

# DC'S COMEBACK

108+ MONTH REPORT



By focusing on the pillars of our Comeback - public schools, public safety, and the Downtown - we are showing people why DC is the most important city in the world. Never bet against cities, especially not this one. Cities are resilient. Cities are drivers of innovation. Cities are where people come to change the world. And there is no city in the world like Washington, DC.

-Mayor Muriel Bowser

**MAYOR.DC.GOV**

WE ARE WASHINGTON  
GOVERNMENT OF THE  
DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA  
DC MURIEL BOWSER, MAYOR



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# LETTER FROM THE MAYOR



Dear Washingtonians,

We are fortunate in DC that since 2015, our city has experienced tremendous economic growth. This growth has allowed us to make significant investments in our people and neighborhoods – we’ve modernized schools and libraries, added thousands of affordable homes, transformed our waterfront and created new destinations across DC, and launched and expanded innovative human services programs that are giving more Washingtonians a fair shot.

Today, even as we face a confluence of post-COVID factors, our city is still strong. We continue to have a Aaa bond rating. DC is the number one city in the country for tech careers and among the top cities for women-owned business openings. We are leading the country in office-to-housing conversions. Tourism is rebounding. Our public school enrollment is up two years in a row. Crime is trending down. And unlike many of our peer cities, DC’s population is growing.

I know that by continuing to work together – by striking the right balance between investments and sacrifice and by prioritizing investments that will kick off more revenues for the District – we will get back to the economic growth levels that have fueled the renaissance of modern Washington.

I’m optimistic about our future. Our Comeback Plan is working. And over these past few years, we have been reminded many times: never bet against cities, especially not this one. Cities are resilient. Cities are hubs of history and culture. Cities are drivers of innovation. Cities are where people come to change the world. And there is no city in the world like Washington, DC. Let’s keep pushing.

Sincerely,

  
**Muriel Bowser**  
Mayor



# DC'S COMEBACK

## BY THE NUMBERS

Added  
**8,000**  
residents

DC ranked 7th  
among all states in  
terms of population  
percentage growth

Increased  
population  
for the second  
year in a row

Added  
**12,260**  
more jobs

Hotel  
occupancy and  
room revenue  
returned to  
pre-pandemic  
levels

Welcomed nearly  
**22 million** visitors  
from across the  
country and around  
the world, **2.8 million**  
more than the  
previous year



Johns Hopkins University's new Bloomberg Center, located on Pennsylvania Avenue, is the latest academic addition to Downtown DC. The Bloomberg Center hosts the university's School of Advanced International Studies.

IN 2023, WE  
**OPENED:**

Photo Credit: Will Kirk / Johns Hopkins

- Nearly **165,000** sq feet of retail space
- More than **800,000** sq feet of office space
- More than **6,000** residential units
- **649** new hotel rooms
- New **400,000** sq foot branch of Johns Hopkins University

**With more than 1,400 units proposed by 2025, DC is leading the country in office-to-housing conversions.**



In 2023, total enrollment in public schools increased for the second consecutive year to 98,649 students in DC Public Schools and public charter schools.



In February 2024, Metro rail and bus service had a **20% increase** over February 2023 and weekend ridership had fully recovered. To help close WMATA's projected FY25 operating budget deficit, the District provided \$200 million on top of our FY24 operating subsidy.



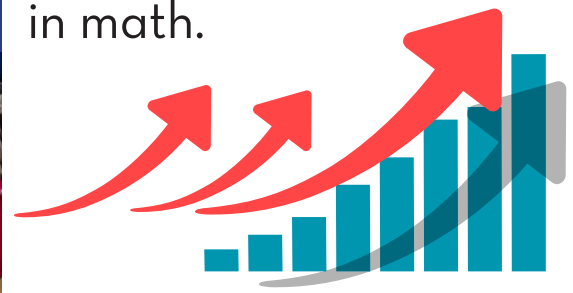
# EDUCATION

“Our public schools have been a bright spot in the renaissance of Washington, DC, and they will continue to play a critical role in our comeback.”  
-Mayor Bowser



In 2023, DC funded **High-Impact Tutoring** in 73 of the highest-need schools and 19 community-based sites, reaching over 5,100 public school students.

Since the pandemic, DC Public Schools (DCPS) has remained the single fastest-improving urban school system in reading – with 4th-grade students completely recovering – and the third fastest in math.



Since 2015, we have grown our public education budget from **\$1.4 billion to \$2.7 billion.**

The Advanced Technical Center (ATC) is a central piece of the Bowser Administration’s efforts to reimagine the high school experience and set students on a pathway to the middle class. The ATC provides DC students with career-focused opportunities to acquire professional skills, earn industry credentials, and gain college credits in high-demand, high-wage careers such as cybersecurity and general nursing.



## DCPS:

- The contract approved in December 2022 gave DCPS teachers a 12% increase in salary over four years and a 4% retention bonus.
- Last year, DCPS retained 95% of effective and highly effective teachers.

# WORKFORCE



In November 2023, Mayor Bowser and the Department of Employment Services (DOES) announced the HBCU Public Service Program to create a pathway to public service for graduating seniors of Howard University and the University of the District of Columbia (UDC). Starting June 2024, 25 graduates will be placed in District agencies for a year, and will be eligible for full-time District Government employment after their apprenticeship.

In 2023, Mayor Bowser kicked off the transformation of the historic Spingarn High School into the home of the new DC Infrastructure Academy.



# RECREATION



Total enrollment in Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) summer camps rose **33%** from 2022 to 2023, from 7,678 to **10,210** enrollments.

In August 2023, Mayor Bowser and DPR broke ground on the Anacostia Recreation Center at Ketcham Elementary School, Anacostia's first new recreation center in 20 years.



# PUBLIC SAFETY



Throughout 2023, Mayor Bowser worked to rebalance our city's public safety and justice ecosystem so that, above all else, it prioritizes the safety of our community. Washington, DC is a city that is committed to creating opportunity and believes in second chances. As we connect people to those opportunities, we must also work together as a community to send a clear message that we will not tolerate violence.

In May 2023, Mayor Bowser introduced the Safer Stronger Amendment Act of 2023, with provisions like expanded pre-trial detention. That summer, the Council passed a package of emergency legislation, and those policies began to bend crime trends down.

In October 2023, Mayor Bowser introduced the Addressing Crime Trends Now Act (ACT Now) to address public safety challenges by giving law enforcement more tools to hold criminals accountable and keep neighborhoods safe.

On March 11, 2024, Mayor Bowser signed Councilmember Brooke Pinto's Secure DC legislation, which includes provisions from Safer Stronger 2.0 and ACT Now, into law.



After a distinguished 25-year career in law enforcement, Pamela Smith became the first African American woman named permanent Chief of the Metropolitan Police Department (MPD).

Staffed by outreach teams from public safety, human services, behavioral health, and community relations agencies, the new Safe Commercial Corridor Hubs in Chinatown and Anacostia connect residents to a range of city services with a specific focus on working across government to keep the corridors safe and clean.

Mayor Bowser increased the hiring bonus for new MPD recruits from \$20,000 to \$25,000, with up to \$6,000 in rental assistance also available. **Interested in joining MPD? Visit [joinmpd.dc.gov](https://joinmpd.dc.gov)**





In 2023, the Fire and Emergency Medical Services Department (FEMS) responded to 210,998 calls for service, including more than 33,000 fire calls and more than 167,000 EMS calls.



In 2023, the Office of Unified Communications (OUC) handled nearly 1.8 million emergency 911 calls and nearly 1.5 million non-emergency/city service 311 calls. The District's 911 call center is one of the busiest in the country, historically ranking as the 4th busiest center behind those of New York City, Chicago, and Los Angeles.



Mayor Bowser is funding a new DC Jail to replace the aging Central Detention Facility. A modern, secure, and resilient Department of Corrections facility will use evidence-based practices that support residents' safe return to the community and reduce recidivism.

Know a young person who might be interested in a career at OUC? Learn more about the OUC Junior Academy, a free 5-week program that teaches young people about career pathways in public service.

**Learn more at [ouc.dc.gov](https://ouc.dc.gov)**

## You can help build a safer, stronger DC...

Through **CameraConnect DC**, residents and businesses can share video footage with MPD's Real-Time Crime Center.  
**[mpdc.dc.gov/cameraconnectdc](https://mpdc.dc.gov/cameraconnectdc)**

By providing rebates for businesses and organizations that purchase automated external defibrillators (AEDs), the **AED Incentive Program** will help increase survival rates for people who go into cardiac arrest in the community. **[fems.dc.gov/aed](https://fems.dc.gov/aed)**




# BUILDING A STRONGER, HEALTHIER DC

One thing we know: When people get the right care at the right time, they will have better outcomes. By building a robust system of care that addresses the wide range of physical, mental, and behavioral health care needs in our community, we can build a stronger, healthier DC.



Mayor Bowser and the Department of Behavioral Health (DBH) opened the District's first Stabilization Center to provide immediate crisis intervention, typically lasting 24-72 hours, for those experiencing substance use disorder. Since its opening in October 2023, the Stabilization Center has provided services to 1,540 community members.

**The facility provides support including peer counseling and resources to sustain long-term recovery. Get connected to the Stabilization Center: (202)-839-3500 or at [DCstabilizationcenter.com](https://DCstabilizationcenter.com)**



In October, the Child and Family Services Agency (CFSA) launched the 211 warmline. This will voluntarily connect children, families, and community members to DC Government systems of care and community-based services and prevent unnecessary investigations by Child Protective Services.



A new Whole Blood Program, an initiative designed to support and train paramedics in performing pre-hospital blood transfusions in partnership with the American Red Cross, will increase survival rates by decreasing the amount of time it takes to replace lost blood.



In 2023, Mayor Bowser announced that the District will cancel up to \$90 million in medical debt for many of the 90,000 District residents who have unpaid medical bills.



# A NEW HEALTH CARE CORRIDOR EAST OF THE RIVER

April 2024

 **ANACOSTIA**

October 2022



Mayor Bowser and Dr. Ayanna Bennett, the Director of DC Health, cut the ribbon on the new DC Health headquarters in historic Anacostia, bringing nearly 700 DC Health employees to the neighborhood.



Universal Health Services (UHS) cut the ribbon on the new Cedar Hill Urgent Care GW Health. The clinic is now serving over 12,000 patients a year.

September 2023

**CONGRESS HEIGHTS**

Coming in 2025



Mayor Bowser joined Whitman-Walker to open the new Max Robinson Center on the St. Elizabeths East campus.



Currently under construction on the St. Elizabeths East campus, the new full-service Cedar Hill Regional Medical Center GW Health will open in 2025.

Mayor Bowser and Universal Health Services (UHS) announced a plan to bring new emergency services to Ward 7 on the Fletcher-Johnson campus. The new freestanding emergency department will provide 24/7, hospital-quality emergency services for patients of all ages, from pediatrics to seniors, with a full-service emergency room staffed with an experienced team including board-certified emergency medicine physicians, ER nurses, and ER techs.



# BUILDING A STRONGER, MORE RESILIENT DC



In November, Mayor Bowser and the District Department of Transportation (DDOT) celebrated 50% completion of the DC Smart Street Lighting Project, which has modernized almost 40,000 streetlights across DC.



Department of Energy and Environment (DOEE) helped 2,005 low-income households access solar energy and benefits in FY23.



While attending the COP28 Local Climate Action Summit, Mayor Bowser released Carbon Free DC, a strategy for DC to achieve carbon neutrality by 2045. Carbon Free DC will continue DC's legacy as a sustainability pioneer and help address the drivers of emissions.

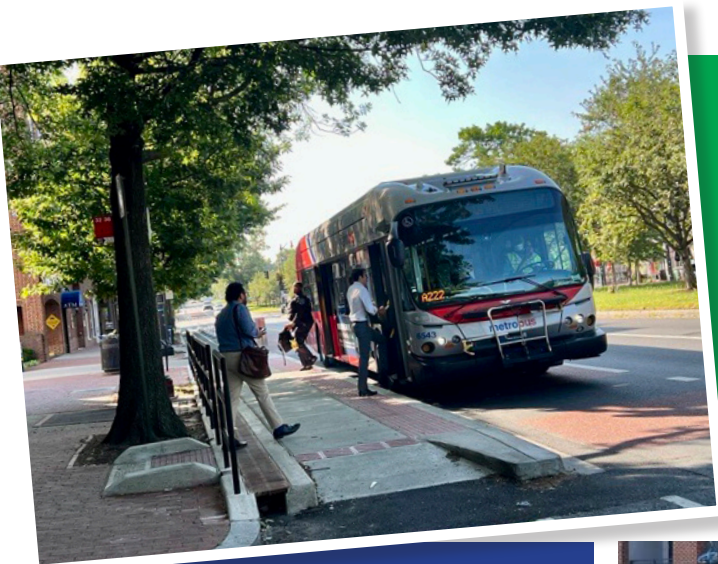
Learn more:  
[tinyurl.com/DCCarbonFree](https://tinyurl.com/DCCarbonFree)



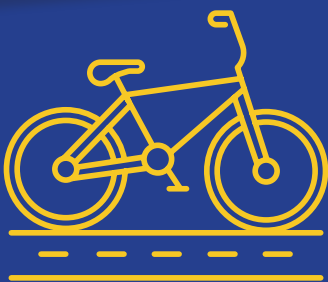
In July 2023, Mayor Bowser and community members kicked off the transformation of “Dave Thomas Circle.”

This long-awaited infrastructure project will significantly improve the Florida Avenue and New York Avenue NE intersection, improving safety for all who move through it and creating new green space. Public spaces at the transformed intersection will be named Mamie “Peanut” Johnson Plaza in honor of the late women’s baseball pioneer.

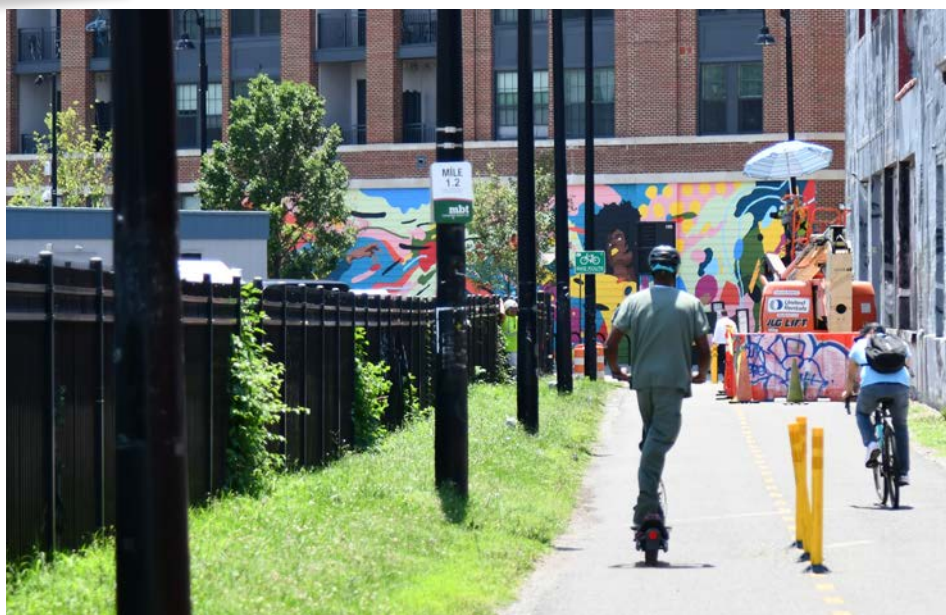




Mayor Bowser established the Bus Priority Program in order to improve access to opportunity for District residents across all eight wards. Through the program, the amount of bus lanes in the District has grown from less than a mile to over 13 lane-miles built or under construction. DDOT is delivering on the Mayor's historic commitment to deliver 51 bus priority projects, with five projects completed and 17 in active planning, design, or construction.



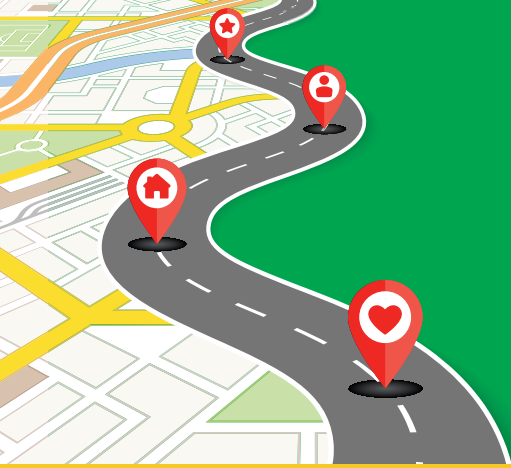
**In FY23, DDOT installed 7.8 miles of protected bike lanes for a total of 114 miles.**



Over five miles of the Metropolitan Branch Trail (MBT) have already been completed, starting at Union Station, going up through Eckington, Edgewood, Brookland, and Fort Totten. The current trail sees over 2,500 bicyclists and pedestrians per day! The Fort Totten to Takoma section will complete nearly two miles of trail, making the trail within DC nearly complete. The Mayor's budget funds the final segment between Blair Road and Piney Branch Road in Takoma, which will be completed in 2027.

In 2023, the Department of Public Works (DPW) launched a Curbside Composting Pilot Program for residents in all eight wards. Almost 9,000 households are participating, and DPW has collected almost 300 tons of food waste to be repurposed into compost.





# 36,000 BY 2025

## ADDING NEW HOMES ACROSS ALL 8 WARDS

**COMEBACK  
GOAL:**  
Add 15,000  
residents  
Downtown by  
2028

**Progress toward 36,000 new homes by 2025,  
with at least 12,000 affordable homes:**

34,389 out of 36,000 homes

9,500 out of 12,000 affordable homes

**Housing in Downtown** is an innovative program designed to catalyze new residential development and add thousands of new residents Downtown through a 20-year tax abatement. Learn more about the Housing in Downtown program at [dmped.dc.gov](https://dmped.dc.gov)

“My grandfather believed this part of town could one day become offices, shops, hotels, and restaurants...History has proven that people always want to live, work, and play in cities ...Wilco and our team undertook this project because we believe people and businesses want to come back to the city – you just need to give them a reason.”  
Gary Cohen on transforming the Vanguard office building into housing in Downtown DC

The Elle apartments are the first major office-to-residential conversion in DC’s Golden Triangle Business Improvement District.

In FY23, the Home Purchase Assistance Program (HPAP) had a record-setting year, distributing nearly **\$70 million** in loans to support nearly 470 Washingtonians in becoming first-time homebuyers.



Lisner-Louise-Dickson-Hurt Home in Ward 3 will deliver **93 affordable senior apartments**. This will be the first Housing Production Trust Fund project west of Rock Creek Park.



# OBVIOUSLY DC:

## STRONG NEIGHBORHOODS IN ALL 8 WARDS

**DC is number one in the nation for tech careers - Forbes**

**DC is one of the top cities for women-owned business openings - Yelp**

**The Vitality Fund** is an investment program designed to bring businesses to Downtown DC by supporting their relocations or expansions.

- Mayor Bowser has announced six companies that are recipients of the Vitality Fund and that will expand their presence in Downtown DC.
- Together, these companies will occupy nearly 150,000 square feet of office space, creating over 530 jobs in the process.

### **The Commercial Property Acquisition Fund**

provides eligible DC-based businesses (equity impact enterprise businesses or businesses eligible to be a certified equity impact enterprise) with down payment assistance of up to \$750,000 or 25% of the sale price, whichever is less, for acquiring commercial property in the District.

### **Learn more at [obviouslydc.com](https://obviouslydc.com)**

In January 2023, the community came together to celebrate the Spice Suite's new home in the Langdon neighborhood of Ward 5. The Spice Suite is part of owner Angel Gregorio's larger vision: Black and Forth. Black and Forth is a block of commercial space that will house multiple Black, woman-owned small businesses.



In December, Mayor Bowser cut the ribbon on Miss Toya's Southern Cajun Kitchen, a new, Black-owned restaurant in Ward 7 and a Food Access Fund recipient.

Since launching the Food Access Fund in 2021, Mayor Bowser has invested almost \$40 million to increase access to grocery stores, restaurants, fast-casual restaurants, and other food access points, with a focus on Wards 7 and 8.



Sala Thai and Duffy's Irish Pub both opened in Hill East in late 2023 and each received support from the Food Access Fund.

# THE GREAT WARD 8

“ Mayor Barry said to me, ‘Miss Bowser, I have a challenge for you: I want you to do more for Ward 8 than I was able to do.’ And since then, we have embraced with dogged determination, an agenda for Ward 8 that I know would make Marion Barry proud.”

Mayor Bowser at the renaming ceremony of Marion Barry Avenue SE, November 2023



The transformation of the St. Elizabeths East campus represents Mayor Bowser’s commitment to ensuring that the residents of Ward 8 have equal access to amenities and opportunities. To date, the District has invested nearly \$900 million into the campus, delivering:

- Entertainment and Sports Arena
- Sycamore & Oak
- New 801 East Men’s Shelter
- 88 new opportunities for homeownership at the District Towns at St. Elizabeths East
- New Whitman-Walker Max Robinson Center
- Cedar Hill Regional Medical Center, GW Health – delivering in 2025

## ST. ELIZABETHS EAST

Sycamore & Oak is a new outdoor retail village that houses 13 local businesses – all Black-owned and all owned by residents of Wards 7 and 8.





# 202 CREATES

“Life is sometimes black and white, and it’s the arts that fill in the color.”  
- Mayor Bowser



## The Capital of Creativity

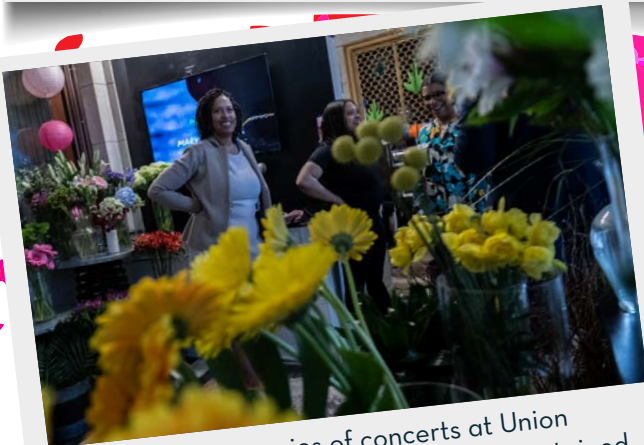


Mayor Bowser, Congresswoman Eleanor Holmes Norton, Ronald Moten, and community members broke ground on the Go-Go Museum and Café and cut the ribbon on the Go-Go Mobile Museum.



Photo Credit: The Kennedy Center

Theatre Week is a week-long celebration of the many theaters across the city that bring world-class performances to Washington, DC.



Jazz in Bloom, a series of concerts at Union Station, highlighted local talent and entertained travelers and tourists.



At a celebration of the MuralsDC Anacostia project, Mayor Bowser and the Anacostia BID unveiled a new “Art to Go-Go” shuttle.



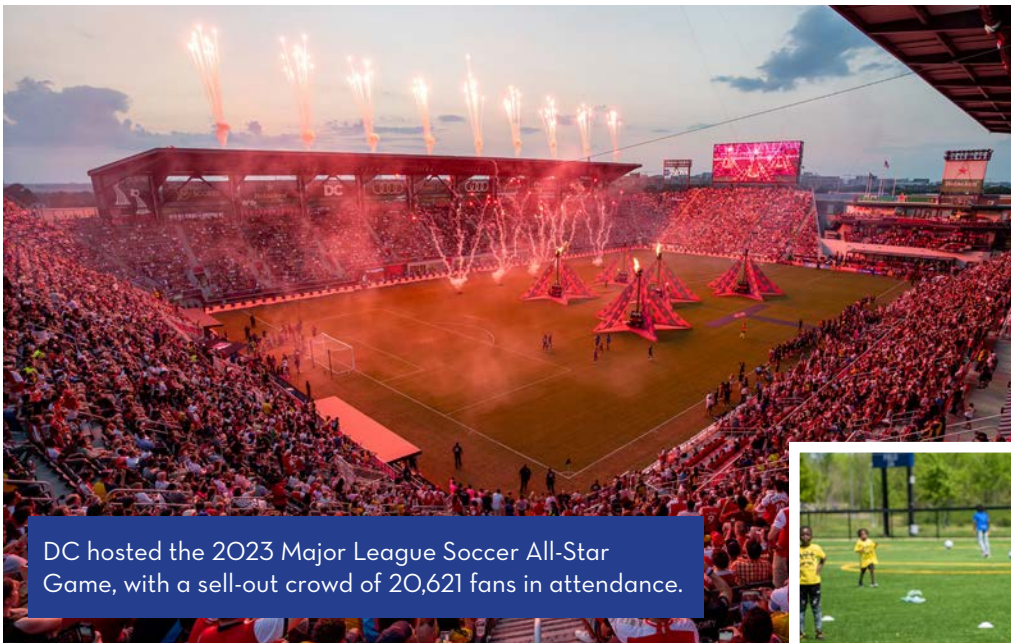
# SPORTS CAPITAL

Mayor Bowser, Chairman Phil Mendelson and Members of the Council of the District of Columbia, and Chief Executive Officer of Monumental Sports & Entertainment Ted Leonsis announced that they reached a deal to transform and expand the Capital One Arena into a state-of-the-art urban arena that will be the home of the Washington Wizards and Washington Capitals through 2050.



## DC Teams

**Washington Mystics**  
**Washington Wizards**  
**Washington Spirit**  
**DC United**  
**Washington Capitals**  
**Washington Nationals**  
**Washington Commanders**  
**DC Defenders**  
**DC Divas**  
**DC Breeze**  
**DC Shadow**  
**Capital City Go-Go**



DC hosted the 2023 Major League Soccer All-Star Game, with a sell-out crowd of 20,621 fans in attendance.



Beginning in 2023, the Washington Spirit began playing all home games at Audi Field, also the home of DC United and the DC Defenders.



The Fields at RFK - 27 acres of asphalt transformed into three state-of-the-art artificial turf recreational fields and other amenities - continue to host community events like the RFK Day of Play. In February 2024, the U.S. House of Representatives passed H.R. 4984, bipartisan legislation that would transfer administrative jurisdiction of the RFK campus to the District, allowing for a mix of uses.





## Gallery Place-Chinatown Task Force

In neighborhoods across DC, from the waterfront to Union Market, our community has witnessed and enjoyed the transformation of old spaces into new uses. Mayor Bowser created the Gallery Place/Chinatown Task Force to focus on potential future uses of the Capital One Arena, Gallery Place, and the surrounding blocks. This team of experts is charged with creating an immediate activation plan, long-term vision, and investment plan for a re-energized Gallery Place/Chinatown neighborhood.

[bedowntown.dc.gov](http://bedowntown.dc.gov)

### Task Force priority areas:



#### Visioning



Develop a strategic vision for the future of the two city blocks that make up the Capital One Arena and Gallery Place.



#### Activation



Identify temporary and permanent activation programs, including special events, to increase visitation to Gallery Place/Chinatown, with public safety, cleanliness, and public health resources in mind.

#### Investments and Incentives



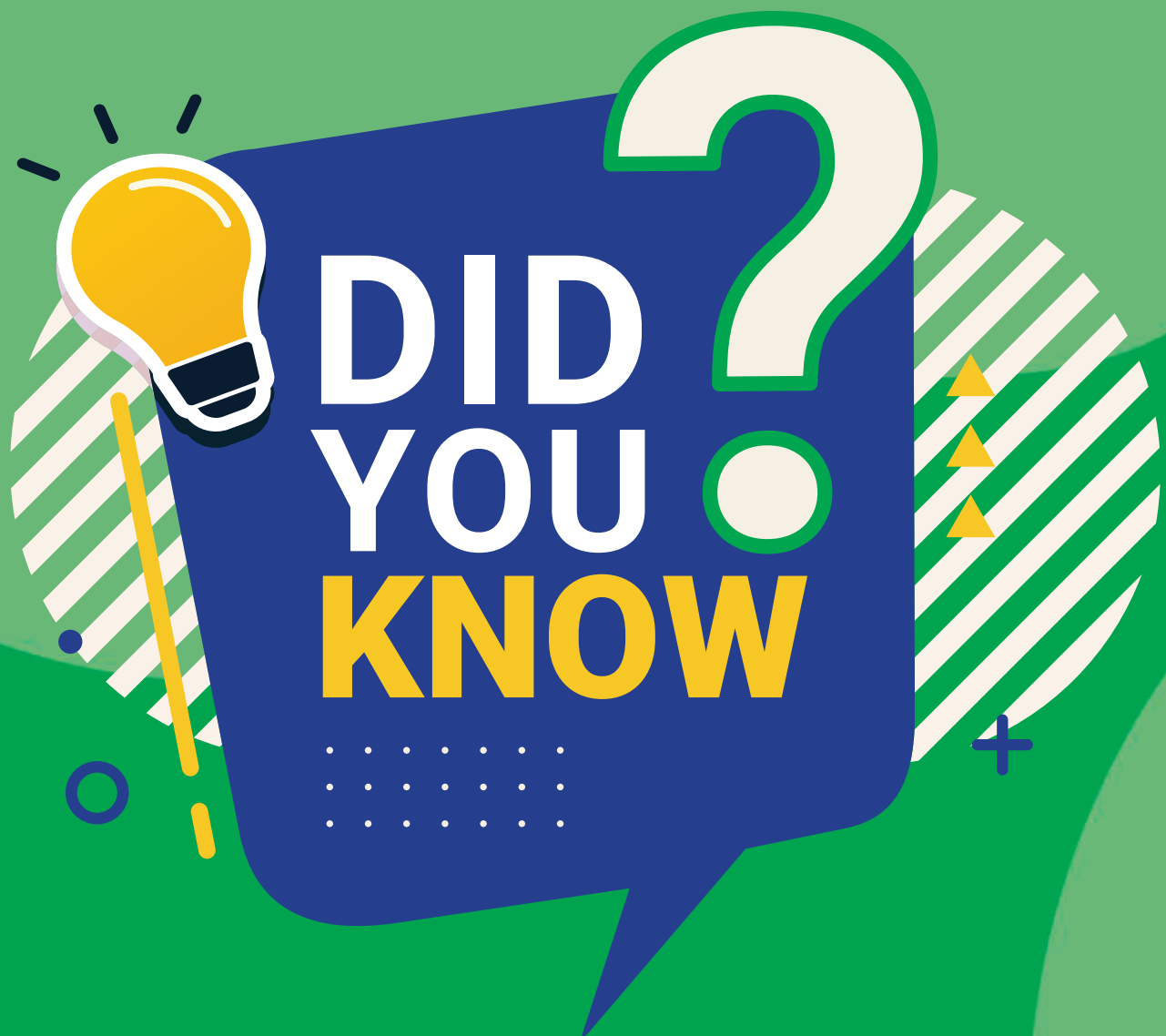
Source, evaluate, and recommend investment tools to support existing businesses, prioritize critical capital investments, and reposition real estate assets into new productive uses.



#### Community Engagement and Marketing



Promote community activations and provide updates about changes and planning for the future of Gallery Place/Chinatown.



The Mayor's Office of Community Relations and Services – or, the MOCRS – serve as a direct link between District residents, Mayor Bowser, and District agencies. They are Mayor Bowser's eyes and ears in the community, and the MOCRS can help you solve challenges and connect to services and resources.

**Learn more about the MOCRS for your ward at [mocrs.dc.gov](https://mocrs.dc.gov)**