

March 19, 2026

Via email to Ms. Jenna Brooker
Bridge Detroit

Dear Ms. Brooker:

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to your list of questions. When *Bridge Detroit* published “*Detroit’s approval of concrete mixing plant questioned*” on May 21, 2024, we provided the enclosed letter in response to the article, but we did not see it – or even part of it – printed in *Bridge Detroit*. We provide it once again because it includes information responsive to some of the questions you have sent to us for your next article about Kronos.

Community Support. Your emailed list of questions refers to “residents” who allegedly have made complaints about Kronos. We have over 500 letters signed by Detroit citizens living within one mile of the plant supporting Kronos’ investment in Cadillac Heights. Additionally, six churches in close proximity to the plant have signed similar letters supporting Kronos. Citizens and churches in Detroit support the job-creating investments we are making, recognize our active involvement in the community, and support the road closures discussed later in this letter.

Final City approval of those road closures, which has not yet occurred, will allow us to undertake the additional improvements you mention in your list of questions. Those improvements will represent an additional \$7,500,000 investment in Cadillac Heights on top of the \$10,000,000 we have already invested. The plant will not move from its current location and we have no plans to increase output at Kronos. We are proud to invest in Cadillac Heights and we not aware of any private investment of this size in this area over the past several decades. We believe this type of private investment should be cheered – not criticized – and 500+ people who live around Kronos agree.

Community Engagement. We regularly participate in community events throughout District 3. We have hosted several job fairs, prioritizing Detroit residents for high-wage, Union positions that pay over \$33 per hour plus benefits. Several Detroiters have already been hired through these efforts. We partnered with the Detroit Police’s 11th Precinct for “Halloween in the D” and the Haunted Garage and Hill event where we donated food and helped pass out candy to families. We distributed approximately 500 turkeys throughout the neighborhood via community groups. We provided food and refreshments to the Community for National Night Out. We partnered with several local churches, community groups, and the 11th Precinct for a Veterans Day Celebration providing food and refreshments. Next month, we are partnering with the 11th Precinct to make and distribute Easter baskets.

Community Safety. We participate in the Detroit Police Department’s Project Green Light Detroit program. Cameras at the plant feed directly into the 11th Precinct to enhance neighborhood safety. Our private blight removal efforts have eliminated vacant and blighted houses. The 11th Precinct reports zero complaints about the Kronos Plant. Local residents have told us that they are happy to see the activity our plant brings and that the lighting and cameras have positively impacted community safety.

Kronos is legally compliant and fully permitted. As you know, but did not mention until the 38th paragraph of your last article on Kronos, the Kronos plant is a by-right use under the City's zoning ordinance. As discussed more fully below, according to the City of Detroit and EGLE, it is fully permitted and compliant with all legal requirements.

No concrete crushing has ever occurred at the Kronos facility. The plant has a BSEED-approved fugitive dust plan and continuous PM 10 air monitoring. Data from the continuous air monitoring is provided to BSEED. There has never been an exceedance. The plant purchased a water truck to suppress dust in 2024. We regularly perform and document sweeping and watering. The plant itself has a high-efficiency 12,500 cubic foot dust vacuum system. To our knowledge, no other concrete plant in Detroit has a full-time watering truck, PM 10 monitoring, or the dust vacuum system installed at Kronos. All of these mitigation measures exceed City of Detroit requirements. Any community complaints to BSEED or EGLE are promptly investigated, responded to and resolved. In fact, a BSEED official was quoted in *Bridge Detroit* on April 9, 2025: "I have not been able to substantiate any emissions when we have gone for inspections".

City Law Department Memo – Kronos is a fully legal operation and compliant with City Ordinances. On October 30, 2025, the City of Detroit Law Department issued a legal opinion regarding Kronos' operation. The question presented was "Is there any authority available to the City to pursue closure of Kronos Concrete?" The answer was: *"There is no authority to pursue closure of Kronos Concrete because its use is permitted under applicable zoning regulation, and it is operating in compliance with City ordinances."* The Law Department's memo further recognized: *"Kronos is properly zoned for its use"* and *"Kronos is properly permitted"* and *"Kronos is not in violation of any City ordinances"*.

The Law Department's memo also described BSEED's continuous visits to Kronos, and that: (a) those visits have not resulted in any violations related to fugitive dust, (b) Kronos is following its fugitive dust plan, and (c) air monitoring near the facility shows no elevated levels:

An Environmental Specialist visits the site three times a week and has not observed a violation related to fugitive dust. Kronos has provided a fugitive dust plan, which it appears to be following. An air monitor near the facility has shown no elevated levels.

EGLE Inspection Report – Kronos facility is fully compliant. On November 14, 2025, EGLE inspected the Kronos facility. It observed "No fugitive dust was observed from the facility during the initial monitoring." EGLE also noted that Kronos met the following requirements: (1) not producing more than 200,000 yards of concrete per year; (2) use of a drop chute; (3) all cement handling operations use dust control measures; (4) all production records maintained; (5) proper notice to AQD District Supervisor of operations was timely provided; (6) plant is more than 250' away from nearest residence; (7) proper implementation of fugitive dust plan; (8) proper loading of concrete trucks; (9) proper use of various strategies to control fugitive dust; (10) proper clean-up of spills; (11) proper maintenance of records regarding dust suppression; (12) proper stockpiling of materials; (13) proper watering of stockpiles; and (14) proper site watering records. EGLE

concluded: “*Visual inspections of the Kronos site and documentation from Kronos provide support that the site is active with mitigating fugitive dust.*”

We know Kronos receives heavier scrutiny than any other concrete plant in Detroit. The quotes from City officials, the City’s Legal Memo, and the EGLE Inspection report prove that Kronos properly operates, controls fugitive dust, and is a good neighbor. It has a water truck, high tech vacuum systems, and continuous air monitoring showing no exceedances. *You should mention all of these facts in your article along with the BSEED quotes, the City’s Legal Memo and the EGLE Inspection Report, which all state on the record that Kronos is compliant.*

Kronos supports public and private infrastructure development. It is impossible to build roads, sewers, sidewalks, neighborhoods, affordable housing, solar fields, hospitals, schools, parks, community centers, and virtually every other kind of permanent structure that improves peoples’ lives without concrete. Here are some projects Kronos has supplied: Ralph C. Wilson Centennial Park, Michigan Central Station, Campus Martius, Eastern Market, Michigan State Research Center, Second Canaan Baptist Church, and sidewalks around the Capuchin Soup Kitchen. In addition, we are a primary supplier for the City of Detroit’s Street improvement program and the City of Detroit’s Sidewalk improvement program. In terms of specific projects in District 3, we have supplied concrete to the North East Water Treatment Plant, Detroit City Airport (multiple projects), lead service line replacements, City of Detroit Alley Reconstruction, Caramagno Foods Freezer, Sherwood Tower, Stevenson Pump Station, Castle Solar Park, ITC Caniff Substation, Earmark Watermain, and the Caniff Street Reconstruction, among others.

Moreover, concrete is a perishable material. In summertime temperatures, concrete should be poured within 45 minutes from when it is loaded into a concrete truck. Otherwise, its quality begins to quickly degrade. High quality infrastructure projects require concrete plants in close proximity.

Your article should also mention that absent concrete production facilities like Kronos in the City of Detroit, not only would there be less jobs and less City tax revenue, but the cost of both public and private infrastructure development would go up. Put another way, private investors would be less likely to invest in Detroit, and taxpayers would pay far more for publicly-funded infrastructure.

History of the property. Crown Enterprises, LLC or its predecessors have owned a contiguous 16.9-acre parcel in Cadillac Heights since the mid-1960s. That property was operated as a truck terminal until late 2018. The plant sits on that parcel. The truck traffic associated with the previous trucking use was substantially higher than the traffic associated with the concrete plant use today. Kronos has far less truck traffic than the truck terminal and it only operates from late March to early December. The rest of the year it is closed. During the operating season, the plant operates within all of City of Detroit ordinances, including ordinances regarding hours of operation.

In 2019, as part of a Property Exchange Agreement with the City of Detroit, Crown obtained 2.6 acres consisting exclusively of tax-foreclosed, blighted houses or vacant parcels. Crown, in compliance with City of Detroit ordinances, demolished the blighted houses immediately upon receipt of demolition permits. After 2019, Crown has acquired an additional 3.92 acres through open market transactions, typically paying far above market value for the additional property.

Almost every single lot Crown has acquired within Cadillac Heights is zoned for industrial or business use. Our property acquisition is and was designed to acquire the land bounded by McNichols, Moran and Jerome to provide buffering around the plant.

We understand that you intend to criticize the Property Exchange Agreement, which allowed Crown to obtain 2.6 acres from the City. But rather than criticize it, you should ask your readers whether it helped achieve a positive outcome. The positive outcome is a \$10+ million job creating, tax-revenue generating, infrastructure-supporting investment. And we intend to continue investing in the site.

Kronos has not made the improvements because the City has not issued all necessary approvals. Kronos has plans to upgrade the site. But it needs City approval to commence the work. Kronos has paid a right-of-way vacation fee. As of today, the application has not yet been approved by the City. We did plan to move the plant to the west, but that plan has changed. The plant will not move and we have no plans to expand its current output. Upon the City processing the road vacations – which will remove the cost of road maintenance from the City and add the property to the City property tax rolls – we will be legally permitted to make the investment and improvements identified in the letter we sent to you on May 22, 2024, and which is enclosed here again. Those improvements will include securing the entire area bounded by McNichols, Jerome and Moran to protect it from illegal dumping and trespassing, green buffering around most of the plant site, permanent, opaque fencing around the remainder, tree plantings, stormwater upgrades, and repairing the sidewalks around the facility.

The Property Maintenance Agreement (“PMA”) eliminates blight. The intent of the City’s Property Maintenance Code is to eliminate blight, not to issue tickets. The PMA efficiently effectuates that purpose. First, Crown identified all properties it or its affiliates own in the City. Second, it includes an agreed-upon maintenance interval for the properties. Third, it classifies those properties as either subject to a certificate of compliance, slated for demolition, or vacant without structures. The agreement maps out a protocol for inspections and the issuance of certificates of compliance, and provides that the City will provide Crown with notice of potential blight violations under the Property Maintenance Code and an opportunity to cure them. Crown, when notified, responds within an agreed upon time frame eliminating the potential violation and providing evidence of the same to the City. Most blight violations occur when third parties dump trash or leave inoperable vehicles on vacant property. Crown clears the trash and has the vehicles towed at its expense. Although the PMA, to our knowledge, was the first agreement of its kind, we understand that other landowners with significant holdings in the City have entered into similar agreements with the City as the City strives to eliminate blight.

Hercules Materials Holdings is a growing business that currently employs 200+ people in Michigan. We understand from your reporting that you do not cover job creation or building infrastructure. But we think that the Hercules story is exciting. In five years, we have grown to one of the largest ready-mix concrete suppliers in Michigan and we intend to keep on growing, employing people, and continuing to help build neighborhoods, parks, hospitals, schools, roads and churches.

Hercules was founded in the spring of 2020, after the Property Exchange Agreement, to provide ready-mix concrete through affiliated plant companies to related entities. Its first plant was Hercules Concrete, which was located just east of the Ambassador Bridge. Hercules Concrete supported the complete re-decking of the Ambassador Bridge. Thereafter, in response to market demand for ready-mix concrete, the decision was made to expand the business to serve third parties.

Since that time, we have established six concrete plants. Plants are located in Detroit (2), Centerline, Pontiac, Ypsilanti, Marshall and Novi (to be opened soon). Today this group of plants taken together is the first or second largest ready-mix concrete operation in Southeast Michigan. During the peak season, these plants employ over 250 employees, most of them in good-paying Union jobs. Over 20% of our employees are residents of Detroit. The average hourly wage for plant workers currently exceeds \$33 per hour plus benefits. Concrete from our facilities literally helps build billions of dollars of infrastructure – including roads, sidewalks, parks, hospitals, and schools.

Conclusion. We are in the neighborhood every day. We know, and we suspect you know, there are a very small number of people who are criticizing us. In fact, we have received threats from people indicating that they would complain to media outlets if we did not buy their property. Most of the people against us do not even live near Kronos. But we also know the work we have done in the Community and that the vast majority of the Community around Kronos support the jobs, investment and infrastructure the plant supports.

Sincerely,


Ken Dobson