

ECONOMY AND JOBS

1. Given the strong economic and population growth in recent years, we can all agree that this city is now a hot place to live and work. However, this growth has not benefited many people, especially low-income and unemployed DC residents. How would you leverage taxpayer funds for economic development in ways that would benefit the neediest DC residents?

We must do more targeted and strategic planning to address the needs of low-income and unemployed residents. Our primary focus must be (1) improving schools, (2) creating affordable and workforce housing, and (3) creating jobs.

I continue to be a steadfast advocate for investing in our neighborhood schools so that children in every area of our city have access to strong public schools. A major part of improving education must be expanded vocational education. I will leverage our demand for amenities and services to create jobs for residents by creating a low- or no-interest loan program aimed at filling amenity and service gaps in underserved parts of the city, tying loans to local employment to create entry level housing. I also will work to create a pipeline training program for skilled employment for residents tied to our major infrastructure projects, including storm water retention and burying power lines. We also must do a better job of educating adults, including literacy, GED and continuing education programs that are accessible.

2. Seattle has enacted a minimum wage of \$15.00. San Francisco will vote on a ballot initiative in November of \$15.00. The mayor of Los Angeles has proposed a minimum wage of \$13.25, and Mayor Rahm Emanuel supports a \$13.00 wage for Chicago. Should DC set its sights higher? If so, to what level and in what time frame?

Most of my family works hourly wage jobs and can no longer afford to live here. DC must have a minimum wage that allows people, including those who work in the service industry, to live here without living in poverty. Different states and advocacy groups have advocated for varying minimum wages, but these calculations differ from state-to-state. I will fight for the minimum wage that supports working people and working families in DC and allows people like my family to call DC home again.

TAXATION

3. In 2014, the DC Council enacted significant changes in tax law, many of which were recommended by the Tax Revision Commission. What do you think of these changes? What further changes would you propose, if any?

Generally, I supported the recommendations of the Tax Revision Commission because they decreased tax burdens on the middle-class, giving people and families more money in their pockets. However, I would like to examine a reduction of residential property taxes in order to protect seniors (who are not old enough to be exempt from property taxes under the Council's recent bill) and other people with limited incomes from being priced out of their homes due to steady property value increases. I also would like to see a lower property tax for businesses that are willing to located in underdeveloped commercial areas of our city.

ELECTION REFORM

4. Do you think that public financing of elections is an effective way to reduce the influence of large contributors on legislation? If yes, what model do you favor? If not, what alternative do you recommend?

Yes. I would support a public finance system that requires either a baseline amount contributions raised from small donations or a number of signatures in order to access the public funds.

5. The electoral system in DC allows candidates to be elected to office with a plurality, not a majority, of votes. Do you support any type of runoff system of voting? If yes, what mechanism do you favor? If not, why not?

Yes. I support a runoff because it allows people to elect the candidate(s) they believe will best represent them without fearing that they are wasting their vote. I do not believe this level of democracy is accomplished with instant runoffs, which ask voters to rank their choices. Instant runoffs still allow candidates with no clear majority of support to win.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

6. How do you propose we better use development projects on public land for affordable housing, particularly housing for low-income residents?

All public land used for housing must include low- and moderate-income housing. Additionally, I believe that proceeds from the sale of public land should go into the Housing Trust Fund, which funds creation and preservation of affordable housing. We must then focus particularly on preserving affordable housing by having the District purchase buildings with affordable housing that are being put on the market, capping rents, and re-selling the buildings.

7. Are our rent control laws adequate? If not, what can be done to reduce the burden on tenants?

PUBLIC EDUCATION

No. We have to do a much better job and helping low-income residents find rent-controlled unity. Beyond that, we have to increase the rental vouch amount and availability to assist residents in need, and focus on preserving affordable rental units, which we are losing at an alarming pace.

8. The [percentage of children in traditional public schools](#) has declined dramatically in DC and is now, at 56%, the [third](#) lowest in the nation. Should we be concerned about this trend? If so, what should be done to halt or reverse it? If not, what changes would you propose to accommodate to the trend?

We should be very concerned. A balanced school system in the District requires strong neighborhood schools. However, we cannot improve neighborhood schools unless we convince more parents to attend and invest in these schools. To accomplish this, we have to work with educators and the community to develop concrete turnaround plans for every underperforming school, commit to multi-year budgeting to give schools the planning resources to turn around schools, expand vocational education so that we have fewer students dropping out, and work in partnership with fellow public and charter schools in developing and implementing best practices, and give teachers the support and training they need to continue to improve and feel valued.

EAST OF THE RIVER

9. With respect to development at St. Elizabeth's Hospital campus, what can the Council do to protect the interests of and maximize the benefits to those currently living east of the Anacostia River?

As redevelopment expands east of the Anacostia River, the Council must develop a neighborhood preference for housing purchase and rental programs to ensure that residents are not pushed out. We must also develop an aggressive school turnaround and job training and placement program to ensure that residents have the resources and training to participate in the growing economy in this area of the city.

PLANNING

10. The Executive's zoning, planning and historic preservation functions report through the Deputy Mayor for Planning and Economic Development (DMPED). In your view, does this structure work well for the city? If not, how would you alter it?

While zoning, planning and historic preservation interests often can conflict, reorganizing agencies to dissect these functions will not necessarily change any outcomes since most agencies report to the Mayor. Increasing the power of agencies that do not report to the mayor would violate home rule. Therefore, I believe we have to give a stronger voice to residents on the Zoning Commission, the Historic Preservation Review Board, and the Advisory Neighborhood Commission to act as a check on the executive.