



COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
JOHN A. WILSON BUILDING
1350 PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE, NW
WASHINGTON, DC 20004

MATTHEW FRUMIN
Councilmember, Ward 3

COMMITTEE CHAIR
Human Services

COMMITTEE MEMBER
Executive Administration and Labor
Facilities
Housing

March 5, 2026

The Honorable Muriel Bowser
Mayor of the District of Columbia
John A. Wilson Building
1350 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20004

Dear Mayor Bowser,

As we approach the Fiscal Year 2027 budget, the challenges facing the District will require discipline, thoughtful decisions, and investing in ways that strengthen our community's foundation. The District remains fundamentally strong, but we face real pressures. Economic uncertainty, volatility in federal policy, and structural changes in our workforce and revenue base create challenges that require careful stewardship. We must respond by protecting the programs and investments that matter most, managing our resources responsibly, and remaining focused on long-term stability and opportunity.

This budget also arrives at a time when the District's autonomy and Home Rule remain under threat. Our ability to govern ourselves, to make decisions grounded in the needs of our residents, and to invest in our communities depends on maintaining fiscal stability and demonstrating sound management. Protecting Home Rule requires that we exercise it responsibly.

My approach to this budget reflects extensive engagement with Ward 3 residents, school leaders, Advisory Neighborhood Commissions (ANC), business owners, service providers, and community organizations. It also reflects my responsibility as Chair of the Committee on Human Services, where I see firsthand both the extraordinary resilience of our residents and the critical importance of the services that support them.

The message from Ward 3 residents has been clear. They understand the fiscal constraints we face. They are asking us to protect what works, fix what does not, and make targeted investments that preserve and enhance the quality of life of all residents in the District.

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Six priority areas consistently rise to the top:

- **Education and early childhood stability:** Strong schools, early childhood programs, and childcare access are essential to families and to the city's future.
- **Protecting and strengthening the safety net:** Food access, homelessness prevention, shelter capacity, and workforce supports must remain stable during economic uncertainty.
- **Housing production and housing stability:** Preserving and expanding affordable housing, particularly in high-cost neighborhoods, and building new housing are critical to long-term equity and economic strength.
- **Public safety and emergency response:** Continued progress requires sustained Metropolitan Police Department (MPD) support, funding for Office of Unified Communications (OUC) response capacity, and infrastructure investment.
- **Support for seniors:** With one of the largest senior populations in the District, Ward 3 must maintain and expand strong community-based aging supports and quality programming for older adults.
- **Economic vitality and stewardship of public spaces, transportation, and sustainability:** Investing in Main Streets, libraries, parks, and transportation infrastructure supports growth and preserves neighborhood vibrancy.

This will be a challenging budget year. We must be careful stewards of public resources. At the same time, thoughtful investments can protect critical programs, strengthen our communities, and position the District for continued success. The enclosed priorities reflect these goals and the needs expressed by Ward 3 residents.

Sincerely,



Matthew Frumin
Councilmember, Ward 3
Chair, Committee on Human Services

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Fully Fund Our Education Ecosystem

Education remains one of the most important investments we make as a city. Strong schools, early childhood programs, and educational supports create opportunity, strengthen communities, and support working families. I appreciate your administration's work to develop initial school budgets that, in most cases, provide stability for students and staff during a challenging fiscal year. Several Ward 3 schools have received strong allocations that reflect thoughtful engagement. However, a small number of schools, including Horace Mann Elementary School and John R. Thompson Jr. High School, continue to face targeted gaps that merit further review and partnership to ensure students do not experience reductions in critical academic or social-emotional supports.

- Preserve funding for the Pre-K Enhancement and Expansion Program (PKEEP) at no less than \$21.8 million in FY27 and \$91.2 million over the financial plan, reflecting inflationary adjustments necessary to sustain providers and maintain access to early childhood education. PKEEP currently supports 27 community-based providers across the District and approximately 1,050 PK3 and PK4 seats, including roughly 300 seats serving Ward 3 families. Because DC Public Schools do not provide PK3 seats in Ward 3 and PK4 capacity remains constrained, PKEEP is essential to ensuring families have access to early childhood education. Loss or reduction of this funding would destabilize providers, reduce childcare availability, and create significant hardship for working families.
- Fully fund the Early Childhood Educator Pay Equity Fund to ensure that compensation for early childhood educators remains aligned with the salary scales adopted by the Council and recommended by the Early Childhood Educator Equitable Compensation Task Force.
- Protect and sustain the Child Care Subsidy Program to ensure working families across income levels can continue to access affordable childcare and remain in the workforce.
- Provide sufficient funding to support the University of the District of Columbia's operating budget and workforce development programs.
- Sustain out-of-school-time programming at current service levels, recognizing its importance for academic achievement, youth engagement, and public safety, even if expansion is not feasible in this fiscal environment.
- Prioritize timely completion of HVAC repairs at Janney Elementary School in coordination with scheduled roof and skylight repairs, incorporate the proposed geothermal component into the final scope of work, and provide a clear project timeline to prevent further delays and ensure classrooms have reliable heating and cooling.



Protect and Strengthen the Safety Net

A strong safety net is foundational to economic stability and community well-being. During periods of fiscal constraint and economic uncertainty, we must preserve core supports that prevent homelessness, reduce hunger, and help residents transition to stable employment and long-term self-sufficiency.

- Fully fund non-congregate, year-round shelter for District families. The District has long been committed to sheltering homeless children in safe, private rooms, even in hard financial times. Requiring children to share rooms with strangers would undo the District's work to leave behind the inhumane shelter conditions at DC General and DC Village. Last year, you proposed providing congregate housing at Harbor Light, but experience from this year has shown that space is best used for single residents and that we can use additional, non-congregate spaces for families.
- Preserve and expand opportunities for residents to transition out of homelessness. The District will run out of vouchers for individuals after this fiscal year. After that, homeless residents with disabilities will not be able to match to new permanent housing options. We should first support those residents by continuing to use the vouchers we have, matching current vouchers to new residents as vouchers turn over. Second, we should invest in at least 500 new opportunities to help residents transition out of homelessness, whether by bringing new bridge housing online, standing up new transitional housing, expanding shallow rent subsidies by expanding and making DC Flex funding recurring, or adding more housing vouchers, especially for single residents.
- Maintain the practice of reimbursing residents for stolen benefits and prevent future benefits theft by funding the Public Benefits Security Amendment Act of 2025 (\$1.4 million in FY27).
- Advance access to food and supportive services, especially for residents affected by new federal Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) restrictions, so that vulnerable households do not experience gaps in nutritional support, including:
 - Maintaining \$2.3 million in annual funding for FRESHFARM Food Prints to ensure continued access to healthy food in schools and communities.
 - Providing \$1 million in recurring annual funding for Nourish DC to expand the local food ecosystem in underserved neighborhoods.
 - Fully funding Sun Bucks at \$2.1 million in FY27 to promote food access for District children during out-of-school periods.
- Seek to avoid cuts to local Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) and invest in employment, education, and wraparound supports to help TANF beneficiaries reach independence. The District should better use existing resources and invest in job placement and vocational rehabilitation programs to help residents get back on their feet. We should also fund additional staff at the Department of Human Services and

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Department on Disability Services to help residents who cannot work apply for federal disability benefits.

Expand Affordable Housing and Preserve Housing Stability

Expanding housing supply and preserving affordability are essential to the District's long-term fiscal health and equity goals. Strategic investment in housing production, preservation, and supportive stabilization services ensures that residents across income levels can remain in their communities and that high-cost neighborhoods contribute to inclusive growth.

- Sustain robust funding for the Housing Production Trust Fund (HPTF), which remains the District's primary tool for producing and preserving affordable housing, including in high-cost neighborhoods such as Ward 3.
- Maintain \$1.1 million in funding for the Department of Behavioral Health's Community Connections Housing Support Case Management Pilot along Connecticut Avenue, which provides supplemental case management, coordinated behavioral health services, and a landlord and neighbor hotline to address quality-of-life concerns in buildings with a high number of voucher holders and improve stability for residents and surrounding communities.
- Support continued implementation of the Housing in High-Area Needs Tax Abatement (HANTA) program and evaluate whether increases to the statutory caps may be necessary to sustain affordable housing production in high-cost neighborhoods, including Ward 3.

Strengthen Public Safety and Community Well-Being

Public safety remains a core responsibility of government, and while we have made meaningful progress, residents expect continued improvement through investments in policing, behavioral health response, prevention, and infrastructure that supports safe and stable neighborhoods.

- Provide funding to support MPD staffing, recruitment, retention, and training, including sustaining key recruitment incentives such as the Housing Incentive Program (\$500,000), Education-Based Incentives (\$1,226,390), and Hiring and Referral Bonuses (\$3,258,537). These targeted investments are essential to maintaining authorized staffing levels, improving response times, and sustaining effective community policing across Ward 3 and the District.
- Fund critical capital improvements and long-deferred maintenance at the Second District MPD station on Idaho Avenue, NW, including repairs to roofing, plumbing, and building systems. While these needs may be funded through the District's broader Building Renovations capital project, it is essential that sufficient resources be allocated to ensure timely completion and safe, functional facilities for officers and staff.

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- Sustain and expand investments in behavioral health crisis response programs, including co-responder units and mobile crisis teams, to ensure individuals in crisis are connected to appropriate care while allowing MPD to focus on core law enforcement responsibilities.
- Ensure sufficient funding for OUC, at no less than its FY26 operating budget of \$64,693,201, to support emergency call response capacity, staffing stability, and interagency coordination to maintain timely public safety responses.

Support Our Seniors

Ward 3's senior population continues to grow, and supporting seniors must remain a core priority.

- Allocate at least \$16.3 million annually to Lead Agencies in FY27, representing a modest six percent increase above current funding levels.
- Provide approximately \$1.21 million annually to support Senior Villages, representing a six percent increase above the FY26 allocation, to reflect rising operating costs, increased demand for services, and an expanding senior population.
- Provide dedicated funding for specialized dementia services, reflecting a six percent increase to address rising demand and service costs, including:
 - Approximately \$480,000 for Iona Senior Services' Dementia Navigators program to sustain care coordination and caregiver support for families navigating dementia diagnoses.
 - Approximately \$212,000 for the Sibley Community Dementia Program to continue memory support programming and community-based services for older adults and their caregivers.
- Follow through on the Wards 2 and 3 Senior Wellness Center Task Force recommendations by identifying and allocating funding for a dedicated Ward 3 senior wellness center, including \$1.8 million annually in operating support and up to \$20 million for capital or facility improvements. Whether through renovation, construction, or a leased facility model, the FY27 budget should establish a clear pathway toward opening a dedicated senior wellness center in the near term.
- Expand funding for the Safe at Home program, Home Delivered Meals Service, and the DACL Connector Card to strengthen aging-in-place supports.



Support Thriving Commercial Corridors, Public Spaces, Transportation, and Environmental Sustainability

Ward 3's commercial corridors, public spaces, parks, libraries, and transportation infrastructure are essential to the vitality, accessibility, and livability of our neighborhoods. These assets support small businesses, strengthen community connections, improve public health, and contribute to economic stability.

- Allocate at least \$7.5 million to maintain and increase the current FY26 collections budget for DC Public Library (DCPL). Electronic circulation is increasing and the cost of e-books increases each year, putting strain on historically stagnant collections resources.
- Maintain funding for FY26 staffing levels at neighborhood libraries to prevent reductions in hours or branch operations.
- Allocate no less than \$5 million for DC Main Streets to reflect a three percent inflationary adjustment above the FY26 baseline and ensure a minimum of approximately \$172,762 per program annually. Last year, the Council funded this enhanced level across the financial plan to make the increase recurring; maintaining that commitment in FY27 is critical. Sustaining this funding level, along with annual inflationary adjustments, will ensure that Main Street organizations can continue delivering economic development, small business support, and corridor revitalization services.
- Increase funding for the Connecticut Avenue Clean Team by \$50,000 annually to better respond to the clean and safe needs of the four commercial districts it serves.
- Allocate \$500,000 for a Friendship Heights Action Plan. Friendship Heights represents one of the District's most significant untapped opportunities to advance housing production, economic growth, fiscal sustainability, and quality of life through strategic reinvestment. An Action Plan, inclusive of a multimodal mobility strategy, cohesive streetscape and public realm framework, and a retail and economic development plan, would position Friendship Heights to support housing production and equitable economic development.
- Protect and maintain current funding for Books from Birth to promote early childhood literacy, brain development, and school readiness.
- Provide targeted operating and capital funding with clear timelines to address persistent maintenance and infrastructure needs at Ward 3 parks and recreation facilities, including:
 - Turtle Park: Fund erosion and stormwater drainage mitigation (estimated at \$65,000) to prevent recurring flooding of the playground and athletic courts following expiration of prior capital funding.
 - Guy Mason Recreation Center: Ensure timely completion of baseball field netting replacement (estimated at \$63,728); repair deteriorating brick steps and broken



lighting; and provide adequate custodial support to maintain this heavily used facility.

- Wilson Aquatic Center: Address recurring elevator failures, locker room conditions, pool temperature instability, and staffing shortages that limit pool utilization.
 - Hardy Park: Support continued rehabilitation and maintenance of athletic fields to sustain safe conditions and youth programming.
- Include the Connecticut Avenue Streetscape Improvement Project in the FY27 capital budget and allocate an estimated \$10 million to complete the project as designed. As requested by ANC 3F, this investment would advance pedestrian safety, stormwater mitigation, and economic revitalization along the Van Ness corridor.
 - Advance the Tenleytown Multimodal Access Project by allocating no less than \$2 million to complete final design work and at least \$13 million in capital funding for construction in the capital plan.
 - Continue investments in tree canopy expansion, electrification incentives, and climate resilience infrastructure.

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