



COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

THE JOHN A. WILSON BUILDING
1350 PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE, NW
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20004

KENYAN R. McDUFFIE
Councilmember, Ward 5
Chair Pro Tempore
Chair, Committee on Business and
Economic Development

Committee Member
Finance and Revenue
Labor and Workforce Development
Transportation and the Environment
Recreation and Youth Affairs

February 28, 2019

The Honorable Muriel Bowser
Mayor of the District of Columbia
1350 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW, Suite 300
Washington, DC 20002

Re: Fiscal Year 2020 Budget Proposal

Dear Mayor Bowser:

As you prepare your Fiscal Year 2020 (“FY20”) proposed budget, I would like to highlight a few Ward 5 priorities and request that you consider funding them in FY20.

Last year, your Fair Shot budget made critical investments essential to Ward 5 residents such as supporting \$20 million in funding for a new Lamond-Riggs library; \$500,000 for new Main Streets and Clean Teams along South Dakota/Riggs Road and Bladensburg; and \$300,000 for the design and creation of a statue of native Washingtonian and civil rights leader, Charles Hamilton Houston.

Our Ward 5 FY20 budget is about making the District equitable and inclusive for all. From investing in affordable housing to keep residents in their homes to expanding behavioral health and trauma informed services, together, our Ward 5 FY20 budget requests moves the District towards real achievable and equitable results.

Further, our Ward 5 budget represents feedback gathered from residents during my Ward 5 Budget Engagement Forum, and consideration of over 300 hours of Advisory Neighborhood Commission (ANC) and civic association meetings.

1. Affordable Housing

Affordable housing remains one of the highest priorities of Ward 5 residents. With your leadership and the support of the Council, we have made critical investments in the Housing Production Trust Fund, adjusted amounts for HPAP, and other important steps to ensure housing affordability. However, the *Washington Post* just reported that “[i]ncome inequality is rising so fast... that data can’t keep up”. Therefore, we must do more to address the city’s affordable housing shortage.

The Schedule H Homeowner and Renter Property Tax Credit is a critical tool to help low-, moderate-income, and senior residents cope when they face substantial tax burdens. In fact, the last time the Council made adjustments to Schedule H (2013-2014), the benefits were immediate, with the number of households claiming Schedule H tripling. Therefore, I am requesting that you increase the maximum Schedule H credit from \$1,000 to \$1,500, increase the income eligibility to \$50,000, and simplify the application process.

2. Education Resources - STEM Funding for McKinley Tech; Behavioral Health; and Trauma Informed Services

- *STEM Funding*

A significant number of Ward 5 residents reported education as their top budget priority. I am requesting that you prioritize funding to support additional funds to expand McKinley Tech's Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) Program. By 2020, 50 percent of all new jobs will require at least a bachelor's degree or above, and nearly 60 percent will require at least some form of education and training beyond high school. However, 60,000 adult African American DC residents have not finished high school.

McKinley Tech is one of five specialized secondary schools in the District. McKinley is the only STEM high school in the District. As such, the school is in dire need of additional funding to support and expand its Biotechnical, Engineering, and IT and programs and to encourage participation by investing in scholarships in STEM fields. Just last year, five graduates from McKinley made national headlines by gaining acceptance into Morehouse College and receiving scholarships from the United Negro College Fund. These students intend to major in computer science and hope to bring more people of color to STEM-related fields.

- *Mental Health Support*

I am requesting that your FY20 budget include funding to ensure every DCPS school has adequate mental health supports and trauma-informed training for both students and teachers, staff, and administrators. Black students are nearly seven times more likely to be suspended compared with to their white counterparts.¹ What is needed is not more discipline but a comprehensive approach to help students with challenges faced both inside and out of school. Funding would be used to train school staff in trauma-informed and restorative practices, provide students with access to trained mental health professionals such as Trauma Informed Coordinators, within their respective schools, and ensure every school is equipped with high-quality, evidence-based social emotional learning programs. I am also requesting that you invest in social emotional learning (SEL) approaches within every school in DCPS.

3. Transportation and Infrastructure Improvements

I request significant investment in transportation resources including funding for sidewalk repairs and renovations, expanded bus service, and bike lanes. I am requesting that you prioritize reliable,

¹ District of Columbia Office of the State Superintendent of Education, "State of Discipline: 2015-2016 School Year", page 20, accessed on February 26, 2019 at https://osse.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/osse/page_content/attachments/2015-16%20OSSE%20Discipline%20Report%20Updated%20Jan%206%202017.pdf.

frequent, and expanded bus service particularly for the B8/B9; H6; 83 and 86. We have heard from numerous residents including representatives from the Bicycle Advisory Council requesting funds for more protected bike lanes, particularly across New York Avenue, North Capitol Street, and Rhode Island Avenue. I also heard from many residents requesting that funds be prioritized to improve safety on the MBT through investing in improved lighting, working call boxes, and the installation of cameras.

- *Dave Thomas Circle*

For decades, the intersection of Florida Avenue and New York Avenue, commonly referred to as “Dave Thomas Circle” has posed a traffic nightmare for residents and visitors alike. It is no secret that this is a failing intersection that is unsafe for pedestrians, cyclists, and motorists. Therefore, I am requesting funds to cover the cost of eminent domain, engineering, and final design phases that addresses pedestrian and bike space and slowing automobile traffic on New York Avenue.

- *Decking Over of North Capitol Project*

I am requesting an initial investment of \$40 million to support an initiative to deck over North Capitol Street from V Street to Seaton Place with a pedestrian and bike-friendly greenway. Many Ward 5 residents noted pedestrian safety as their top infrastructure-related concern. The Catholic University of America Graduate School of Architecture and Planning conducted a corridor study titled, “The New North Capitol Street,” which examined the prospective connectivity, public realm, and neighborhood character improvements that would bridge together the Stronghold, Bloomingdale, Eckington, and other nearby neighborhoods.

North Capitol Street is a major artery in DC that runs North to South, and provides key access to Union Station and the Capitol building. Like many arteries in DC, urban planning changed the makeup of North Capitol Street during the 1960s and 1970s, creating scars along the landscape as portions of the streets were suppressed below the ground plane to surpass east and west connectors. This left a neighborhood with unfriendly pedestrian access through service roads, minimized sidewalk widths, and unattractive disruptive views to the Capitol. This led to many parts of the corridor being neglected and segregated from the overall cities vision of public space and connectivity.

The neglect and segregation have resulted in divides over the past few decades affecting zoning and business development. While specific areas within the aforementioned neighborhoods have experienced intense gentrification, the goal is to promote stable growth while creating an identity that does not threaten existing residents. The decking-over project would promote “stable, inclusive, multi-racial/multi-cultural neighborhood, and build community identity and sense of place through civic engagement, neighborhood history, and design.”²

² Bloomingdale Civic Association meeting minutes – September 2018, <http://www.bloomingdalecivicassociation.org/uncategorized/bloomingdale-civic-association-meeting-minutes-september-2018/>

- *Circulator Bus*

I request that your FY20 proposed budget includes \$500,000 in funds to fully establish a dedicated, rapid bus line along New York Avenue from the NoMa-Gallaudet University Metrorail station to the Shops at Dakota Crossing, which would include stops at the Union Market area and Ivy City/Hecht Warehouse area. The New York Avenue corridor has evolved into a vibrant area with new housing and businesses, including retail, restaurants, and distilleries. While residents living around Union Market and neighborhoods such as Ft. Lincoln, Woodridge, Arboretum, Ivy City, and Eckington enjoy the new amenities, they frequently lament about the challenges of accessing the area. The lack of public transportation options along New York Avenue limits residents' ability to commute to and from work as well as restrict opportunities for visitors to patronize area businesses. As you are aware, the businesses are doing their best to continue operating, but will have a very difficult time continuing to do so without help from the District to create reliable transportation to and from this area.

- *Arboretum Bridge and Trail Project*

I request significant capital investment in the Arboretum Bridge and Trail Project. The Arboretum Bridge and Trail Project is a key route being designed as part of the Anacostia River Trail (ART) network, which will be 28-miles long once fully developed. Funds will be used to provide the missing passageway between the Anacostia waterfront and the U.S. National Arboretum, which garners over 500,000 annual visitors. Ultimately, this investment will be ADA compliant and will improve access for users including pedestrians, bicyclists, kayakers, canoers, rowers, fishers and wildlife observers.

- *Funding for Direct Bus Transportation for Lamond-Riggs Students Traveling to the New North Middle School*

Ward 5 students living in the Lamond-Riggs neighborhood are zoned for Ward 4 schools, including the New North Middle School that will open on the Coolidge campus in the 2019-2020 school year. Parents at LaSalle-Backus Education Campus have been advocating to make sure students in the neighborhood will have direct bus access to the new middle school campus that will be approximately 1.5 miles away. We know that students at other schools such as Deal Middle School have a special bus that provides public transportation for that school. Likewise, when McKinley re-opened, 9th graders were bussed from the metro to the school, and we know that students in schools that are in swing spaces are also bussed. Accordingly, there is ample precedent for prioritizing the safety of the city's young students. Without this option, parents may look for other school options in the neighborhood that are safe and accessible, and the New North Middle School will not receive the robust support from in-bound residents that it should. Therefore, I am asking for the support in providing funding to make sure there is safe, affordable, and direct bus access for Ward 4 and 5 students in Lamond-Riggs to the New North Middle School.

- *Funding for Implementation of the Fort Totten Access & Mobility Study Recommendations*

DDOT completed an access and mobility study for the Fort Totten metro station in 2011. This study set forth a number of useful recommendations to improve pedestrian/bicycle access to and vehicular traffic around Fort Totten metro station.

A tremendous amount of development has taken place in the neighborhood since 2011. I request that funding be allocated for DDOT to develop a public implementation plan in the next fiscal year for the recommendations provided in this study and that it be updated to the extent necessary to reflect development in the neighborhood.

4. *Environmental*

- *W Street Trash Transfer Station*

In discussing top budget priorities around the environment, many residents identified environmental clean-up as their top priority. Closing the W Street Trash Transfer Station has long been a priority for Ward 5 residents, particularly those living within the Brentwood neighborhood. This past fall, with your support, the Council took important steps towards addressing this environmental justice issue by moving emergency legislation so that the District can complete the acquisition and construction of the new facilities before the District runs out of storage space. Acquisition of the W Street Site will allow the District to construct and operate a facility or multiple facilities to warehouse and store the equipment, records, property and supplies of numerous District agencies in a District-owned facility. I request \$80 million in funds be allocated in your FY20 proposed budget for the acquisition, construction, and operations of the future facility.

- *Funding for Ward 5 Environmental Studies*

I am requesting funding to support the funding of air quality survey and a storm water management/hydrology study. Given the abundance of industrial uses throughout Ward 5 in neighborhoods such as Woodridge South, Brentwood, Ivy City, Gateway, Ft. Lincoln, Arboretum, V. Street, Eckington, and Langdon, neighbors frequently complain of paint particles, the decrease in air quality due to fumes from the aforementioned industrial uses, and the high incidents of asthma rates throughout the ward. Ward 5, particularly Woodridge and Ft. Lincoln have suffered constant flooding due to poor drainage and other issues.

5. *Capital Improvements/Investment in Parks and Rec., Centers*

- *DCHA Park at WV Ave & Mt. Olivet*

Ward 5 residents identified park improvements as a priority for capital improvements. The small park at the corner of West Virginia Avenue and Mt. Olivet Street is the only existing resident-scaled park space in Ivy City. This park is at a key location between two communities and has the potential to be a significant place that is not only a green amenity but also a bridge between the two neighborhoods. Although the park is owned and maintained by the District of Columbia Housing Authority (DCHA), only limited access is permitted.

These two spaces are critical to providing open and green amenities for Ivy City. As such, investments to enhancing programming and quality must be prioritized. Therefore, I am requesting funds be allocated in FY20 to activating the park by increasing access by improving pedestrian connections, fencing, and landscaping.

- *Langdon Dog Park*

Please provide funds to support the installation of new lighting at Langdon Dog Park. At 11,500 square feet, Langdon Dog Park is among the largest dog parks in the District. The Dog Park provides a convenient and accessible place for these many dog-owning neighbors to meet, build relationships, and strengthen their communities.

- *Harry Thomas Rec., Center Redevelopment and Theodore Hagans Cultural Center*

I request significant capital investment in Ward 5 educational resources including funding for renovations of the Harry Thomas Recreational Center. I would also like to ensure that funding for Fort Lincoln Park and Theodore Hagans Cultural Center remains on track. This includes ensuring that the \$5 million to renovate Fort Lincoln Park and the \$13 million for modernization of the existing facility slated for the projects in FY19 remains available.

- *Thurgood Marshall Elementary School*

The next request represents an intersection of community concerns across several high priority areas including public safety, health and human services, and education. I am requesting funding for the Department of General Services (DGS) to properly secure the Thurgood Marshall Elementary School, located at 3100 Fort Lincoln Road. On January 7, I wrote to Keith Anderson, Acting Director of DGS outlining my concerns about the site being vacant and unsecured. Not only is the site an eyesore, it has also become dangerous, unsafe, as well as a public nuisance in the Fort Lincoln community. I indicated that I had received numerous complaints from residents regarding individuals entering and removing government property from the school as well as homeless individuals seeking shelter and setting up living quarters inside the school. Until a more permanent solution is implemented, I requested that DGS complete the following tasks:

1. Ensure that all individuals have exited the property;
2. Collaborate with the Department of Human Services (DHS) to identify safe housing for homeless individuals;
3. Secure the site by locking doors and placing a fence around it; and
4. Posting “No Trespassing” signs prominently around the building.

On February 5, 2019, I received a letter from Director Anderson indicating that DGS conducted a sweep of the school as well as welded shut all unsecured doors. Further, DGS committed to coordinate with the Metropolitan Police Department, the Deputy Mayor for Health and Human Services, and Department of Human Services (DHS) to monitor the site in order to connect homeless individuals with safe housing services. However, DGS has indicated that fencing and “No Trespassing” signage is not funded in the Fiscal Year 2019 budget. Consequently, I request that you reprogram FY 19 funds to DGS to complete these important tasks. Ensuring the completion of these tasks is important to maintaining safety for residents and homeless individuals seeking shelter there.

6. *Public Safety*

- *Office of Neighborhood, Safety, and Engagement*

Safety is a top concern of Ward 5 residents. As such, I am requesting that you fully fund the Office of Neighborhood, Safety, and Engagement (ONSE). Significant investment is needed to expand the number of program participants and geographic areas. I am hopeful that these funds will add much needed resources to neighborhoods such as Hanover, Benning Road, and Brentwood, for example, however, I am happy to discuss specific communities with your office. Funding would also go to support programmatic efforts by expanding available resources for rapid response, and to expand wrap around service offerings through service providers.

Earlier this year, Deputy Mayor Kevin Donohue reported that homicides in the District were up forty percent in 2018. To date, homicides are already up sixty-four percent from 2018. As you know, the NEAR Act, which I ushered through with the full support of my colleagues, promotes an evidence-based, community-focused and public health-intervention and prevention model to reduce instances of crime in the District of Columbia.

I am hopeful as we are beginning to see some positive results as programs are fully implemented and operationalized. However, the frequent appeals by residents, as well as testimony of Executive Director of the ONSE, Del McFadden, and that of Attorney General Karl Racine brought to light the urgent funding needs of the office.

7. *Health*

Investing in equitable and improved health outcomes is a priority for Ward 5 residents. Therefore, I am also requesting that your FY20 budget fund medically supported treatment for addiction, recovery, and intervention.

- *Equitable Access to Midwife Services*

I am asking that you expand health/Medicaid coverage for District residents to include midwife services for pregnant beneficiaries. The Center for Disease Control noted that Black women are 243 percent more likely to die from pregnancy-or childbirth-related causes. Investing in preventative services has the potential to ameliorate equity concerns while improving care and reducing the costs of childbirth and would align the District with other jurisdictions such as [Oregon](#) and [Minnesota](#).³

In March 2014, the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists and the Society for Maternal-Fetal Medicine argued that, “Published data indicate that one of the most effective tools to improve labor and delivery outcomes is the continuous presence of support personnel, such as a midwife.”

³ Renee, Montagne, “Black Mothers Keep Dying After Giving Birth. Shalon Irving’s Story Explains Why,” NPR. Accessed on February 27, 2019 at <https://www.npr.org/2017/12/07/568948782/black-mothers-keep-dying-after-giving-birth-shalon-irvings-story-explains-why>

8. *Legislation*

I am requesting that your FY20 proposed budget fully fund the following bills:

Enacted

1. B22-0686, the “Senior Strategic Plan Amendment Act of 2018”
 - i. As introduced, this bill requires the Office on Aging to develop a comprehensive ten-year strategic plan that shall serve as a long-term blueprint for the District. The plan includes an assessment of the data currently available on the District's senior population, the senior populations' needs, and the growth and decline in diversity of the senior population, among other things; and
 - ii. This law is subject to appropriations and to-date, is not funded. I am requesting \$220,000 in funding for FY20 and \$1.245 million to cover the cost of 3 FTEs over the plan.
2. B21-0021, the “Enhanced Penalties for Distracted Driving Amendment Act of 2015”
 - i. B21-0021 was passed unanimously in November of 2016 and became law in February of 2017.
 - ii. B21-0021 imposes enhanced penalties for multiple distracted driving offenses within an eighteen - month period and eliminates the penalty waiver for first - time offenders who purchase a hands-free device; and results in the suspension of the license and registration of the driver for at least 30 days, but not more than 90 days;
 - iii. The District will also suspend the offender’s vehicle registration for at least 30 days, but not more than 90 days if the offender is a District resident.
3. B22-0944, the “Sports Wagering Lottery Amendment Act of 2018”
 - i. B22-0944 was introduced in September of 2018 and is projected to become law in May of 2019;
 - ii. Only amendatory sections 316(d) and (e) of section 2(e) of B22-0944 are subject to appropriations;
 - iii. The aforementioned sections establish the “Sports Wagering Small Business Development Program” and creates a training and capacity building program within the Department of Small and Local Business Development (DSLBD); and
 - iv. Requires the ODCA to prepare a study to evaluate the performance of the DC Lottery sports betting platform.

- v. I am requesting \$400,000 in recurring funds to cover reporting costs and the implementation of the “Sports Wagering Small Business Development Program.”
4. B22-0904, the “Clean Energy DC Omnibus Amendment Act of 2018”⁴
- i. This bill places the District of Columbia as a national leader in the fight against climate change;
 - ii. The Committee added important provision that would support workforce development and created the Sustainable Energy Infrastructure Capacity Building and Pipeline Program, which would prepare Certified Business Enterprises, including women- and minority-owned businesses, with the tools to compete for and win contracts in renewable energy; and
 - iii. This legislation is projected to generate approximately \$59 million in special purpose revenue. I am requesting \$21 million in FY20.

Introduced

5. I plan on re-introducing, B22-0346, the “Charles Hamilton Houston and Other Diverse Washingtonians Commemorative Works Amendment Act of 2017”
- i. This bill would direct the Commemorative Works Commission to erect statues in each of the City’s eight wards that highlight native Washingtonians who are women or minorities. This bill is designed to memorialize them, educate residents and visitors about them, honor their legacy, and increase representation of native Washingtonian women and minority historical figures lauded throughout the city;
 - ii. FY 19’s Budget Support Act contained *Subtitle M. Commission on the Arts and Humanities Grants* which included \$300,000 for the design and construction of a Charles Hamilton Houston statue. I would like to thank you for your leadership on this important issue and I am honored to serve as co-chair for the Charles Hamilton Houston Commission;
 - iii. This subtitle will make the inaugural statue a memorial to honor Charles Hamilton Houston, a native Washingtonian and graduate of Dunbar High School. As native Washingtonians, you and I know that the District of Columbia has been the birthplace for many unsung figures who had an impact on, not just the District of Columbia, but the entire nation; and

⁴ Dewitt, Jeffrey, Chief Financial Officer, *Fiscal Impact Statement – Incarceration to Incorporation Entrepreneurship Program of 2016*, Office of the Chief Financial Officer (2016). For more information see: <https://kenyanmcduffieward5.com/2018/12/19/mcduffie-supports-council-action-on-landmark-legislation-to-require-100-sustainable-energy-by-2032/>

- iv. This request for FY20, specifically asks that funding be provided for the design and construction of seven additional statues.

I welcome the opportunity to discuss the budget requests and appreciate your thoughtful consideration of each of them. For your convenience, I have directed my staff to gather estimates for each of my requests. I am happy to share these estimates with the staff you deem appropriate. My staff also has more detailed requests gathered from Budget Engagement Forum participants. I am happy to share those requests if needed. Should you have any questions, please contact my Director of Policy and Legislative Affairs, Brian McClure, at bmcclure@dccouncil.us or 202-724-8028.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "K.R. McDuffie". The signature is stylized and cursive.

Kenyan R. McDuffie