

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
Chief of Staff to Mayor Muriel Bowser



Fiscal Year 2024
Performance Oversight Hearing

Testimony of
Lindsey Parker
Chief of Staff to Mayor Muriel Bowser

Before the
Committee on Executive Administration and Labor
Council of the District of Columbia
The Honorable At-Large Councilmember Anita Bonds, Chairperson

Wednesday, January 29th, 2025

Good afternoon, Chairperson Bonds, members of the Committee on Executive Administration and Labor, staff, and members of the public. My name is Lindsey Parker, and I am the Chief of Staff to Mayor Muriel Bowser. I am here to testify on behalf of the Executive Office of the Mayor (EOM) regarding our agency's performance in Fiscal Years 2024 and 2025 to date.

The Executive Office of the Mayor plays a critical role in supporting Mayor Bowser's priorities for DC and ensuring that the Administration's policies and initiatives are effectively communicated, implemented, and responsive to community needs. EOM consists of the immediate staff to Mayor Bowser, along with entities such as the Office of the Secretary. Our multifaceted role includes overseeing communications, outreach, appointments, scheduling, and legislative relations at various levels of government, including with the Council of the District of Columbia, the U.S. Congress, the federal government, regional governments, and international stakeholders. More information about mayoral events and ways to engage with our team can be found at **mayor.dc.gov**.

Over the past year, the Executive Office of the Mayor has continued to focus on delivering responsive and effective services and programs to the residents and businesses of the District of Columbia. Together, we have worked with the community and DC Government agencies to advance **DC's Comeback Plan**, breaking ground on the most office-to-residential conversions per capita, welcoming new employers and millions of visitors to **#BeDowntown**, delivering on Mayor Bowser's promise of building **36,000 units of new housing by 2025**, building on our progress at the St. Elizabeths East campus, enrolling more students in our public schools, and more.

We have collaborated and coordinated with residents, businesses, community leaders, school leaders, public safety partners, and members of the Council to put forth legislation like Mayor Bowser's Safer Stronger and ACT Now bills. The Council passage of the Secure DC Act, which included important provisions from both bills, was a key contributor to the **35% drop in violent crime** we experienced between 2023 and 2024.

Internally, we've now seen the benefits of restructuring EOM to communicate with and respond more quickly to constituents. This reorganization has increased communication with critical partners, from labor unions to partners in Congress and more.

In October 2023, Mayor Bowser announced a reorganization of EOM that created the following divisions reporting to the Chief of Staff:

- **Office of General Counsel (OGC)**, led by General Counsel to the Mayor Betsy Cavendish, advises the Mayor and EOM offices on legal matters.
- **Office of the Secretary (OS)**, led by Secretary Kimberly Bassett, manages DC's Archives, commissions all DC notaries public, publishes the District of Columbia Register and the District of Columbia Municipal Regulations, and acts as a liaison between the government and the diplomatic community.
- **Office of Intergovernmental Affairs (IGA)**, led by Director Tomás Talamante, serves to engage local, regional, and federal governments and elected officials to address the most pressing issues and advance Mayor Bowser's priorities. This portfolio includes the Office of Policy & Legislative Affairs (OPLA) and the Office of Federal & Regional Affairs (OFRA). Over the past year, IGA has been instrumental in planning and preparing for the Presidential Inauguration, leading the DC Government's *Presidential Inauguration Committee* to ensure smooth operations. The team also protected the federal *Special Event Relief Fund* and successfully increased the allocation to \$90 million to meet the growing costs of hosting National Special Security Events. Additionally, IGA organized the first ever *National Housing Summit* with the National League of Cities and planned DC welcome receptions for attendees of the Congressional Black Caucus and the U.S. Conference of Mayors, further solidifying our role as a hub for national and regional leadership gatherings.
- **Office of Communications (COMMS)**, led by the Mayor's Communications Director Susana Castillo, is responsible for creating and coordinating direct dialogue between Mayor Bowser and the public by providing strategic communication direction, media relations, public information dissemination, agency communications review and coordination, government-wide communication standards, and guidance to and training opportunities for Bowser Administration public information officers in each agency. The team organized more than *220 mayoral press engagements*, "went viral" with more than 370 social media posts and published the *Mayor's Progress Report* and *Back-to-School Guide*.

- **Operations and Engagement**, led by Deputy Chief of Staff to the Mayor Steve Walker, is responsible for improving public awareness and involvement in the work of the Bowser Administration, including maintaining strong communication with our residents and businesses via our outreach and engagement offices and by filling mayoral appointments. This portfolio includes the Operations, Support Services and Scheduling and Advance teams, the Mayor's Office of Talent and Appointments (mota.dc.gov), the Mayor's Correspondence Unit, the Mayor's Office of Community Relations and Services (mocrs.dc.gov), and Mayor's Office of Community Affairs (moca.dc.gov). The team helped coordinate over **1,500 public engagement events** in all eight wards, including Emancipation Day and a record-setting Fresh Start 5K with 6,800 registered attendees. To request a ceremonial letter from Mayor Bowser, invite Mayor Bowser to an event, make us aware of a constituent services request, head online to **mayor.dc.gov**, or email **scheduling.eom@dc.gov** or call **202-727-2643** and the team will respond.

Our progress has continued into FY 2025, as seen in projects that reflect our commitment to bringing teams together to streamline service delivery and get big things done. For example, we have established a new Safe Commercial Corridor Hub in Chinatown, helped keep Capital One Arena downtown, and are closer than ever to unlocking the potential of the RFK Stadium Campus.

In conclusion, I am proud of the work that EOM and the Administration has done over the past year and excited about the opportunities that lie ahead. I am confident that by working together, we can continue to provide more targeted and streamlined services and programs to our residents and businesses. I look forward to returning to testify in the coming weeks in support of Mayor Bowser's budget and want to remind residents and businesses that we look forward to hearing the public's priorities regarding next year's budget. Stay tuned to learn more about the budget process at **budget.dc.gov**. Thank you for your time, and I look forward to answering any questions you may have.