

LOVE Building Community Benefits Agreement

2022

Table of Contents

- I. Introduction
- II. Definitions
- III. Core Values
- IV. Benefits
 - A. Resources**
 - B. Programming**
- V. Evaluation and Accountability
- VI. Signatories & Advisors

I. Introduction

The LOVE Building, located in Detroit's Core City neighborhood, will be home to Allied Media Projects, Detroit Justice Center, Detroit Disability Power, Detroit Narrative Agency, Detroit Community Technology Project, and Paradise Natural Foods.

Joining together under one roof allows us to create a hub for collaborative social justice organizing and serve as a resource for the surrounding neighborhood. Though our individual missions vary, they are rooted in the collective vision of cultivating liberation, joy, and justice for all Detroiters.

The LOVE Building provides a community space that is deeply accessible and environmentally responsible. It nurtures and amplifies the art, organizing, and cultural work being done by Black, Brown, Indigenous, Queer, Trans, and Disabled Detroiters. It provides valuable resources to the surrounding neighborhood, such as legal services, healthy and affordable food, media arts programming, and a community Internet hotspot.

The purpose of this Community Benefits Agreement is to help the LOVE Building put this vision into practice.

This document reflects conversations that took place between 2019 and 2022 with the tenant partners and advisory councils of the LOVE Building.

II. Definitions

Community

The LOVE Building exists within three primary rings of community (Communities):

1. The six organizations who share the office space of the building (Tenant Partners).
2. The surrounding Core City Neighborhood (Neighborhood).
3. The wider artist-activist community of the city (Local Network).

Benefits

For The LOVE Building, “benefits” include all commitments and intentions we are setting for how this building will provide a beneficial value to the three rings of our community. These benefits include physical resources (like Internet connectivity) as well as programs such as pro bono legal services and digital media trainings. They include both short-term commitments and long-term possibilities.

Agreement

By signing this document, the LOVE Building and its six tenant partners are stating our commitment to implement the benefits described herein, **within five years** of the public opening of the LOVE Building.

We will continue to engage our Communities in a spirit of collaboration to bring the vision of this document to life. Because we know that the needs of our Communities are not static and will evolve over time, we commit to revisiting the CBA every five years and revising as needed (see Evaluation and Accountability section below).

III. Core Values

These were designed collaboratively by the six LOVE Building Tenant Partners at the beginning of the development process. We intend to keep these values at the center of all the work that we do together as the LOVE Building. We recognize that these values are not distinct, but rather integral to each other.

Visionary Organizing

We are attempting to model the liberated, joyful, and just world in which we want to live, while fighting and dismantling harmful systems at the same time. We are prioritizing the visionary organizing of Black, Brown, Indigenous, Queer, Trans, and Disabled Detroiters.

Accessibility

We are modeling an approach to accessibility that is rooted in love and hospitality, while countering the pervasive ableism of our world. We work to make our space usable and welcoming to people with disabilities and others who are often excluded from social justice organizing.

Intergenerational Wisdom

We are rooted in Detroit's legacy of activism and the wisdom of those who came before us. We value and work to create spaces where elders, children, and everyone in between can contribute their brilliance.

Creativity

We believe that liberation is a creative process. We are providing a gathering space for artists, performers, cultural producers, and all people to do the creative work of social transformation.

Community Accountability

We begin by listening. We are cultivating an environment of trust by always being transparent, self-reflective, and responsive to community needs.

Environmental Responsibility

We are committed to practices, such as solar energy and green infrastructure, that minimize our impact on the environment and cultivate healthy communities for future generations.

Place-Keeping

We are committed to honoring the legacy and present reality of Core City as a majority Black and Brown neighborhood through archiving, oral history and remembrance practices, in addition to participating in local organizing to hold new developments accountable to existing residents' needs and resisting displacement.

IV. Benefits

The benefits of the LOVE Building are organized into two main categories: Resources and Programming. Each resource and programmatic offering has two sections: short term and long term, which delineate those items that we commit to accomplish within the first five years of opening, and those that we will commit to exploring, with the hope of implementing within five to 10 years.

A. Resources

Cultural preservation

The Core City neighborhood of Detroit has a rich legacy as a Black neighborhood with thriving businesses and community development organizations, community art, and neighbors who take care of one another. This legacy persists today.

The LOVE Building will contribute to the cultural preservation of the Core City neighborhood through the following:

- Design a mural through a collaborative, community process around the theme “Ancestral Love, Moving Us Forward” that features portraits of beloved community members who have passed away. As part of this process, we will:
 - Consider long-term preservation (protection from inclement weather, etc) in the design and construction.
 - Continually add portraits to the mural on a biennial basis, through a participatory process.
 - Consult with local grief workers to add ritual to this process, hold space that will support healing and remembrance through the creation of the mural (ex: House Full of Black Women ritual art installation).
 - Create a collectively-generated image/audio description of the mural that can be played outside or made available using a QR code or something similar.

The LOVE Building will commit to explore:

- Adding interactive, textural, multimedia components to the mural (ex: audio recordings about the people represented in it that are accessible from a phone).
- Creation of an oral history archive of audio interviews (with transcriptions) and photography from both the 4731 Grand River Building and the Core City Neighborhood.
- Establishing a partnership with “The Old Westsiders” to further neighborhood historical preservation.
- Researching and establishing relationships with artists and culture creators in the Core City neighborhood.

Community gathering space

There is a strong need in the Core City neighborhood for more places where communities can gather to access resources, celebrate, build relationships, and organize.

To help meet this need, the LOVE Building will commit to the following:

- Create a multi-purpose room that can be rented by the general public for various types of community-oriented events. The multi-purpose room will include:
 - A sprung subfloor to accommodate dance and other types of fitness classes.
 - Built-in multimedia performance and livestreaming capabilities.
 - Seating to accommodate bodies of all sizes.
- Provide accessibility guidelines for use of the space and support with implementing those guidelines by providing referrals for ASL vendors, childcare providers, and other access services.
- Provide rent-free use of the multi-purpose room for Core City Block Club meetings, such as the Grand River Block Club and United Block Club Council.
- Provide discounted rental rates for Core City residents holding private events (birthday parties, baby showers, etc.).

- Work with Neighborhood Advisory Council members to determine the boundaries of Core City.

The LOVE Building will commit to explore:

- Inviting elected officials to host semi-regular “coffee hours” at the LOVE Building, during which time constituents can discuss needs and have questions answered.
- Actively supporting neighborhood organizing around future CBA processes with new developers entering the Core City neighborhood.

Digital infrastructure

Digital redlining (the practice of systematically denying low-income neighborhoods access to affordable, high-speed Internet) is a problem in the Core City neighborhood.

In order to increase access to the Internet in the short term, the LOVE Building will commit to:

- Provide a free public wifi network.
 - Circulate promotional materials within the neighborhood and around nearby bus stops to ensure the public is aware of the network (provide these in both text and Braille)
 - Host a neighborhood directory and other applications on an Intranet.
- Provide a publicly accessible computer and printer station for short-term use by the general public.
 - Provide screen-reader software on the computer.
 - Work with the Love Building Community Advisory body to determine specific usage guidelines and protocols.

In order to address digital inequity and grow community-owned communications technologies in the long term, the LOVE Building will explore:

- Partnership with the Detroit Community Technology Project to expand its Equitable Internet Initiative to the Core City Neighborhood.

Green infrastructure

The LOVE Building will pursue green infrastructure and environmental sustainability, while avoiding policies that would negatively impact disabled people (for example: straw bans or stigmatization of prepared foods).

The LOVE Building will commit to the following:

- Design a pocket park at the corner of 15th and Grand River in collaboration with advisors from our Communities, prioritizing stormwater management features, accessibility, and flexibility for a variety of community uses.
- Prioritize energy-efficiency and environmental sustainability in furniture selections and interior design.
- Provide recycling and composting services for all building tenants.

The LOVE Building commits to explore the following:

- Work with Mogo to provide a bike rental station near the LOVE Building and advocate for adaptive bikes to be included.
- Addition of a green roof.
- Creation of an off-the-grid “comfort station” / public restroom as both a demonstration project and community resource that is also highly accessible (see: [Stalled Project](#)).
- Install EV charging stations in the parking lot.
- Install [Soulardarity](#) Solar Lighting Models.
- Creation of a solar-powered charging station in conjunction with nearby bus stops.
 - Ideal charging capacity would support motorized wheelchairs in addition to small electronics.
 - Instructions for usage of the station would be available in large format print and multiple languages, including Braille.

Neighborhood directory and capacity-building

While Core City is home to a wealth of community organizations, social services, businesses, and other resources, there is not a central directory through which this information is easily accessible. Many neighborhood organizations have been historically under-resourced and are in need of capacity-building support.

The LOVE Building will commit to the following:

- Create and maintain a neighborhood directory that includes information about the location of food pantries, mutual aid programs, temporary shelter, and other human service organizations, local businesses, non-profit organizations, schools, churches, and other resources. As part of this process, the LOVE Building will commit to the following:
 - The directory will be available in multiple languages and formats for maximum accessibility.

Additionally, the LOVE Building will explore the following:

- Disseminating neighborhood information through a newsletter, website, or social media.
- Organizing volunteer days through which LOVE Building tenants to support neighborhood organizations.
- Providing pro-bono services to Core City non-profit organizations in organizational development (grantwriting, financial management, etc).

B. Programming

The six tenant partners of the LOVE Building currently lead programs that address many of the immediate neighborhood needs that were identified through the CBA process. We will continue to evolve and refine our programs to better support neighborhood needs over the next five years.

The following programs will be launched within the first five years of the LOVE Building opening:

Pro-bono legal services

Through the work of the Detroit Justice Center, the LOVE Building will provide the following:

- Returning citizens support (e.g. traffic warrants, child support)
- Property Tax Appeals/Foreclosure Prevention
- Renters Rights
- Eviction Defense
- Business/Non-Profit Development
- Consumer debt defense

Training and Education

While some classes will be fee-based, the LOVE Building will commit to provide a regular schedule of tuition-free classes. Core City residents will receive a discount on fee-based classes. Potential training and education opportunities include:

- Digital Stewards training (workforce development for IT industries)
- Worker-owned cooperatives training
- Community Land Trust training
- Digital media classes (film, audio, graphic design, web design)
 - digital accessibility best practices will be promoted within these classes.
- Nutritional and culinary arts education
- Dance and other fitness / wellness classes, with emphasis on classes that are accessible for all body types and abilities.
- Know Your Rights training

Arts & Cultural Programming

- Public film screenings, concerts, performances, and art exhibitions.
 - ASL, CART, and other access accommodations at public events

- Rentable recording studio and video production spaces.
 - Prioritizing artists who align with the LOVE Building's values.

Disability Justice Programming

When designing programming by and for disabled people, the LOVE Building will prioritize the following:

- Programming that addresses the intersections of racism and ableism, and that attends to the fact that not everyone uses the term disability as an identifier.
- BIPOC leadership in disability justice programming and organizing.
- Interaction opportunities with community elders, children, unhoused people, incarcerated or formerly-incarcerated people, and others who may be impacted by ableism but may not identify as disabled.

Specific programming provided by Detroit Disability Power, within the first two years of the LOVE Building opening include:

- Community Care Circles: gatherings for people living with disabilities, chronic pain, and chronic illness, as well as caregivers of people with disability/ chronic illness, to share stories and grow community.

Future Programming

Within the first five years of opening, the LOVE Building will explore the following additional programmatic offerings:

- Partnerships with other organizations who provide training in areas such as: food service industries, emerging green industries, skilled trades and home repair, youth mentorship, tax preparation, financial literacy, and neighborhood development, energy efficiency workshops.
- Creation of a media equipment library for rent at low cost to the community.

- Semi-regular neighborhood festivals that support oral history-telling and neighborhood identity-formation.
- Kid and teen-centered programs, potentially in collaboration with local schools.
- Educational programming such as freedom schools that provide cultural and political education to help youth understand their roots and role in society.
- Paid internships for teens to help put on the exhibitions and programming

V. Evaluation and Accountability

Upon completion of the CBA, the LOVE Building will establish a permanent Community Advisory Body (CAB), composed of representatives from the Tenant Partners, Neighborhood Advisory Council, Art & Archive Council, and Disability Justice and Access Advisory Council.

The CAB will meet quarterly beginning in 2023 to advise on various aspects of the implementation of the CBA.

Before the end of 2027, the LOVE Building will engage a third party to conduct an evaluation of its success in fulfilling the commitments of the Community Benefits Agreement and produce a public report with its findings.

Following that evaluation, the LOVE Building will lead a process to reassess the needs of its Communities and revise the CBA as needed.

VI. Signatories & Advisors

Tenant partner signatories:

Allied Media Projects
Detroit Justice Center
Detroit Disability Power
Detroit Narrative Agency
Detroit Community Technology Project
Paradise Natural Foods

Advisors:

Neighborhood Advisory Council Phases 1 & 2

- Andy Chae
- Bruno V
- Cornetta Lane
- Elanor Parnell
- Jerry Martin
- Laura Amtower
- Lillie Bell Skinner
- Nefertiti Harris
- Rico Moore
- Rod Byrd
- Tony Johnson
- Alake Williams
- Latia Leonard
- Daniel Washington
- Rayvon Williams
- Georgia Watson

- Karen Hopes
- Edwynn Bell

Art and Archive Advisory Council

- Gloria “Aneb” House
- Erik Howard
- Halima Cassells
- RoseMarie Wilson

Disability Justice and Access Advisor:

- Aimi Hamraie