



# Bruce Simpson City of Detroit Ombudsman 2024-2025 Ombudsman Budget Recommendations

*“Improving Your Quality of Life on a Daily Basis”*

## Demolition Deferral Process

Sec. 8-17-26. - Demolition Deferral After Show Cause Hearing before City Council Process Needs Consistency.

### The Office of the Ombudsman Investigations/Research Discovered the Following:

- The Building Safety Engineering Environmental Department (BSEED) was not fully executing the process outlined in the ordinance.
- An additional obligation to provide “**proof of funds available**” to bring the property up to code is not a part of the actual application that was given to the applicant.
- “Proof of Funds Available” is listed online as a step in obtaining a deferral; however, it is not spelled out as to what is acceptable as it relates to the “proof of funds available.”
- The applicant can meet BSEED’s required criteria; however, their property can still potentially be demolished if the deferral application and process are not approved by the Director of BSEED.

## Ombudsman Recommendation

- The Building Safety Engineering Environmental Department (BSEED) must comply with the Demolition Deferral Ordinance.
- The City Council executes the ordinance by approving every deferral.
- The City Council executes the ordinance by providing their vote of approval on any deferral.
- That information, approved by the City Council, must be shared with the Detroit Demolition Department in a timely fashion to prevent demolition. Addressing this component of the deferral process is necessary to prevent the demolition of salvageable properties.
- The Building Safety Engineering Environmental Department (BSEED) must place the “proof of funds available” information on the application given to the applicant.
- The Building Safety Engineering Environmental Department (BSEED) must provide clear language regarding what “proof of funds available” is acceptable. (Special Note: Providing this information removes any opportunity for miscommunication or ambiguity).

## Veterans Department

According to the United States Census Bureau, there are 22,765 veterans in Detroit. Veterans have representation on every level of government, with the exception of municipal government.

In response to Council Member Waters’ request for the establishment of a Veteran Affairs Department, on March 15<sup>th</sup>, 2024, the Legislative Policy Division issued a report stating that veterans face the following challenges: unemployment, homelessness, poor mental health, physical injuries, and lack of education. *(Continued on page 3)*

