



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

JANESE LEWIS GEORGE

Ward 4 Councilmember
Chair of the Committee on
Facilities

COMMITTEE MEMBER

Committee on Transportation and the Environment
Committee on Executive Administration and Labor
Committee on Public Works and Operations

March 2, 2026

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

Dear Mayor Bowser,

Thank you for the opportunity to share my priorities for the Fiscal Year 2027 budget for Ward 4 and the District of Columbia. These priorities reflect what Ward 4 residents share about their daily lives and are informed by oversight hearings, CARE days, neighborhood listening sessions, and ongoing conversations with community leaders and service providers.

This budget is being developed during a period of significant uncertainty. Federal actions are straining the District's economy and programs, requiring clear choices about who the District prioritizes and how its most vulnerable residents are protected.

The District should focus limited resources on preserving stability and meeting basic needs. The social safety net is under pressure and must be strengthened to prevent deeper hardship. Emergency rental assistance, housing vouchers, access to the DC Healthcare Alliance, food assistance, cash supports, and health care options, including for immigrant residents, must remain accessible and adequately funded. The District must also protect immigrant communities by maintaining a clear boundary between local public safety work and federal enforcement. Residents should be able to access services, send their children to school, and seek help without fear. Public safety should emphasize prevention, accountability, and community trust.

At the same time, the District should invest in job training and workforce supports for residents affected by federal layoffs. If difficult budget decisions are required, they should not come at the expense of programs that sustain residents' basic needs. In uncertain times, District leadership must act with care and intention. I ask that you prioritize the following requests when developing your FY 2027 budget proposal:

Housing Stability, Food Security, and Economic Supports

Housing stability and economic security are the foundation of family wellbeing and neighborhood stability. As housing costs rise, food prices remain high, and federal actions create new economic disruption, the District must ensure that residents can remain housed, fed, and financially stable. Protecting the full continuum of housing assistance, strengthening food access,

and maintaining reliable cash supports are essential to preventing deeper hardship and ensuring families can weather periods of uncertainty.

- Preserve and expand funding for the Emergency Rental Assistance Program (ERAP) to prevent evictions, keep residents stably housed during periods of financial disruption, and ensure program rollout is accessible and humane.
- Maintain and expand funding for homeless services such as shelters, bridge housing, and short-term and permanent vouchers to ensure residents experiencing homelessness can access safe shelter and transition quickly into stable housing.
- Increase funding for the production of deeply affordable housing, including the capital and long-term operating support required to serve extremely low-income residents.
- Preserve the Home Purchase Assistance Program (HPAP) as a critical pathway to sustainable homeownership for District residents.
- Increase funding for the Child Care Subsidy Program to provide families with affordable early childcare, improve early childhood outcomes, and maintain current enrollment levels.
- Fully fund Give SNAP a Raise to supplement inadequate federal benefits and reduce hunger among District families.
- Maintain full funding for No Senior Hungry to ensure seniors can access nutritious food and age with dignity.
- Preserve funding for WIC to support the nutritional needs of pregnant people, infants, and young children.
- Maintain and strengthen TANF and TANF caregiver subsidies to support families with the greatest needs.
- Continue and expand monthly basic income initiatives and other local cash assistance programs that provide flexible, stabilizing support.
- Increase funding for language access services, community-based enrollment assistance, and accessible benefit platforms.

Health, Disability, and Aging Services

Health and human services allow residents to live with dignity, independence, and stability across the lifespan. District residents with disabilities, seniors, families, and children rely on consistent access to community-based supports, preventive services, and a stable care workforce. As demand grows and systems face strain, the District must preserve and strengthen these services to prevent crises, reduce long-term costs, and ensure residents can remain connected to care and community.

- Preserve Medicaid coverage for adults, including childless adults your office has proposed eliminating in 2029, and increase funding for Medicaid-funded disability services to ensure uninterrupted, community-based care.
- Expand funding for Senior Villages as a proven, cost-effective model that supports aging in place and reduces isolation and increase funding for senior centers to support additional space, programming, and accessibility upgrades.
- Increase funding for the DACL Connector Card and transportation for DACL lead agencies so seniors and residents with disabilities can access transportation and essential services and are not isolated from care or community resources.

- Increase funding for DC Health and the Child and Family Services Agency to expand home visiting programs for seniors, families at risk, residents with disabilities, and individuals involved in the child welfare system.
- Increase funding for Collaboratives to support the 211 Warmline, respond to increased call volume, and prevent unnecessary entry into the foster care system.
- Protect funding for the Office of the Ombudsperson for Children, which provides independent advocacy, coordination, and accountability across agencies serving children and families.
- Increase funding for ChAMPS to ensure the District’s behavioral health crisis team for children and teens is fully operational and responsive.
- Protect funding for the DC Healthcare Alliance so that current participants can continue to remain in the program, protecting critical access to health care for D.C.’s immigrant community and preventing increased pressures on the District’s hospitals and community health centers.
- Increase funding for the DC Health Professional Loan Repayment Program to strengthen the pipeline of behavioral health providers and other critical health professionals.
- Increase funding for Clean Teams to reflect the scale of work along long commercial corridors and in high-need neighborhoods.
- Protect funding for Healthy Homes to address environmental health hazards that disproportionately affect vulnerable residents.
- Maintain funding for DPW to ensure reliable trash collection and address the District’s persistent rodent issues across neighborhoods.
- Support inclusive recreation and community participation by maintaining funding for the DPR Special Olympics Grant, which provides essential opportunities for residents with intellectual and developmental disabilities.
- Increase funding for disability service providers’ ability to pay for growing overtime and operating costs through the administrative fee.

Community Safety Through Prevention, Accountability, and Facilities

Community safety depends on prevention, accountability, and functional public infrastructure. Removing barriers to opportunity, holding systems accountable for unsafe conditions, and investing in violence prevention all reduce harm before it occurs. At the same time, safe schools, well-maintained public facilities, accessible infrastructure, and the District’s ability to govern effectively are core public safety responsibilities that require sustained investment.

- Preserve funding for agencies responsible for sealing criminal records under the Second Chance Act and maintain cross-agency budget lines to ensure record sealing is implemented effectively so residents can access employment and housing opportunities.
- Increase funding for community-based violence interruption initiatives with demonstrated impact in high-need neighborhoods.
- Protect funding for the Access to Justice Initiative to ensure District families can continue to access legal support that keep residents safe, housed, and financially secure.
- Expand Safe Passage to additional schools and focus resources on corridors where students face the greatest risk traveling to and from school.

- Invest in programs to remove lead pipes from homes so our vulnerable residents are no longer ingesting poisonous levels of lead.
- Invest capital and operating funds for the Department of General Services to address preventative maintenance, aging schools and facilities awaiting modernization, summer school facilities blitzes, functioning locks and doors, and climate-readiness upgrades.
- Increase funding for the Office of Disability Rights and DGS to accelerate ADA compliance and remove long-standing accessibility barriers in public facilities.
- Protect funds in the Sustainable Energy Trust Fund and Renewable Energy Development Fund to support programs such as Solar for All and fund the Healthy Homes Act.
- Protect and clean-up our rivers from polluting stormwater runoff by fully funding the Anacostia River Cleanup and Protection Fund.
- Provide adequate funding to bring all capital projects into compliance with the District's leading environmental standards, including those in the Greener Government Buildings Act.
- Provide new funding for DGS and DPR to maintain and operate the Fort Dupont Ice Arena.

Youth, Recreation, and Community-Based Prevention

Accessible recreation and youth programming are proven public safety and public health investments. Safe spaces, trusted adults, and reliable facilities reduce harm, support healthy development, and strengthen community connection. To sustain these benefits, the District must invest in recreation infrastructure, address staffing challenges, and protect programs that provide critical support to young people and families.

- Increase operating funding for the Department of Parks and Recreation to expand hours of operation on nights and weekends and provide more age-specific programming to youth and seniors in all eight wards.
- Include sufficient funding to repair all broken exercise equipment across all of DPR's recreation and aquatic centers.
- Increase funding for DPR's food and agricultural programs, including green food purchasing.
- Protect funding for critical youth-serving programs, including Safe Shores, which provides essential services for children who have experienced trauma.
- Address DPR staffing challenges, including lifeguard salary increases, to ensure pools remain open and accessible year-round.
- Provide targeted capital funding for upgrades at Riggs–LaSalle Recreation Center, including a new field, outdoor fitness equipment, replacement of indoor fitness equipment, window repairs in the multipurpose room, new blinds in the computer, senior, multipurpose, and arts and crafts rooms, and updated computers and televisions.

Education, Workforce, and Neighborhood Opportunity

Schools, workforce systems, and neighborhood corridors are interconnected drivers of opportunity. Stable school funding, coordinated transportation, and investments in educators support student success and workforce participation. At the neighborhood level, Main Streets, libraries, and infrastructure investments strengthen local economies and community identity.

Together, these systems must be aligned and adequately funded so residents can live, work, and thrive in their own neighborhoods.

- Fully fund all five Ward 4 Main Street programs, including Petworth, Uptown, Upper Georgia Avenue, Takoma, and Parks, with specific attention to restoring funding for Takoma Main Street, that continues to serve District residents.
- Preserve existing capital funding for Ward 4 library projects, including planned renovations and new commons space on Kennedy Street, without shifting resources from one community to fund another.
- Advance the Georgia Avenue Surplus project and implement recommendations from the Georgia Avenue Revitalization report to support corridor revitalization and long-term economic activity.
- Fully fund and implement the recommendations of the Early Literacy and Math Task Forces, with investments in evidence-based instruction, targeted interventions, and teacher supports that strengthen foundational reading and math outcomes.
- Maintain and strengthen the District’s local Child Tax Credit as a critical support for families facing rising costs.
- Ensure sufficient staffing at the Office of Unified Communications to meet demand and maintain reliable city services.
- Provide targeted funding for job training and workforce pathways for residents displaced by federal layoffs.
- Fully fund the Early Childhood Educator Pay Equity Fund to protect educator wages and expand access to affordable health care, and protect PKEEP funding to expand Pre-K 3 and 4 capacity, support working parents, and reduce long commutes for families.
- Retain and increase funding for the School Connect program at LaSalle–Backus Elementary and Ida B. Wells Middle School, and increase funding to sustain competitive compensation for School-Based Behavioral Health clinicians and coordinator roles.
- Protect and expand funding for out-of-school time programs at DCPS, DPR, and community-based sites as a critical prevention and enrichment strategy.
- Increase the adult education weight in the Uniform Per Student Funding Formula (UPSFF) to 1.3, consistent with the 2023 DC School Funding Study.
- Expand Community Schools funding, invest in Advanced Technical Centers, strengthen OSSE–DDOT coordination, and improve transportation transparency through tools such as a bus tracking portal for families.

Proceed with Ward 4 Capital Projects

Finally, several capital projects in Ward 4 are scheduled for upcoming modernizations. It is important for all the projects to remain on schedule and that neighborhood and school communities are promptly and thoroughly updated. I ask you continue to invest in Ward 4, including through the following capital projects:

- New Playground at Grant Circle
- Shepherd Park Library
- Kennedy Street Library
- Whittier Modernization and Swing Space
- LaSalle-Backus Education Campus Modernization
- Emery Heights Recreation Center Modernization

- Small Capital Improvements to MPD's Fourth District station
- ADA upgrades at Riggs LaSalle Rec. Center
- Track replacement at Riggs LaSalle Rec. Center
- Hattie Holmes Senior Wellness Center Courtyard Enclosure
- Pre-K Playground replacement at Takoma Elementary
- 2-5 year old playground replacement at Shepherd Park
- Playground slide replacement at Lafayette Pointer Park
- Playground slide replacement at Chevy Chase Community Center

Thank you for leading by prioritizing people's basic needs in DC's next budget.

In Service,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Janeese Lewis George". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Janeese Lewis George
Councilmember, Ward 4
Chairperson, Committee on Facilities