



Ward 7 Councilmember Candidate Questionnaire

Candidate Information

Your responses will be posted on the Ward 7 Dems webpage. Please provide a headshot of the candidate.

Candidate Name: Dwight Deloatch
Current Neighborhood: Benning (East of the River)
Candidate website: deloatch.dwight@gmail.com
Candidate Twitter: DwightSDeloatch
Candidate IG: DwightSDeloatch
Candidate Facebook: DwightDeloatchforWard7
Other social media:

General Questions

1. What makes you the right selection for the Democratic nomination for Ward 7 Councilmember?

As a Democratic candidate for Ward 7 DC Council, I bring fresh experience and deep commitment to serving our community. Here is my reason that I deserve to be the right choice for Democratic nomination. I am a native Washingtonian and have been a proud resident of Ward 7 for 18 years. I attended Friendship Collegiate Academy for high school. Earned my Bachelors and Master's degrees from Delaware State University. With my educational credentials I am equipped with the knowledge and skills to address complex issues facing our community. I inherited a family small business hired District of Columbia residents. I served on the DC Public Charter School Board Parent and Alumni Council, where I engaged in discussions about improving DC Charter Schools. As a former Family Support Worker, I had the privilege of making an impact during the challenging times of the COVID-19 pandemic. I assisted clients in applying for DC Emergency Rental Assistance programs helping them stay in their homes and avoid eviction. I facilitated negotiations between landlords and clients to find sustainable payment plans. I am dedicated to building upon the legacy of our elders. Ward 7 residents deserve hope and optimism. As DC Councilmember I aim to restore that hope by championing policies that uplift our community. Ever ward, especially Ward 7, should benefit from the District of Columbia resources. Equitable distribution ensures fairness and prosperity for all. It is time for Ward 7 to be recognized. I will actively listen to residents, ensuring their voices are heard and their needs will be addressed.

Campaign Pillars:

- Affordable and Equitable Housing
 - Ward 7 residents deserve an affordable place to call home
- Public Safety
 - Priority to reduce juvenile crime and create safer neighborhoods

- Economic Empowerment
 - Create opportunities for small business growth
- Revitalizing Education
 - Implement programs to rejuvenate our education system
- Quality Food Access
 - Ensure nutritious food is available to every Ward 7 resident.

2. How would you build relationships with the Council, Mayor, and Ward 7 Candidates who were unsuccessful in their bid to ensure that the needs of Ward 7 residents are met?

If elected as the next Ward 7 DC Councilmember, I am committed to fostering strong relations with diverse stakeholders to ensure the needs of the District of Columbia are met. As a Councilmember, I will actively engage with other ward councilmembers, at-large members, and the Chairperson of the Council. I will serve on relevant committees to work alongside fellow councilmembers to address specific District of Columbia agencies and initiatives that impact our residents. The Mayor of the District of Columbia plays a pivotal role in shaping and implementing legislation. I pledge to collaborate closely with the Mayor's office to find effective solutions to issues concerning residents in Ward 7. Promoting swift resolutions of disputes is essential to maintain efficient governance. I am committed to maintaining respectful relationships with other candidates regardless of the election outcome. I pledge to hold regular office hours where residents and Ward 7 stakeholders address concerns, fresh ideas and explore ways to uplift our community.

Education

In recent years, Ward 7 has faced significant challenges in public education, including disparities in academic achievement, access to resources, and support for special education. If elected to the Ward 7 Council seat, what specific measures will you implement to address these educational disparities and ensure that all children in Ward 7 have equitable access to high-quality education and support services?

As a candidate for Ward 7 DC Council, I am committed to addressing the educational disparities residents face in our community. The District of Columbia education system requires revitalization. Recognizing that teachers play a vital role in students' achievement, I will advocate for increased funding and resource allocation to support our educators. The DC Public and Charter Schools will face budget challenges this fiscal year due to a decrease in pandemic related federal dollars. I collaborate strategically with my colleagues on the DC Council to allocate funds effectively to ensure resources reach the classrooms. I will propose legislation to allocate additional funding for annual professional development. I will advocate for wellness programs that support our educators mental and physical wellbeing. A campaign pillar includes proposing mandatory financial literacy courses for all District of Columbia high school students. Recognizing that not all students will pursue higher education, it is crucial that they have

financial acumen to navigate the workforce successfully. To properly prepare students to enter the workforce, we must establish stronger partnerships with apprenticeship programs and job training initiatives. By connecting students with real world experiences, internships, and vocational training, we can bridge the gap between education and employment.

Economic Development

In light of the current economic landscape in Ward 7, as Ward 7 Councilmember, what innovative measures would you propose to bolster economic development in Ward 7?

As a candidate for Ward 7 DC Council Economic Empowerment is a central campaign pillar. As DC Councilmember I will advocate for funding the DC Deputy Mayor for Planning and Economic Development for targeted funding to support local small businesses. Our ward needs commercial development. Attracting additional anchor stores is essential for creating a vibrant business district. As a council member, I will collaborate with property owners to ensure quality stores meet the needs of our residents. As the District of Columbia rebounds from the COVID-19 pandemic, I pledge to ensure economic benefits are equitably distributed across all wards. While Downtown DC is essential, we must prioritize the unique needs of Ward 7. The transfer of owners of the RFK land presents a historic opportunity for Ward 7. This site can become one of the biggest revitalization projects. I pledge to prioritize Ward 7 needs including affordable housing, ensuring access to quality food, establishment healthcare facilities, and exploring the potential for a sports arena that benefits our community.

Housing

In October of 2023, the agencies that fund HPAP (the District's Primary First-time homebuyers' program), revised their distribution requirements to be based on a "first come first serve basis."

By January of 2024, all funds were exhausted. This development shook lenders, Realtors, and especially, first time home buyers. As Ward 7 Councilmember, what specific measures and/or initiatives would you champion to improve homeownership opportunities for individuals and families who would like to make our Ward their home?

If elected as the next Ward 7 DC Councilmember, I will fulfill my campaign pillar of providing affordable and equitable housing for residents in Ward 7. I recognize that barriers exist for underrepresented homeowners, and I am dedicated to reducing those barriers. I propose legislation to implement homeownership workshops to educate potential homebuyers about the process. I will advocate for funding for DC Housing Authority to secure first-time homebuyer assistance programs. Millennials face significant challenges when it comes to saving for a home due to higher education debt. Families and seniors experiencing financial hardship should not risk losing their properties due to delinquent property taxes. I pledge to promote a property tax payment plan program. Program to provide flexibility for homeowners, allowing them to manage their tax obligations while retaining ownership. Wards 7 residents are part of generational wealth transfer, passing homes to heirs. To protect families' assets, I advocate for funding to provide residents with estate planning services to obtain will and trust.

Public Safety

Ward 7 and the entire city is experiencing an increase in crime. What would you identify as the core causes of this spike and what legislative tools would you suggest that could stop the increase and address the root causes?

As a candidate for Ward 7 DC Council, I recognize the urgency of addressing the recent increase in crime across the District of Columbia. Factors contributing to the spike include social determinants, unemployment, food insecurity, and systemic poverty. Juvenile crime has increased as well. No parent should receive a call that their child has fallen victim to gun violence. I pledge to focus on prevention initiatives that address systemic pitfalls leading to juvenile criminal activity. Improving coordination between the DC Metropolitan Police Department, Department of Youth Rehabilitation Services, and Office of the Attorney General. I propose Project Redemption, where criminally involved juveniles' complete mandatory community services, Upon successful completion, the juvenile become eligible for expungement of their past criminal records. As DC Councilmember I will actively engage with community centers, youth programs, and neighborhood associations to receive feedback. This coloration can develop targeted strategies and ensure our efforts align with creating safer neighborhoods.

Transportation

What do you see as the biggest transportation needs facing Ward 7 residents? As a Ward 7 Councilmember, what specific measures and/or initiatives would you champion to improve the transportation infrastructure in Ward 7.

If elected as Ward 7 DC Councilmember I pledge to increase funding for DC Department of

Aging to provide transportation services for seniors. I am committed to advocating for efficient bus and rail services with WMATA. Reliable public transit is crucial for residents to and from their prospective destination. As DC Councilmember I will explore the extension of the DC Circulator trolley car to serve more areas in Ward 7. I will advocate for the installation of elective vehicle charging stations throughout Ward 7. Promoting the DC Infrastructure Academy to train DC Residents on emerging trades.

Health & Human Services

What are the biggest health and human services challenges that you see facing Ward 7 residents? As a Ward 7 Councilmember, what specific measures and/or initiatives would you champion to improve health outcomes of Ward 7 residents?

As Ward 7 DC Councilmember, I recognize the critical importance of health and human services challenges Ward 7 residents face. I pledge to increase funding for DC Department of Health, Department of Human Services, and Department of Behavioral Health. I will push legislation that prioritizes mental health services to provide essential services to residents in need. I will work with DC Councilmember to create legislation to prioritize Request for Proposals for registered 501c(3) organizations to increase housing capacity, vital case management, and wrap-around services for residents. As a former Family Support Worker, I understand the challenges families face when seeking health and social services benefits. I pledge to focus on establishing adequate health care facilities in ward 7. I pledge to advocate for funding for free medical screening services for low-income residents. Early detection and regular screening can prevent serious health conditions.