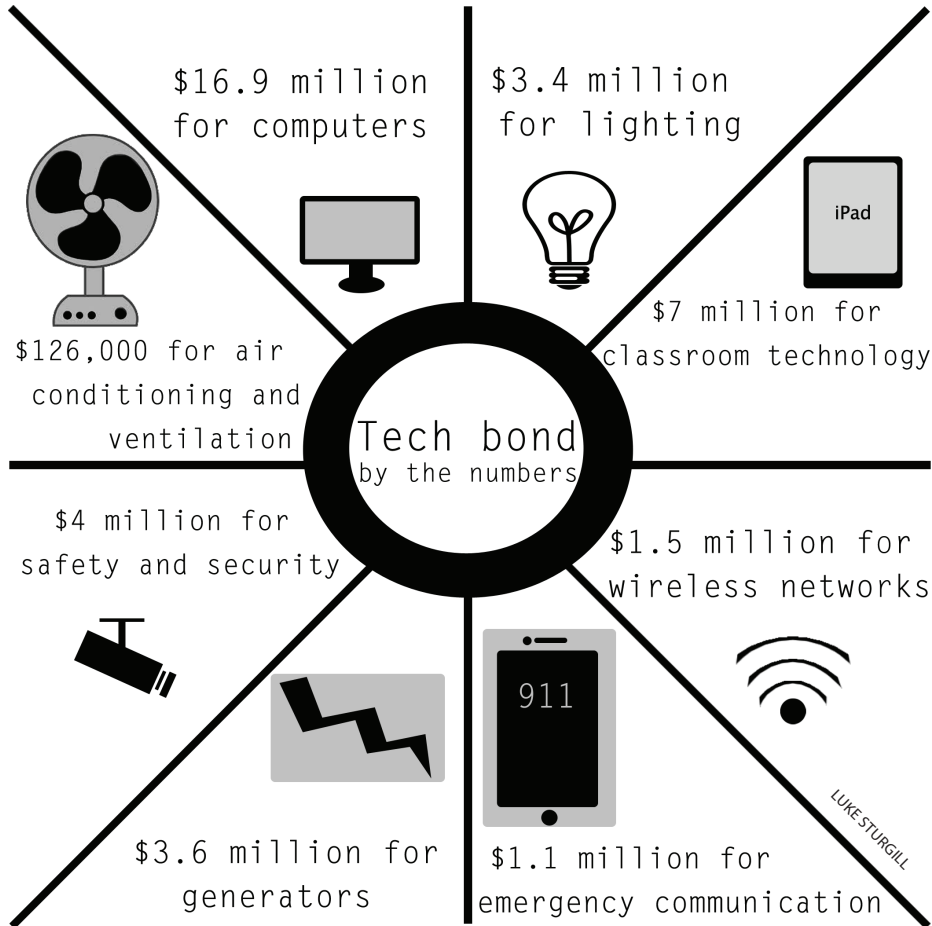
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WINTER BREAK
Begins Friday, Dec. 20 at 3:05 p.m.
School resumes Monday, Jan. 6 at 8 a.m.

NWEA WINTER TESTING BEGINS
Monday, Jan. 6 at 8 a.m.

8TH GRADE ORIENTATION
Wednesday, Jan. 8 at 6:30 p.m. in the PAC

BAND & ORCHESTRA CONCERT
Thursday, Jan. 16 at 7:30 p.m. in the gym



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Deals with Iran may lower gas prices, affecting U.S. drivers

By Lawrence Lezuch
INTERN

The whines from newly licensed teenagers over gas prices have steadily increased over the past several years. But this pattern may come to a halt. There could be a new deal between Iran, the U.S. and other allies that will be discussed at the Geneva II Conference Jan. 22 that could lower gas prices.

Junior Courtney Lamparski sees the benefits this possible deal could have on her.

“It would really help because I would probably have to pay for my own gas with my own money so the lower the price, the better it is for me,” Lamparski said.

The Iranian and U.S. relationship has been stressed for years, but there seems to be a light at the end of the tunnel for this issue. President Barack Obama and Iranian President/Sheikh Hassan Rouhani are now talking diplomacy and possibly relieving sanctions placed on Iran in 1994. These sanctions have damaged the economy of Iran, so President Rouhani wants to work out a diplomatic solution with President Obama to lift these sanctions, while keeping the country’s nuclear program intact.

“They were never one of the acknowledged nuclear powers

of the world but we know that they have been very close to and probably have nuclear capabilities,” history teacher Bridget Cool-ey said.

Before 1994, Iran shipped 2.5 million barrels of oil a day (2% of the world’s oil supply.) After these sanctions, they were given a maximum quota of 715,000 barrels a day. This was detrimental to their economy, but the US-Iranian relation was under too much stress at the time for a deal to be worked out.

The new deal proposes that Iran is allowed to ship 1 million barrels of oil a day, if Iran agrees to degrade half of their uranium to from 20% to 5% and oxidize the other half.

“Oxidizing uranium is when you’re reacting it with oxygen” Chemistry teacher Kristen Lee said. “They will make it into a di-oxide, but very easily they could switch it back.”

If everything goes as planned, then the U.S. should see a drop in gas prices.

“Nothing is for sure. We don’t know until we try, but it would benefit the U.S. and Iranian economy,” Marketing teacher Michelle Davis said.

Senior Stephen Cleland believes Iran’s history makes them untrustworthy and the U.S. needs to be self sufficient.

“In the past Iran has had nuclear weapons,” Cleland said. “And we need to get more of our own oil and anything to make gas prices cheaper.”

So far this deal and its outcomes are just mere speculations there will be no guarantees about this deal until Jan. 22 when The Geneva II Conference is called in to place to discuss and settle all recent conflicts in the Middle East including the Syrian Civil War.

Tech bond

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Grosse Pointe resident Gloria Gomah is opposed to the tech bond and says that taxpayers shouldn’t be burdened with the large sums of money the proposal is asking for.

“Infrastructure is very important in order to make things work in a technological age. I’m not opposed to that,” Gomah said. “I’m against any bonds that high. You have to be sensitive to the fact that it can’t be everything all at once, and I think that’s what they’re trying to do.”

The \$60,000 additional costs would have been avoided if the tech bond had been voted on during the November election period. Roeske believes that nothing has substantially changed in dollar amounts because the issue was supposed to be voted on by residents earlier.

“I hate to use the phrase ‘the 11th hour,’ but at the last minute, one Board member threw a wrench into that, and another Board member jumped on board. It’s not so much why aren’t we waiting until next November, but why couldn’t we have voted on it this November,” School Board vice president Roeske said.

According to an article in the Grosse Pointe News, 85% of the district’s technology, including desktop computers and laptops, is seven or more years old and therefore no longer capable of running on the latest software updates.

“I think that some of the essential components are the infrastructure,” Murray said. “Many of our computers are outdated and either take an extremely long time to process or can’t actually even host the software that we need now.”

The bond will not exceed \$50,280,00 if it is approved. The first three years after the bond has gone into effect, it will help to upgrade the schools’ technology and improve the security systems.

It would also pay for daily instruction for each of the schools to expand their knowledge of their new equipment. While the first phase focuses on new technology and learning how to use it, the second phase of this bond will allow students to have their own devices to learn in and out of the classroom.

“I would love to see more student-driven applications so that in classrooms, you would see students using tablets or iPads, and there wouldn’t be a disparity anymore between those who have devices already and those that need devices,” Murray said.

If the bond is approved in February, the board will begin to immediately institute it.

“There are some things we have to get done within two years because of changes in laws around about what you have to be doing in a school. If the bond is passed in February, we will begin immediately,” Roeske said.

Funding for the technology bond would come from Grosse Pointe residents’ taxes. If approved, there would be an additional 2.28 millages imposed onto citizens’ taxes. If the taxable value of a home is \$150,000, then there would be a \$350 tax increase. This would be equivalent to an approximate 4.01% tax increase issued to taxpayers for the next 10 years.

“I feel that it is a necessity. The district has had decreased funding from the state over the last five years, and so we have had to make tough choices, and we have put the money toward keeping our class sizes small and our programs intact. So I think that it’s something we need,” School Board treasurer Judy Gafa said.

“I proposed splitting the bond into separate proposals in order to lower the risk of failure. We need about nine million dollars for infrastructure so that we have the range necessary to guarantee complete Internet service to all of our existing equipment and future purchases. This is a vital need and I believe the community would support it if this was presented separately,” Pangborn said.

Red Cross Blood Drive saves lives

Everyone is capable of saving three lives in 15 minutes. All that is needed is a willing participant and a prominent vein.

This year, the annual American Red Cross Blood Drive was held Monday, Dec. 9 in the PAC.

“(The Student Association is) in charge of advertising for it and registering students ahead of time, but The Red Cross actually runs the blood drive.” Student Association adviser Jonathan Byrne said. “Last year we collected 39 usable pints, and this year our goal was to collect 44 usable pints.”

Even though there was a large turnout, not every pint collected can be used because of disease.

“Once we collect the blood here it goes downtown to the main lab, and then they break the blood down into three components, red blood cells, platelets, and plasmas,” American Red Cross nurse Natalie Washington said. “Hospitals place orders through us, and then we ship it out as whatever blood type they need.”

Hospitals use this donated blood to aid cancer patients, burn victims, premature babies and patients who receive organ or bone marrow transplants.

Link Crew hosts tailgate

Freshmen, along with their upperclassmen Link Crew leaders, gathered in the cafeteria Friday before the North v. South freshman basketball game for a freshmen tailgate.

“I think it’s an awesome idea that they did this for freshman. It was really cool,” freshman Nate Campbell said.

The tailgate was put together by Link Crew’s social committee. Although it was not the first event Link Crew has put together (the first being the No-Shave November fundraiser), it was the first event directed toward freshman.

“Not a lot of people tend to go to freshman games. I feel like this is unifying them. You’re a part of North; you’re a part of our culture here,” science teacher Kristen Lee said.

Hockey team plays at Comerica

Not everyone gets the opportunity to play hockey at Comerica Park, but the boys hockey team will play against their rival Warren De La Salle. The face-off will take place Dec. 23 at 8:30 p.m.

“We are preparing for it like any other game. It’s the same thing as always, just a little more hype. We will try and do our best to not let the excitement over boil,” senior Will Zinn said.

Only twenty-four high school hockey teams get to be a part of this event.

“This is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity, and the fact that it is at Comerica is pretty cool,” sophomore Andrew Tomasi said.

While the rules of the game remain the same, this unique opportunity invites an entirely different atmosphere.

“It’s different from any other game because it’s at Comerica, and it’s outside,” sophomore JP Navetta said.

The team is trying to keep their emotions under control and use their excitement to motivate them against Warren De La Salle.

“We are all very excited, and it should be an amazing experience,” Zinn said.

The whole team is going to take this change from their usual game style being inside in a rink to playing outside at Comerica park.

By Kaley Makino, Brittney Hernandez and Caelin Micks

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Jan. 6-Jan. 23	Jan. 6-9
Jan. 27-Feb. 13	Jan. 20-23
March 10-March 27	Feb. 3-6
March 31-April 17	Feb. 17-20
	March 3-6

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