

# Baltimore Squeegee Collaborative Working Action Plan

## Historical Overview

Dating back as early as the 1980's, Baltimore has grappled with a persistent challenge with youth panhandling – or squeegee workers, that dart across high traffic intersections washing windshields to earn money. It is impossible to look at “squeegeeing” outside of the full context of the systemic issues that force young people to street corners to try to make money. In fact, structural racism guarantees a life of disparities for boys and young men of color. Baltimore is known as the birthplace of Redlining. 26 years ahead of the first Federal policies making it legal to deny Blacks opportunities to live in specific communities, Baltimore passed Ordinance 610 in 1911. This ordinance created densely populated underfunded and underdeveloped communities of Black people. The effects of redlining are still present 100 years later today. Over the past 40 years, the City has developed multiple plans, deployed a series of strategies aimed at curbing squeegeeing – yet it persists.

## What is the squeegee collaborative?

Mayor Brandon M. Scott convened the ‘Squeegee Collaborative’ – a cross-section of youth, business, community and government leaders to develop a city-wide, public, private and community-based response to the challenges and opportunities squeegeeing presents to the City of Baltimore. With an eye towards getting to the root causes that drive young people to corners, the collaborative met with nonprofit providers, legal experts, racial equity leaders, squeegee workers.

The goal of the Squeegee Collaborative is to eliminate the need to squeegee in Baltimore by creating positive pathways to work, school, entrepreneurship and support services for squeegee workers, while providing enforcement that balances the public safety interests of squeegee workers and motorists. The Collaborative developed a series of recommendations across a set of key domains, you can read the full plan at <https://aamebaltimore.com/squeegee-collaborative/>

## Squeegee Collaborative Recommendations



### Support Services

#### Overview

- We will institute a network of providers that have deep knowledge and connection to communities aligned to young people who squeegee.
- Case workers will serve as Navigators for youth who squeegee, and will be provided with a vetted, comprehensive list of programs, partners, resources, etc.



### Accountability

#### Overview

- Self Regulation: an agreed upon code of conduct for squeegee activity.
- School-aged Youth: increase outreach to engage under-18 workers.
- Driver Accountability: Institute actions for drivers that disrupt traffic when engaging with panhandlers
- Disallowed Areas: High-traffic areas where individuals are not allowed to squeegee
- Enforce law regarding criminal activity



### Governance, Data and Measurement

#### Overview

The Squeegee Collaborative will function as a formalized subgroup within the governance of the Boys and Young Men Of Color initiative. The leadership team of the collaborative will feature a hybrid model, consisting of representatives from the Squeegee Worker Leadership Team, Government, Non-Profit, and the Private Sector.

# The Squeegee Collaborative at a Glance

## What are we solving for?

The Squeegee Collaborative was brought together by Mayor Scott in the Summer of 2022 to solve for the systemic failures that have pushed Baltimore's young men and boys of color to squeegeeing cars at high-traffic intersections as a form of supporting themselves and their families. This is not only unsafe for both youth and motorists, but exemplary of the inequities that have been perpetuated for decades in Baltimore.

## How are we going to solve it?

We will address these issues at their roots and solve for reasons that youth have resorted to squeegeeing to support their livelihood. We are building a network of coordinated care services that will remedy each of the areas that are currently insufficient for boys and young men of color in Baltimore. This includes:

- Education
- Workforce
- Entrepreneurship
- Recreation
- Mentoring
- Counseling
- Specialized Services
- Family Services

By guiding our youth and creating new pathways for them to be successful, we will build a value proposition that is far more beneficial to pursue than squeegeeing. Our care network will include dedicated Navigators that will guide and support our boys and young men of color through the entire process of registering and receiving care and support.

## Who is going to facilitate this care?

Our coordinated care network will be led by the Mayor's Office of African American Male Engagement (MOAAME) and supported by Baltimore's vast network of nonprofit agencies, philanthropic businesses, government entities, the community, and a leadership team of youth themselves. We will be constantly vetting and evolving our services as needed to best support the youth in Baltimore.

## How will we implement accountability?

Our first priority is to solve for the safety and well-being of youth who squeegee. We have created a 5-pronged accountability protocol that includes Self-Regulation, addressing School-Aged Youth, Driver Accountability, Disallowed Zones, and Criminal Activity. Our goal is to hold all parties accountable and prevent youth from being encapsulated in the criminal justice system whenever possible.

## How will this initiative be resourced?

The Squeegee Collaborative will include resources from a variety of sources, existing and new. For services, the city is fortunate to have a large number of amazing resource providers that would be able to provide a range of services. Additionally, the city will both realign existing resources while also using new resources for sections of the plan. Finally, local businesses and local and national philanthropy will also be tapped to assist in specific aspects of the plan.

## Who will oversee this initiative?

The Squeegee Collaborative will become a formalized subset of Mayor Scott's Boys and Young Men of Color initiative. The governing board will consist of members from Government, Business, Nonprofit, and Youth Leaders with squeegeeing experience.

## When will this take place?

We are currently in the process of ramping up services, vetting care providers, and installing the infrastructure that will expand upon MOAAME's current capacity. By creating a care network inclusive of all parts of Baltimore's ecosystem, we create accountability to find the best solution in every direction possible. We are immediately taking steps to ensure this plan is sustainable, equitable, and successful for years to come.