

Saunteel Jenkins for Detroit City Council
New Leadership. New Results.

CAMPAIGN PLATFORM SUMMARY

Restoring Honor, Integrity and Professionalism

The upcoming election is the chance for Detroit to elect effective leaders who possess innate qualities needed to move this city forward. Any effective leader must have vision, competence, courage, integrity and the ability to communicate/inspire others.

Vision is a clear picture of the great things possible for this city. Competence should be a minimum requirement for anyone in a leadership role, including elected officials. The pervasive dysfunction within city government, the debilitating economy, and the high crime rate demand competence.

It is not possible to address the overwhelming issues that plague this city in one year. Real, lasting change is never expedient. But without leadership the change we need will never come.

I would fight to implement a structured training for new council members that includes public policy experts on the following: the City Charter; Robert's Rules of Order, the parliamentary procedure that is *supposed* to govern meetings; budgeting, including individual office budgeting and the State Uniform Budgeting Act; urban planning and tax abatements; public safety; and other topics council members need to understand in order to be effective legislators.

Moving forward requires leaders who possess analytical and problem solving skills. We need leaders who make decisions based on sound principles and information, not emotion and personal gain.

Courage will also be required to make the crucial decisions that lie ahead. Detroit is a city built to accommodate two million people. Today with less than one million residents the structural and service delivery systems have changed very little.

Only revolutionary change and innovation will turn Detroit around. It will mandate sacrifice on many levels. Assistance and input from multiple sources in and outside of the city will be imperative. Therefore, the ability to inspire people to act will be a must.

Now is the time to begin rebuilding a new and improved Detroit. If elected I will work to mobilize people to accept the challenges we face and confront those challenges with new approaches, new priorities and new expectations for city government.

I will be a leader who inspires people by walking the walk. I'll provide *New Leadership and New Results* with a strong and consistent demonstration of competence, courage and integrity.

Keeping Our Children Safe

Reducing the violence that plagues our community and destroys too many of our youth will require a comprehensive set of programs that address several causes and risk factors for violence, and it will require a long-term commitment at every level.

While the police department must play a major role in the solution, they cannot do it all alone. Violence prevention must be addressed in the same way that many other public health issues are addressed.

The campaign to reduce lung cancer does not focus on treatment alone. The campaign has been effective with prevention by educating people on the dangers of smoking and working to change attitudes. The goal is to get those who smoke to quit and make it unpopular for those who don't smoke to start. Violence prevention has to be approached in the same manner.

One of my first priorities as a council member would be to convene a task force on youth violence and education. The goal of the task force would be to research and implement the following:

1. *School-based Initiatives:* Programs can be very effective for multiple reasons. For starters, there is a captive audience. Teaching students conflict resolution skills to prevent violent outcomes is crucial. Parents can be included to teach, as well as learn these important skills. The City can partner with DPS to provide safe after-school activities to keep kids off the streets. For each dollar spent on afterschool programs approximately three dollars is spent on Wayne County Juvenile Facility. We have to spend the dollars up front to reduce the likelihood of incarceration on the back end. Kids who participate in afterschool programs are more likely to graduate high school and attend college; less likely to experiment with drugs, less likely to experiment with sex and less likely to become a teen parent.
2. *Faith-based Initiatives:* According to the U.S. Census Bureau, over 83% of the population claims a religious affiliation. Therefore, the faith-based community can be very effective in getting the message out. Character building can be taught through youth ministries that target at-risk youth. Many churches have the resources to create "street-outreach" programs that go where children are, instead of waiting for the children to come to them.
3. *Detroit Police Department:* The police department can help reduce youth crime and violence by strengthening the gang squad and community policing program. It has been reported that under the Archer administration the gang squad was very effective in reducing violence against youth. There was a three year period when no one under 16 years old was killed through gun violence. Community policing can offer training for neighborhood watch programs and block clubs to help residents to teach them crime prevention strategies. Increasing police presence by placing mini-stations in schools, recreation centers, and other community organizations can help reduce crime and make the police more accessible to the citizens. It also creates an atmosphere where crime is not tolerated. Last, but not least, gun buy-back programs help by reducing the number of guns on the streets.
4. *Political Leaders:* Political leaders can assist in all of the above by making violence prevention a public policy priority. They can provide funding and leverage their

influence to spread the message through grassroots and media campaigns. Keeping our children safe should not be used as a campaign catchphrase; it must be a major priority for all who have the power to make a difference. If elected, I will use every tool at my disposal to keep our children safe.

Detroit we have to take a stand. Losing one child to violence is one child too many. It is time for the entire city to come together and send the message that we care about the safety of our children. We must secure their future and the future of this city by doing everything in our control to stop the senseless violence.

Creating and Retaining Jobs

Mayor Coleman Young used to say, “There is nothing wrong with Detroit that a good job for everyone wouldn’t fix.” Many of the problems our city faces are a direct or indirect result of poverty and unemployment.

To begin to address many of our problems, City Council must help create and retain jobs in Detroit. I would start by creating an environment that encourages investment and welcomes new business and the continued growth of businesses already operating here in the city.

We often hear politicians speak about the need for jobs, then turn around and tell business owners we don’t need them here because they don’t live in the city, or they don’t look like “us”. Government jobs on every level of government continue to disappear as budget constraints force workforce reductions. The reality is we cannot offer jobs to citizens, without having the businesses that create the jobs.

I would work to create an atmosphere at the council table that welcomes business through professional interactions focused on the cost/benefit analysis of proposals brought to council—not petty personal issues that simply serve as a distraction in the process and a deterrent for businesses. I would also have a member of my staff dedicated to walking new and existing businesses through the city processes.

I would work to create more renaissance and neighborhood enterprise zones that offer attractive tax incentives for businesses who locate in Detroit. I would also draft an ordinance that would allow businesses with viable business plans to attain city owned properties for one dollar.

I would work to create partnerships with local colleges and the city’s Workforce Development Department to provide training in areas where growth is expected. Some of those areas include: Alternative energy; Motion Picture industries; and Healthcare.

Creating jobs in the city will also require a combined cohesive effort between the City Council and the Mayor. I will work with the Mayor to send a message that Detroit is open for business. Those who have a viable plan to invest in our city that will result in

increased employment opportunities for our residents and increased tax revenues are welcomed.