



MORNINGSIDER

The Official Newsletter of MorningSide



The Wine Basket is one of several Project Green Light businesses in Morningside. Image courtesy of Jeffrey D. Lewis II

Project Green Light Detroit

Adrian Green | The Morningsider

Detroit — On January 1st, 2016, the Detroit Police Department (DPD) partnered with eight gas stations that have installed real-time camera connections with police headquarters as part of a ground-breaking crime-fighting partnership between local businesses, the City of Detroit and community groups called "Project Green Light Detroit."

According to the City of Detroit's website, this project is the first public-private-community partnership of its kind, blending a mix of real-time crime fighting and community policing aimed at improving neighborhood safety, promoting the revitalization and growth of local businesses, and strengthening DPD's efforts to deter, identify, and solve crime. Today, there are over 500 Project Green Light locations throughout the city, ranging from gas stations, to churches, to reproductive health centers.

Story continued on page 4...

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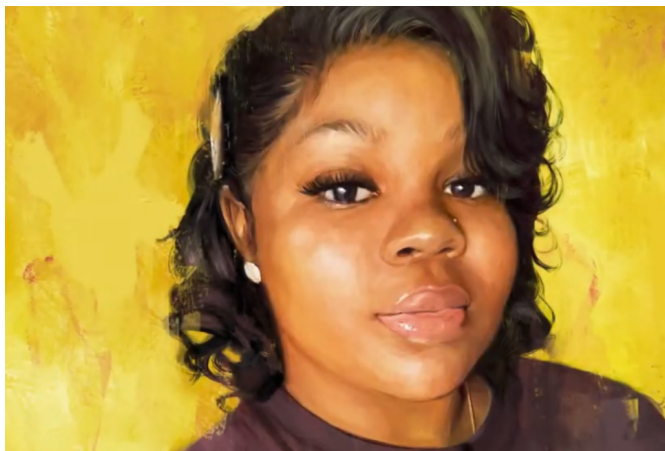
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Be the VOICE for Breonna Taylor... Demand Justice

Jeffrey D. Lewis II | The Morningsider



Breonna Taylor. Image courtesy of Alexis Franklin/ O Magazine

Breonna Taylor's voice was one of significance.

A voice that often shared aspirations and life goals she wanted to accomplish with loved ones.

Goals that were attainable and within actual reach. In due time she would have been able to place a checkmark next to those goals she dreamed of accomplishing.

The night of March 13th those aspirations and dreams that were voiced were all unexpectedly silenced. Officers of the Louisville Police Department barged into Breonna Taylor's apartment unannounced, dressed in plain clothes immediately opening fire while Breonna and her boyfriend were asleep.

Sleeping. 5 bullets. Take a minute and think about that...

Till this day, no charges have been administered to the officers responsible for murdering Breonna Taylor.

Breonna Taylor can no longer speak for herself, but we can speak up for her.

There are several ways to demand justice for Breonna Taylor:

- Call Louisville Mayor Greg Fischer at (502) 574-2003 and demand that he fire the officers who murdered Breonna Taylor
- Call Kentucky Attorney General Daniel Cameron at (502) 696-5300 and demand he CHARGE the officers who murdered Breonna Taylor
- Call Interim Police Chief Robert Schroeder at (502) 574-7111 and demand he completes the investigation immediately and turns it over to Breonna's lawyers and the Attorney General

#JusticeForBreonnaTaylor

State moratorium has ended, but new “Eviction Diversion” plan can offer relief

Nancy Brigham | Contributing Writer

The COVID-19 crisis has disrupted the lives of millions of people and made it nearly impossible for many to keep up with rent and mortgage payments. That's why Governor Whitmer had slapped a moratorium on all evictions -- but only through July 15.

The next day, the 36th District Court stepped up and said it would halt eviction proceedings against Detroit renters for another month, until August 15. That gives people who fell behind time to take advantage of new programs that the state and city are putting in place.

Michigan's new \$50-million Eviction Diversion Program can save renters who couldn't pay their rent during the pandemic and are threatened with eviction, so long as they don't make more than the typical income for the area. It will pay the landlord up to 90% of the rent that's built up since March 1st, which is roughly when the COVID-19 crisis struck. It doesn't cover rent owed before then -- and not land contracts.

To get the money, the landlord must agree to drop all late fees, stop eviction proceedings and accept less than the full back rent. That leaves the renter with a drastically reduced bill, but how much depends partly on the renter's income and what was owed. Any tenant who gets the help but doesn't pay the reduced bill can still be evicted. Landlords don't have to agree to the deal for every tenant -- but it gives them a huge incentive to do so.



Members of the Detroit Eviction Defense protest for tenant and mortgage relief in Detroit's Islandview neighborhood. Image courtesy of Ryan Garza, Detroit Free Press

Tenants who are in dire straits might also get help with the next month's rent, and there's an option to get into a payment plan that would spread out what's owed over the next 12 months.

But money is limited, so if you or someone you know is in rent trouble, the time to ask for help is now. Tenants who seek help are urged to put aside whatever cash they can, because if the landlord agrees to take the new subsidy, a much smaller payment than the rent owed could be enough to save your home. Any tenant who's helped should also make sure everything is in writing, and that eviction proceedings have really been dropped.

The state money is starting to flow, and it must be spent by December 30. United Community Housing Coalition, which for years has helped homeowners and tenants in Morningside and other neighborhoods, will administer the program.

Story continued on page 6...

Continued... Project Green Light Detroit

All Project Green Light Detroit participants install high-definition (1080p) cameras and upgrade to high-speed network connections capable of allowing for consistent video streaming to DPD. Participants also agree to provide adequate lighting on all parts of their properties – and to making other improvements as needed to ensure that their businesses are customer-friendly, safe, and inviting.

Each participant purchases and installs external Project Green Light Detroit signage, including metal flag signs, decals at the top of their doors, and physical green lights – all to signify to customers and community members that they are Project Green Light Detroit participants.

As part of Project Green Light Detroit, DPD and the City have committed to devote staff to effectively receive, monitor, and analyze video feeds from Project Green Light Detroit participants in the department's state-of-the-art Real-Time Crime Center.



Crime Analyst Breanna Lingo monitoring video from Project Green Light Detroit locations. Image courtesy of the City of Detroit

According to the City, Project Green Light Detroit has made a difference in fighting crime since its inception. Police Chief James Craig reported that incidents of violent crime reduced by 48% (compared to 2015) at the original 8 Project Green Light Detroit sites and carjackings have decreased by 40% in two years.

Despite its early success, Project Green Light Detroit is not without controversy. The Memorandum of Understanding between Green Light businesses and the police, in fact, notes that DPD will monitor cameras at its "discretion" and will not guarantee but rather make "its best effort to monitor" a business's cameras should it make a 911 call. Perhaps the most controversial aspect of Project Green Light and the community is the introduction of facial recognition technology.

The City will soon plan to incorporate its use of facial recognition technology on traffic cameras. Such programs have been surrounded by controversy including racial bias, so much so, that some cities like Los Angeles have even backtracked the policies. There is legitimate fear regarding what that would look like in a majority black city such as Detroit.

Detroit Police started using facial recognition software as an investigative tool in 2017. Protesters have demanded the city stop using it, saying the error rate is high when used to identify people of color. The Detroit City Council, which will consider extending a software contract to help pay for it, has been urged to vote no by some residents. Detroit's civilian Board of Police Commissioners also has been discussing the department's use of technology.

Overall, the jury appears to be out on the question of Project Green Light Detroit. Many residents and business owners feel safer with it than without it and some despite the risk of misidentification of suspects, as has happened in some cases, it appears that the community continues to support the initiative.

Adrian Green is MCO Treasurer, a community activist and proud graduate of HBCU Florida A&M University.

Motor City Grounds Crew an Asset to Morningside

Susan Newell | The Morningsider

If you believe that one person can't make a difference, Aaron Smith is here to prove you wrong. You'll see his hand in projects all over MorningSide - in the East Warren Tool Library, Featherstone Garden on Lakepointe, and in the public spaces that his non-profit Motor City Grounds Crew has helped to maintain around the neighborhood. No good thing happens because of just one person, of course, but every good thing that happens takes hard work and leadership, and that's what Aaron has brought to these projects.

Aaron founded Motor City Grounds Crew (MCCG) in 2010, with help from Barney Thiesen, a resident of Grosse Pointe and a retired executive at Lear Corporation. MCCG's mission is "to strengthen Detroit neighborhoods through green space beautification, youth sports activities, and community tool libraries."

MCCG was a logical outgrowth of Aaron's work with Motor City Blight Busters, an organization that pioneered removal of blighted buildings in Detroit through careful deconstruction and recycling of construction materials. He ran a successful prisoner re-entry program for the Blight Busters from 2005-2010, and some of the graduates of that program still work for him on the Grounds Crew, Aaron says.

The focus on beautifying green space has its roots in the fiscal crisis of the Bing administration, when the city could no longer maintain its parks. Eventually Aaron created a for-profit arm, Detroit Grounds Crew, to handle those park maintenance contracts.

Aaron says he gets a lot of satisfaction from the neighborhood cleanups that Motor City Grounds Crew does in partnership with block clubs and other community organizations. "We come in with the heavy equipment, before and after the volunteers, to play a supportive role. We expect people in the community to pitch in," he says. "It's been contagious, as we clean up, more neighbors are cleaning up, feeling more engaged, and more comfortable being out."

The East Warren Tool Library, another project of Motor City Grounds Crew, runs independently on a day-to-day basis now, thanks to the efforts of Joshua Arntson, Eric LeBarge, and Andrew Ianaccone.

MCCG's youth sports activities program, which partners with University of Detroit and Wayne State students in the athletic department, is now in its second year. Its goal is to provide "youth sports on wheels," bringing equipment to kids who may not have the athletic ability or opportunity to play organized competitive team sports. You'll find things like bean bags, jump ropes, and badminton sets on the trailer, for the kind of games that kids of all abilities can play. The program has been hit hard by COVID-19, though, and this in-person sports program has been temporarily suspended.

"I have a natural affinity with this neighborhood," Aaron says, "because it reminds me so much of the Flint neighborhood where I grew up." Although he doesn't live in MorningSide now, he spends most of his days here and is thinking seriously of relocating to our community. We would certainly roll out the welcome mat for such an active, caring neighbor!

Susan Newell, a retired nurse, and her photographer husband Jim West have lived in MorningSide since 1984.



Members of Motor City Grounds Crew clean up damage caused by a storm earlier this summer. Image courtesy of Jim West

Continued... State moratorium has ended, but new “Eviction Diversion” plan can offer relief

City beefs up help with another \$11 million.

Detroit Mayor Duggan also stepped forward with new city money for tenants facing possible eviction. It will help them get legal representation, pay back rent or, if necessary, move to a new home. The \$11 million comes from Detroit and Wayne Metro’s CARES programs, and it is also administered by United Community Housing Coalition (UCHC), as well as MI Legal Services and Lakeshore Legal Aid.

Where to start

Detroit residents at risk of eviction should call **(866) 313-2520** or go online to www.detroitevictionhelp.com

United Community Housing Coalition has also set up a hotline with Lakeshore Legal Aid (lakeshorelegalaid.org) at **(888) 783-8190**

Wayne Metro’s CARES program can be reached by phone at 313-388-9799. You’ll find online applications here: <https://forms.gle/2jXtdFKeuRusE52M7>

Michigan Legal Services, at **(313) 355-3352**, also helps tenants save their homes.

For anyone who gets an eviction notice

If you have back rent you can’t pay, keep an eye out for mail, email or a phone call from the court. If all else fails and you do get an eviction notice, contact UCHC’s eviction hotline for help: **(313) 355-3352**.

No one can be evicted without a signed judgement from the court. The Mich. Supreme Court also says everyone facing eviction is now entitled to a pretrial hearing where their legal rights are explained, and they’re told who to contact. Each case will be delayed for at least a week while the tenant tries to get help to avoid eviction.

We don’t want to see our neighbors and their families kicked out on the street during this crisis. Let’s do what we can to make sure people who need help know how to get it!

Nancy Brigham is a resident of East English Village. A version of this article also appears in the EEV newsletter.



Protesters from Detroit Eviction Defense participate in a caravan in Detroit's Islandview neighborhood. Image courtesy of Ryan Garza, Detroit Free Press

Morningside Storytelling Bike Ride

Are you looking for a way to reconnect with your neighbors while getting in a little exercise all at the same time?

Well if so we encourage you to partake in the 3rd annual Morningside Storytelling Bike Ride scheduled for Saturday, August 15th from 6-8pm. The meet-up location will be at 5027 Balfour (Rear alleyway of The Craft Cafe).

It's a great way to get some fresh air, learn more about the history of Morningside while also taking in our community from a different perspective.

"I'm a huge advocate of cycling. It's a great way to stay fit and it's also a great way to bond with our fellow neighbors. It's a great way to unite members of our community," says organizer and 1st Vice President of MCO, Twiana Odom.

All riders are encouraged to wear their bike helmets and facial masks, as social distancing will be emphasized.

The meet-up location will be at 5027 Balfour (Rear alleyway of The Craft Cafe). For more info, please contact Twiana Odom at **(313) 808-3493**.



Bikers participate in 2019 Morningside Storytelling Bike Ride. Image courtesy of Twiana Odom.

Let's Talk Trash

Please note that bulk trash and yard waste should be put out no more than 24 hours before the city picks it up, and certainly not the day after!

Please be considerate of your neighbors who don't want to look at a pile of trash for two weeks. The next three pick up dates are:

- **August 20th**
- **September 3rd & 17th**

Better yet, sign up for text reminders by texting your address to: **(313) 800-7905**.



Bulk collection cannot exceed two cubic yards. Image courtesy of Susan Newell.

Morningside Community Garage Sale

Get ready Morningside! On Saturday, August 22nd, we will be having our community-wide garage sale!

This event is open to all members of our community, so if you're looking for a way to declutter some items that are no longer needed in your home and may be of value to someone else, this is the event you need to register for.

More details will be released within the next week, but if you would like to register now please contact MCO President, Jackie Grant at **(313) 720-3904**.

Detroit Public Schools Plan In-Person and Online Instruction

Emma Dale | Detroit Free Press USA TODAY NETWORK

The Detroit Public Schools Community District hosted its first of seven community meetings Friday to discuss its plans to reopen for the upcoming school year.

Superintendent Nikolai Vitti gave a virtual presentation. Students, parents and teachers were able to tune in online or over the phone. Vitti laid out the plans the district currently has in place to reopen the school district, pending the state's decision on whether it is safe or not.

Vitti said at this time, parents and students will have the option to pick in-person instruction or online schooling. A survey has been created that allows parents to choose what option they prefer and give feedback. The district asks that all parents fill this out by mid-August.

Vitti talked about the current state of funding from the federal government, which would support only in-person learning and not online. Michigan school districts have not received any information on how schools will be funded for the fall or confirmation on reopening, Vitti said.

The school environment for face-to-face instruction will look much different than pre-COVID-19 times, Vitti said. Schools will most likely be at less than half-capacity, which will make social distancing much more practical, the superintendent said. Masks will also be required for all students, and teachers will have to wear face shields. Lunch at school will also look different, Vitti said. Students will be brought their lunch in their classroom, and if any lunch rooms are open, students will be spread out.

Vitti also talked about the investment in resources and technology that the district is making to ensure safety in all schools. Temperature check machines will be installed in schools, and students will have to get their temperature taken, and review coronavirus symptoms every day, Vitti said. The district will also supply more soap and cleaning supplies to students and teachers. Additional nurses and custodial workers will also be hired for schools, Vitti said.

Before the school year begins, teachers participating in face-to-face instruction will be tested for COVID-19. At this time, Vitti said, students are not required to be tested prior to admission.

Parents were able to call in during the meeting to ask questions. About 700 parents called in and only a few were able to have their questions answered due to time restraints. The next community meetings for the reopening plan are as follows:

- Aug. 10th - Noon to 2 p.m.
- Aug. 11th - 6-8 p.m.,
- Aug. 12th - 10 a.m. to noon

Ronald Brown Academy Gets Ready For School

Vaughn Arrington | The Morningsider

Damon Pitt, Principal of Ronald Brown Academy has already had a taste of what's to come by hosting a summer school program which ended August 6. "We've learned from summer school that in-person learning can work with proper planning and protocols to keep everyone safe," says Mr. Pitt.

In addition to daily temperature checks and mandatory masks, students will have very little movement. Instead of going class to class, it's the teachers who will rotate. Class size will be limited to less than 20 students.

Response to the new plan among parents and teachers has been mixed, he says, with some wanting to return for in-person learning while others would rather not. He is expecting enrollment to be maintained at close to current levels.

Vaughn Arrington is a at-large MCO member, a traveling enthusiast and President of Human Fliers.

After the Pandemic

Hugs will be savored, and achingly sweet,
like my grandmother's peach pie;

six feet will just be
someone's height,
not the measure of danger;

joy will visit us
like an old friend
we've simply lost touch with;

a meal in a restaurant,
no matter how simple,
will be a celebration;

shoulders touching in church
will feel like the warm
embrace of Holy Spirit;

and we'll never need another
five-year-old's rainbow
in a window to
remind us we were always
in this together.

In the meantime, I'll gather
the 1 oz. blue vodka bottles
so plentiful in a nearby vacant lot,

hang them on
a crabapple tree in
the front yard, and
call them
sapphires.

-- MORNINGSIDE POET



Decorative bottles serve as a wind chime.

2020-2021 Morningside Street Ambassadors

Please do not hesitate to reach out if there is an issue on your street that needs to be addressed. Your street ambassador will help you find resources for your problem.

Below are the names of each board member, phone numbers, and their respective streets they are ambassadors for:

- Twiana Odom - **(313) 808-3493**: Berkshire St. & Somerset Ave.
- Jeffrey D. Lewis II - **(313) 522-1982**: Balfour Rd. & Maryland St.
- Adrian L. Green - **(313) 399-8014**: Outer Dr. & Whittier Ave.
- Jackie Grant - **(313) 720-3904**: Three Mile Dr., Bedford Rd., Devonshire Rd. & Chatsworth St.
- Nicolas Hall - **(815) 354-2092**: Courville St. & Audubon Rd.
- Vaughn Arrington - **(313) 804-8472**: Haverhill St. & Alter Rd.
- Maurice "Mo" Mitchell - **(313) 918-8315**: Buckingham & Wayburn St
- Charon Nogue - **(562) 895-9399**: Nottingham Rd. & Beaconsfield St.
- Aaron Smith - **(313) 757-2672**: Barham St. & Lakepointe St.

We are also recruiting community members to serve as block captains for their respective street. Within this role you would serve as the eyes and ears of your block and coordinate with your ambassador to resolve any persisting issues. If this is something that sounds of interest to you, reach out to your street ambassador today!

Morningside + Gleaners Food Distribution

The Morningside/Gleaners food distributions are held at the Craft Cafe, 15641 E. Warren Ave, at 11:00 a.m. on the second and fourth Monday of every month.

The next food distribution will be Monday, August 10th beginning at 11 a.m.

For anyone interested in donating or volunteering, please contact Twiana Odom at (313) 808-3493. Text message is preferred.

Online Community Meetings

Despite social distancing, we can still stay in touch. Here are some important meetings happening online by Zoom videoconferencing website:

Morningside General Community Meeting

Second Tuesday of every month via Zoom. Meeting details will be shared 24 hours before the scheduled meeting. Visit our Facebook page for login info. Our next meeting will be held **August 11th at 6:30 p.m.**

East Warren/Cadieux Neighborhood Framework Plan Virtual Office Hours Each Wednesday from 12:30pm to 1:30pm

Join via computer: <https://us04web.zoom.us/j/248643408>

Join via phone: (312) 626-6799, Meeting ID: 248 643 408

5th Precinct Command/Community Update Each Friday, 1 – 2 p.m.

The Zoom link for the 5th Precinct meeting change weekly. For anyone who is interested in attending, please email MCO at morningsidecommunity2@gmail.com as we will provide you with the access link once we receive it.

Detroit Board of Police Commissioners Each Thursday at 3 p.m.

By computer: Use the following link and follow prompts: <https://cityofdetroit.zoom.us/j/397380647?pwd=SlkzVzU4RURFb2NBRCJlb1kwWVNjdz09>

By phone: Call one of the these numbers: 1(929) 436-2866, 1(312) 626-67991, (346) 248-7799, 1(301) 715-8592

Meeting ID: 397380647 and press ##

The virtual meeting will use a form for public comments:

<https://app.smartsheet.com/b/form/d26fa38cc5e94a018836d065000714ce>

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- 6 - Month Run**
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Morningside's Finest

Camille Upshaw

Camille Upshaw grew up in MorningSide, then moved to New York a few years ago to pursue a career in the theater. That dream was becoming a reality when the pandemic hit, and Camille came back, at least for awhile, to her childhood home on Bedford.

Camille says she noticed many young people in the neighborhood “walking around with nothing to do”, so she decided to organize a safe community gathering at Three Mile Munich Park under the slogan “Dedicated to Detroit.” In just a few weeks, she did crowdfunding, solicited donations of food from MorningSide Community Organization as well as businesses, leafletted the neighborhood, organized face painting, music, and crafts to ensure a successful event July 19.

Mother Nature almost spoiled the fun by sending torrential rain during the early part of the gathering, but by party's end, dozens of people were enjoying fun and fellowship. Kudos, Camille. You are indeed dedicated to Detroit!



For the latest news taking place in MorningSide,
please follow us on:



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MorningSide is a corporation organized and operated exclusively for charitable and educational purposes outlined in section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

Contact The Morningside Community Organization at:

(313) 355-2468 or via email

morningsidecommunity2@gmail.com

Also checkout our new website!

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#morningsiderepresent

