

# *Legislative and Policy Proposal*



*Baltimore City Council President  
Brandon M. Scott*

*(2019-2020)*

Wednesday, July 31, 2019

We hear over and over again that people feel disconnected from their government and don't feel like they get the service they deserve. Our neighbors have witnessed corruption and have been frustrated by the lack of sustained results to our most pressing challenges. Some think things will never change, but that's not Baltimore's destiny.

As Council President, I want to focus the City Council's work over the next year and a half to deliver for Baltimore's residents and bring greater transparency to the way we operate. I developed this policy proposal, highlighting cleaning up city government, improving public safety, investing in our youth, embedding equity in our work, and centering public engagement.

We will continue to make necessary reforms to make our government more accountable. We will leverage all of the resources at our disposal to address the disease of gun violence and heal our city with compassion and holistic services. We will press for more serious investment in Baltimore's youth, from school funding to increased recreational opportunities. We will embed a framework of equity into our local government to ensure all of our communities are supported, invested in, and valued.

The best government is one that invites its residents into the conversation while being responsive to their needs. The priorities, perspectives, and ideas of Baltimoreans must be reflected in this document, too. As such, my team has developed an engagement plan to present this information and solicit feedback. I will be taking these ideas out of City Hall and into our neighborhoods.

During the month of August, I will host a series of community forums across the city to share this proposal and solicit resident feedback. The input and ideas that come out of these forums, along with input submitted to [councilpolicy@baltimorecity.gov](mailto:councilpolicy@baltimorecity.gov), will re-shape this document and the priorities of the City Council through the end of 2020.

I look forward to discussing these proposals with you. Please join me at one of the forums. Thank you for taking the time to make your voice heard. I am eager to hear what you have to share.



Brandon M. Scott  
President, Baltimore City Council

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## Cleaning Up City Government

### **1. Require City Charter Reviews Every Decade**

As Council President, I will pass legislation creating a Charter Review Commission, made up of city officials, legal experts, and residents, to evaluate and suggest changes to the Baltimore City Charter.

### **2. Create City Administrator for Baltimore**

As Council President, I will pass Bill 19-0382, a Charter Amendment I introduced as a Councilmember, to establish a City Administrator in Baltimore City.

### **3. Change the Makeup of the Board of Estimates**

As Council President, I will introduce a Charter Amendment to reduce the size of the Board of Estimates from five members to three.

### **4. End 'Gag Orders' in City Legal Settlements**

As Council President, I will pass Bill 19-0409 "Transparency and Oversight in Claims and Litigation" – legislation I co-sponsored with Councilwoman Shannon Sneed.

### **5. Strengthen City Ethics Watchdog**

As Council President, I will fight for funding to appropriately staff the Baltimore City Board of Ethics. I will fight for the passage of a bill to separate the Board of Ethics from the Department of Legislative Reference.

### **6. Activate the New Cybersecurity Committee**

As Council President, I will work with the co-chairs of the new Cybersecurity & Emergency Preparedness Committee to lead the Council's efforts to modernize the City's cybersecurity infrastructure.

### **7. Expand Access to Public Hearings**

As Council President, I will make all meetings of the City Council and its committees available for live streaming and comments. In 2019, residents should not be required to attend a meeting, in person, to make their voices heard.

## Safer, Stronger Communities

### **1. Require a Comprehensive Crime Strategy**

As Council President, I will pass legislation requiring the biennial development and presentation of a comprehensive crime reduction strategy plan. This plan should be developed with input from the Baltimore Police Department, the Mayor's Office of Criminal Justice, the State's Attorney's Office, the Health Department, the Fire Department, the Office of Emergency Management, the Department of Recreation and Parks, and the Office of Children and Family Success.

### **2. Restore Local Control and Oversight of the BPD**

As Council President, I will continue my advocacy in Annapolis to restore local control of the Baltimore Police Department. Without the ability to set policies and provide oversight, we will not be able to truly transform this department and fulfill Consent Decree requirements.

### **3. Nominate Advisory Commission for Public Safety**

As Council President, I will name an Advisory Commission for Public Safety to give residents a voice as we address the public safety needs of their communities in the context of the Consent Decree.

#### **4. Target Gun Traffickers and Straw Purchasers**

As Council President, I will strengthen our Gun Offender Registry to better identify straw purchasers, illegal users of assault weapons, and those who sell guns to minors.

#### **5. Address Trauma Associated with Violence and Addiction**

As Council President, I will ask the Administration to strengthen cross-agency responses to violence and addiction, with a particular focus on having a more robust mental health response for our youth, families, and communities.

#### **6. Resist Regressive "Tough On Crime" Laws**

As Council President, I will fight attempts to re-introduce harmful and ineffective legislation that seeks to be "tough on crime," such as increasing mandatory minimums for gun violations. These policies do not work, break up families, interrupt childhood and do not work for Baltimore.

#### **7. Implement Small, Local Business Preference**

As Council President, I am eager to propose solutions that increase opportunities for small businesses.

#### **8. Promote Workforce Re-Entry**

As Council President, I will advocate to put our hardest to hire residents back to productive work.

#### **9. Create President's Business Roundtables**

As Council President, I will host quarterly open meetings with Baltimore's small businesses to better understand their role in our local economy, their needs, and how they support sustainable economic development in our communities.

## **Investing In Youth, Investing In Our Future**

#### **1. Fight for More Money for Our Public Schools**

As Council President, I will advocate for increasing the City's contribution to our public schools. To be prepared for the Kirwan Commission recommendations, I will also introduce a Resolution demanding the Department of Finance present the City Council with a proactive plan to increase local funding for our public schools.

#### **2. Create More Modern Opportunities for Youth**

As Council President, I will fight for our recreation centers to be open seven days per week. I will work with the Department of Recreation and Parks and Baltimore's non-profit sector to improve facilities and programming to ensure that they meet the needs of our youth.

#### **3. Improve Planning for Summer YouthWorks**

As Council President, I will work with the City Council and the Mayor's Office of Employment Development to increase oversight and planning of the YouthWorks Program. Every young person in our city who wants a summer job should be able to have one.

#### **4. Enact Youth Athletic Protection**

As Council President, I will pass Ordinance 19-0337: Youth Athletic Protection. I introduced this legislation to keep our youth athletes safe by requiring safety training and equipment for all youth team officials that use the Department of Recreation & Parks' facilities.

#### **5. Lower Voting Age for Municipal Elections**

As Council President, I will introduce and pass a charter amendment to lower the voting age in Baltimore City municipal elections to 16.

## **6. Inspire More City Government Mentors**

As Council President, I will increase the number of city employees engaging in youth mentoring across the City of Baltimore, while working with the administration to identify incentives for participation.

# **Bringing an Equity Framework to Governance**

## **1. Implement Equity Assessment Program**

As Council President, I will direct the Council Committees to hold the Administration accountable for compliance with the requirements of the Equity Assessment Program (18-0223) I sponsored.

## **2. Establish Funding Stream for the Equity Assistance Fund**

As Council President, I will identify a funding source for the Equity Assistance Fund (18-0222), a Charter Amendment I sponsored that received the support of voters in 2018.

## **3. Require Legislation to Have Fiscal and Equity Analysis**

As Council President, I will pass a law requiring all ordinances to have a completed fiscal and equity analysis.

## **4. Investigate Racially and Economically Disparate Impact of Fines and Fees**

As Council President, I will establish a task force of government officials, residents, community partners, and experts to study and provide recommendations on how to address the many ways our city government places burdensome fees and fines on individuals.

# **Centering Public Engagement**

As Council President, I will host a series of town halls to solicit feedback on this policy proposal and new ideas from Baltimore's residents, which will guide the Council's work moving forward.

# **Cleaning Up City Government**

## *Transparency, Accountability & Efficiency in Baltimore*

As Council President, I am committed to making city government more transparent, accountable, and accessible to all city residents. I want to ensure all Baltimoreans have faith in their government and have the opportunity to understand how our city functions.

The recent ethics scandals and ransomware attacks in the City of Baltimore underscore a need to regain the public's trust. Additionally, we must use our resources as efficiently and effectively as possible, and in a way that reflects our values. It is clear that we have work to do on that front. The time for change is now.

### **1. Require City Charter Reviews Every Decade**

As Council President, I will pass legislation creating a Charter Review Commission, made up of city officials, legal experts, and residents, to evaluate and suggest changes to the Baltimore City Charter.

The Charter is the primary governing document for the city. Unfortunately, it is not regularly reviewed and updated. The Charter Review Commission will make recommendations for how to improve and modernize our City Charter each decade.

Many major cities require a periodic Charter review. Such reviews have yielded changes to everything from modernizing language to adjusting governing structure. A regular review process is a best practice that creates opportunities for residents to shape their government.

## 2. Create City Administrator for Baltimore

As Council President, I will pass [Bill 19-0382](#), a Charter Amendment I introduced as a Councilmember, to establish a City Administrator in Baltimore City.

In many jurisdictions, the roles of the Mayor and chief administrator are separate. Mayors are executives who focus on the challenges facing the city, while administrators play a politically-neutral role maintaining efficient city operations. Cities like D.C., Atlanta, GA, Charlotte, NC, and San Francisco, CA all have both an executive and an administrator.

In April 2019, I introduced [Bill 19-0382: Charter Amendment - City Administrator](#), which would establish the position of City Administrator as the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) in Baltimore. By separating the implementation of City policy from overly political considerations, a CAO would improve performance in City agencies, ensure accurate information is available about City services, and increase government responsiveness to resident's needs. As Council President, I will pass this legislation out of the Council and send it to voters for approval.

## 3. Change the Makeup of the Board of Estimates

As Council President, I will introduce a Charter Amendment to reduce the size of the Board of Estimates from five members to three.

The Board of Estimates approves at over a half a billion in city government contracts for goods and services every year. The Board is currently made up of the City Council President, Mayor, Comptroller, City Solicitor, and Director of the Department of Public Works (DPW). The City Solicitor and DPW Director are both appointed by the Mayor. This has led many to question their independence and objectivity when assessing Mayor-supported proposals.

Changing the makeup of the Board of Estimates is one way to increase transparency and deliberation in how taxpayer dollars are spent. Removing the City Solicitor and Director of DPW from the Board of Estimates would make the BOE

process more accountable to the residents of Baltimore because it would give each member of the Board equal weight in approving City contracts. We will increase accountability when the officials who have been elected by the people are voting on how taxpayers' dollars are being sent.

Most cities do not use a Board of Estimates to approve city contracts. Over my tenure, I will investigate alternatives to the Board of Estimates with the intention to make the decision making process more transparent and democratic. This amendment proposal will begin that conversation.

#### 4. End 'Gag Orders' in City Legal Settlements

As Council President, I will pass [Bill 19-0409](#) "Transparency and Oversight in Claims and Litigation" – legislation I co-sponsored with Councilwoman Shannon Sneed.

This bill makes the use of non-disparagement agreements, or "gag orders," illegal for settlement agreements in police misconduct and unlawful discrimination claims levied against the City of Baltimore. "Gag orders" require residents to keep silent in cases of police misconduct, if they reach a financial settlement with the City. The bill also requires the City's Law Department to publish information about claims filed.

The U.S. Court of Appeals for the 4<sup>th</sup> Circuit found the use of non-disparagement agreements in Baltimore's legal settlement agreements for police misconduct cases to be an unconstitutional violation of free speech.

The Baltimore Police Department is making steady progress at reforming itself into a police force Baltimoreans can be proud of. However, the City and BPD must take responsibility for past actions and allow for honest dialogue. Victims of police brutality have a constitutionally protected right to speak about their experiences. We have an obligation to own our mistakes and to be accountable to Baltimore's residents. Transparency at all levels is critical to that mission.

## 5. Strengthen City Ethics Watchdog

As Council President, I will fight for funding to appropriately staff the Baltimore City Board of Ethics. I will fight for the passage of a bill to separate the Board of Ethics from the Department of Legislative Reference.

Baltimore City Government has thirteen-thousand employees with an operating budget of \$2.90 billion, yet allocates \$0 for ethics enforcement, [as recently reported by The Baltimore Sun](#). This is entirely inadequate particularly in light of recent events calling the ethics of elected officials and City employees into question.

Currently, a small volunteer Board of Ethics with no full-time staff conducts investigations into potential violations of the Ethics Code. The Department of Legislative Reference, a department primarily tasked with bill drafting and legal research, spends part of its time working on ethics issues.

Properly devoting the resources necessary for a functioning Board of Ethics can increase the Board's capacity to root out violations of the Ethics Code with consistency and independence.

## 6. Activate the New Cybersecurity Committee

As Council President, I will work with the co-chairs of the new Cybersecurity & Emergency Preparedness Committee to lead the Council's efforts to modernize the City's cybersecurity infrastructure.

In the past decade, the Baltimore metro region has been recognized for its growing tech sector. The recent ransomware attack illuminates a gap in important tech know-how and protection within city government. We must do more as a city to build critical cybersecurity infrastructure while expanding access to technology to all residents. A modern city needs modern technology infrastructure.

I created a new select committee on Cybersecurity & Emergency Preparedness to investigate the ransomware attack and provide a comprehensive review of what happened and to secure the integrity of our City's computer systems. We will meet with industry professionals and academic experts to review best practices for cybersecurity & emergency preparedness nationwide.

The committee will make recommendations to the City Council and the administration detailing the best practices that need to be adopted to prevent future technology emergencies. Then, I will determine whether the committee's work should be expanded to include periodic reviews and assessments of policies, controls, and procedures to help identify, manage and mitigate cyber risks and ensure city government is best using technology to serve residents without violating civil liberties and privacy rights.

## 7. Expand Access to Public Hearings

As Council President, I will make all meetings of the City Council and its committees available for live streaming and comments. In 2019, residents should not be required to attend a meeting, in person, to make their voices heard.

The best way to engage residents who are most affected by policies is to hold public hearings in those communities. Technology has made live streaming and commenting simple and cheap. I seek to make the halls of power more accessible for all residents.

I will work with Council committee chairs to hold our hearings in different spaces in Baltimore. By bringing our meetings closer to our residents, I hope to inspire civic engagement and a more robust exchange of ideas. Expanding access to public council hearings increases transparency and makes legislators more accountable to residents.

# **Safer, Stronger Communities**

## *Increasing Public Safety*

As City Council President and former chair of the Council's Public Safety Committee, reducing violent crime and reforming the BPD have been my top priorities. While our police officers are a key part of any public safety strategy, we will never police our way out of the violence plaguing our city. They need help from all of us and all of government. We need all hands on deck to turn our city around.

Violence is a public health crisis. Our approach must address its root causes. From Safe Streets to Ceasefire, the most effective strategies for addressing the disease of gun violence are informed by healing and understanding the needs of our community.

### **1. Require a Comprehensive Crime Strategy**

As Council President, I will pass legislation requiring the biennial development and presentation of a comprehensive crime reduction strategy plan. This plan should be developed with input from the Baltimore Police Department, the Mayor's Office of Criminal Justice, the State's Attorney's Office, the Health Department, the Fire Department, the Office of Emergency Management, the Department of Recreation and Parks, and the Office of Children and Family Success.

In 2017, I led the Council in requesting a comprehensive violence reduction strategy to deal with record levels of violence. We did not receive one, so we produced a comprehensive citywide public safety framework, "Live to Be More." This month, we finally received the BPD's portion of that plan.

I am thankful for the BPD's dedication to reforming itself into a 21st century police department and for creating a plan to reduce violent crime. This is a critical step to rebuild trust between the department and our residents. We can no longer operate

without a plan to address the more pressing issue in our City. Requiring a crime plan is necessary because we operated without one for too long.

The Baltimore Police Department cannot be expected to reduce crime alone. Every city agency has a role to play in addressing the disease of gun violence in our city. I will continue to advocate for a violence reduction strategy that treats violent crime as a public health issue and incorporates more city resources in the fight.

## 2. Restore Local Control and Oversight of the BPD

As Council President, I will continue my advocacy in Annapolis to restore local control of the Baltimore Police Department. Without the ability to set policies and provide oversight, we will not be able to truly transform this department and fulfill Consent Decree requirements.

I have lead several key reforms since I took office. My efforts helped change state law to civilianize the BPD. Now, more sworn officers walk the beat. I advocated to adjust police district boundaries to correspond with changes in population so officers go where they are most needed. Finally, I worked to eliminate the six-year mandate for Police Commissioner contracts.

Baltimore is the only jurisdiction in Maryland that does not directly oversee its police department. Baltimore's residents must advocate for legislative reforms to the police department by traveling to Annapolis to lobby our state representatives. All other Marylanders can do this through their local county council. The City Council is the most appropriate forum to pass the reform oriented policies required by the Consent Decree.

I understand that state legislators have concerns about this change. I look forward to working directly with them to address and alleviate their concerns. I am hopeful that we will remove this barrier to reform. With increasing calls for police transparency and accountability, now more than ever, Baltimore City must regain the authority to oversee its police department.

### 3. Nominate Advisory Commission for Public Safety

As Council President, I will name an Advisory Commission for Public Safety to give residents a voice as we address the public safety needs of their communities in the context of the Consent Decree.

In 2017, I passed a law establishing a [Citizens Advisory Commission for Public Safety \(17-0063\)](#). This Commission is established, but its members have not been nominated.

I will nominate members to the Advisory Commission for Public Safety, which is comprised of 23 members:

- 2 at-large Baltimore City residents
- a representative of the Hispanic community;
- a representative of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender community;
- an individual with expertise in the area of reentry after incarceration;
- a representative of the Fraternal Order of Police;
- a representative of the Vanguard Justice Society;
- a resident of Baltimore City public housing;
- an individual at least 14 years old or older and under the age of 21; and
- 1 resident of each of the 9 police districts of Baltimore City.

The Commission also includes a member of the Baltimore City House Delegation and Senate Delegation, appointed by the Mayor, as well as the Chair of the City Council Public Safety Committee, the Police Commissioner, and the Director of the Office of Civil Rights and Wage Enforcement.

The Commission is tasked with making recommendations to our agencies about how to address community concerns related to public safety. With new leadership at the Baltimore Police Department and the Consent Decree process underway, it's time for this group to get to work.

#### 4. Target Gun Traffickers and Straw Purchasers

As Council President, I will strengthen our Gun Offender Registry to better identify straw purchasers, illegal users of assault weapons, and those who sell guns to minors.

Several offenses are omitted that are critical to stopping the flow of illegal guns into Baltimore City. Common sense additions to the gun registry would help hold the people trafficking guns into the city accountable.

As we all know, most weapons traced by the BPD originate from outside of Baltimore City — and even outside Maryland. Straw purchasers buy guns for people who are prohibited from having them. They facilitate the worst violence we see in Baltimore, from domestic violence, to armed robberies and shootings. Firearm trace data shows that 60% of firearm recoveries done by police in 2018 originated from outside of Maryland.

Yet, those found to have purchased a weapon for another person, including people who are prohibited from having guns, are not tracked in our City's current gun registry. Right now, straw purchasers are essentially anonymous. We must ensure that people who facilitate gun purchases for people who shouldn't have them are held responsible.

Assault weapons, especially, have no place in our community. Surprisingly, the use of assault weapons in crimes and the sale of firearms to minors are not tracked in BPD's Gun Registry. In the context of severe gun violence in Baltimore City and mass shootings across our country, we should take these common sense steps to improving our ability to build a safer Baltimore.

## 5. Address Trauma Associated with Violence and Addiction

As Council President, I will ask the Administration to strengthen cross-agency responses to violence and addiction, with a particular focus on having a more robust mental health response for our youth, families, and communities.

When someone is harmed by violence the harm inflicted reverberates beyond the victim — families and communities are impacted as well. This repeated exposure to violence, has long lasting consequences, from mental health issues to learning disorders and chronic illnesses. Additionally, addiction has had a similar impact on the lives of our residents.

Our city agencies all have a role to play in serving and supporting those who have been directly and indirectly impacted by gun violence. The City will spend at least \$10 million across 3 city agencies in the next fiscal year on services related to trauma from repeated exposure to violence.

There are many ways we could better deploy city resources to respond to trauma inflicted by violence and addiction. For example, when police respond to a shooting or violent act, we should send trauma clinicians as co-responders. We need better coordination of our city resources and local institutions, from the Department of Health and the State's Attorney's Office, to our local hospitals and health care organizations. Better coordination of resources for victims of trauma will lead to stronger, more resilient communities.

## 6. Resist Regressive "Tough On Crime" Laws

As Council President, I will fight attempts to re-introduce harmful and ineffective legislation that seeks to be "tough on crime," such as increasing mandatory minimums for gun violations. These policies do not work, break up families, interrupt childhood and do not work for Baltimore.

I have spent the majority of my career in public service working to build trust between the Police Department and the residents of Baltimore, while fighting for an understanding of violent crime as a public health crisis. Mandatory minimum sentencing law, broken-windows policing and other variations of stop-and-frisk can be attractive to elected leaders who desperately want to curb violent crime. Unfortunately, these policies do not bear out as successful crime-fighting strategies with sustained results.

Furthermore, Maryland law already establishes mandatory minimums for certain gun violations and these laws have not disincentivized gun violence. They have only served to inflate our prison population and tear apart our families. If we want violence in Baltimore to change, we must be smart on crime, not just tough.

As we reduce crime, we must concurrently restore trust in the police department. That means having a force that is based in constitutional and community based policing principles. It is not a matter of personal opinion — it is a mission required by the Consent Decree.

## *Increasing Economic Wellbeing in Baltimore*

As Council President, I will focus my development efforts on businesses that are contributing to their communities. I will do this by ensuring that more of our public dollars go toward local businesses, including MBEs and WBEs, and toward supporting workers. I will regularly convene local business leaders to discuss the impact of City laws and regulations.

Baltimore's economy is great and varied. With many nationally recognized corporations, and countless small businesses looking to gain a foothold in their neighborhood and looking to grow.

### 7. Implement Small, Local Business Preference

As Council President, I am eager to propose solutions that increase opportunities for small businesses.

All levels of government must streamline their processes to ease the path to investment and employment. For small businesses, the biggest impediment to securing city government contracts is that they are not big enough. As Council President and Chair of the Board of Estimates, I want to bridge that gap.

As Council President I am committed to supporting local businesses and fighting to make sure that the tools we have in place are used to this end. I supported [charter amendment 16-0672](#) which allowed for the creation of a small and local business enterprise procurement preference. After this was approved, the Council passed [an ordinance](#) creating a Small Local Business Enterprise Procurement Preference, which I also supported. Unfortunately, the City has yet to implement this program. The ordinance allows a 10% preference for local and small businesses. We will hold oversight hearings agencies to use this program.

This means that in new, un-grandfathered competitive bids, local and small businesses can win the contract bid even if their price is up to 10% higher than the lowest bid.

## 8. Promote Workforce Re-Entry

As Council President, I will advocate to put our hardest to hire residents back to productive work.

We are missing a huge opportunity. Our reentry workforce is ready, willing and able to work but they are also the most vulnerable to the drug trade. They come home, many hoping to change their lives, but are unable to because of the realities of how tough it can be to find a job.

As Council President, I will introduce legislation to establish a pilot program for the use of Community Workforce Agreements (CWAs) on certain city contracts. CWAs expand entry level employment opportunities, bringing individuals from disadvantaged populations in Baltimore City into the construction labor force through apprentices. Additionally, I will introduce an ordinance requiring each agency to study their staffing model and search for opportunities to hire returning citizens and youth. This includes reviewing their hiring practices and conducting an analysis of budgeted but vacant positions to identify opportunities to hire returning citizens.

## 9. Create President's Business Roundtables

As Council President, I will host quarterly open meetings with Baltimore's small businesses to better understand their role in our local economy, their needs, and how they support sustainable economic development in our communities.

A regular convening of our small business community can help ensure that the perspectives and ideas of the business community are heard with regularity. These quarterly roundtables present an opportunity to have a regular dialogue with our businesses and to hear their concerns and suggestions on pending city council legislation that might affect their operations.

I will convene these roundtables across many different business sectors. I hope to draw from their experience and learn from them ways to approach problems and devise solutions. This insight will be highly valuable to not only strengthen our economy but highlighting opportunities for innovation in our government operations.

# **Investing In Youth,** **Investing In Our Future**

## *Improving Youth Opportunity & Civic Engagement*

As Council President, I believe that our young people are our greatest assets. Our youth are the key to realizing Baltimore's potential. From the quality of school facilities, to programming at our recreation centers, to increased opportunities for work and civic engagement, I want to ensure every young person in Baltimore can thrive, regardless of the street they grow up on.

The year ahead will be critical for the future success of our schools and our youth. The recommendations of the Kirwan Commission are forthcoming and must increase the City's financial investment in our public schools. There are steps we must take now to be prepared for that responsibility.

### **1. Fight for More Money for Our Public Schools**

As Council President, I will advocate for increasing the City's contribution to our public schools. To be prepared for the Kirwan Commission recommendations, I will also introduce a Resolution demanding the Department of Finance present the City Council with a proactive plan to increase local funding for our public schools.

The upcoming legislative session in Annapolis will be critically important for the fate of our children and public education system. Fighting for Baltimore's public schools as the Kirwan Commission finalizes its recommendations will be a top priority of my legislative agenda in Annapolis. I will work with my colleagues at the state level to ensure Baltimore receives a fair, equitable outcome in these statewide recommendations.

The Kirwan Commission is comprised of elected officials and other stakeholders, who have been researching and developing recommendations for education and

school funding in the State of Maryland for the past few years. The Commission is tasked with creating a new school funding formula, which will determine how state and local resources are allocated for the next decade. This funding formula must account for the decades of under-funding that Baltimore City Public Schools have suffered from.

While the new formula has not been finalized, we know it will require that the City invest more local dollars into our school system. We must ensure we are prepared to meet that responsibility. This is not an option.

## 2. Create More Modern Opportunities for Youth

As Council President, I will fight for our recreation centers to be open seven days per week. I will work with the Department of Recreation and Parks and Baltimore's non-profit sector to improve facilities and programming to ensure that they meet the needs of our youth.

Every community should have a recreational facility that is within walking distance from their homes, where residents of all ages can commune and fellowship. That's why in my first month as Council President, I secured an additional \$3.4 million dollars to keep Baltimore's recreation centers open on Saturdays. In the upcoming budget process, I plan to fight for our recreation centers to be open on Sundays. Our recreational centers must be a community resource all week round.

Keeping the recreation center doors open is not enough. Many of our facilities need serious renovation and basic maintenance. Our centers must be places young people want to go, with modern facilities and modern programming that is relevant and appealing to our young people.

### 3. Improve Planning for Summer YouthWorks

As Council President, I will work with the City Council and the Mayor's Office of Employment Development to increase oversight and planning of the YouthWorks Program. Every young person in our city who wants a summer job should be able to have one.

Every dollar invested in our young people returns dividends that compound over time. This is especially true given the current lack of developmental activities available for youth, particularly during the summer. This year, hundreds of youth who applied for a YouthWorks job could not get one because the number of applicants exceeded the number of placements. This problem was exacerbated when Governor Hogan withheld \$1 million dollars that the State Legislature allocated to the YouthWorks program. This would have funded 600 YouthWorks jobs.

While we cannot control state politics, we can ensure we have adequately planned and coordinated to accommodate growing demand in our summer jobs program. In advance of application season, the City Council will use its oversight functions to work with the Mayor's Office of Employment Development to ensure the City is on target to provide the appropriate level of placements.

Additionally, I will lobby in Annapolis to demand the money that was withheld from us this year and demand it be added to any future allocation with interest.

#### 4. Enact Youth Athletic Protection

As Council President, I will pass [Bill 19-0337: Youth Athletic Protection](#). I introduced this legislation to keep our youth athletes safe by requiring safety training and equipment for all youth team officials that use the Department of Recreation & Parks' facilities.

All youth deserve the opportunity to participate in youth sports leagues. All youth also deserve to be safe while playing in youth sports leagues. Too often, youth team coaches are not equipped with the training and equipment to keep our young athletes safe. If a medical emergency happens during a youth related sports event, I want to make sure that this city has taken every step possible to ensure the coaches are equipped to properly respond.

This bill outlines six trainings that all coaches and team parents must complete to use the Department of Recreation & Parks' facilities. This legislation also requires coaches to have access to an automated external defibrillator (AED) in case a sports related health emergency happens. The research shows that on-site access to this equipment is a matter of life and death. Finally, my bill makes sure all coaches and team parents report cases of suspected child abuse.

It is imperative that our youth coaches and team parents have the training and equipment necessary to keep our kids safe. I am proud to partner with the Department of Recreation & Parks' to come up with recommendations on how this legislation can be thoughtfully implemented to keep our kids safe.

#### 5. Lower Voting Age for Municipal Elections

As Council President, I will introduce and pass a charter amendment to lower the voting age in Baltimore City municipal elections to 16.

Too often, the young people of Baltimore City are told what is good for them without opportunities to contribute to the conversation. There is no better way to ensure that elected leaders take our young people seriously than to give them the right to vote in local elections.

Sixteen-year-olds are permitted to drive, work, pay taxes, and be charged as an adult. If we want to foster civic engagement and show our youth that we take their voices seriously, we must allow them to vote. Several cities in Maryland have already lead the way here: Takoma Park, Greenbelt, Hyattsville, and Riverdale Park all allow 16-year-olds to vote in local elections. These policy changes have resulted in dramatic increases in youth engagement. Baltimore should be the first major American city on that list.

## 6. Inspire More City Government Mentors

As Council President, I will increase the number of city employees engaging in youth mentoring across the City of Baltimore, while working with the administration to identify incentives for participation.

Many of Baltimore's youth need positive adult role models. Regardless of the root cause, as a government we can do more to make an impact on the lives of our youth. This means devoting the most important resources we have towards positively impacting youth: time and human capital.

We must be deliberate about being present in the lives of our kids. We hope to set an example that can be replicated across city government and any other industry. We cannot simply say we need to engage the youth. Each of us must participate actively and with purpose.

As Council President, I will encourage City Council staff to take time out of the office during the work week to engage in mentoring activities and programs. This includes everything from working individually with youth, tutoring, and visiting classrooms. There is already a policy in place that permits such activity, but it has not always been promoted or encouraged.

# **Bringing An Equity Framework To Governance**

## *Working to Address Legacy of Redlining and Racial Injustice*

As Council President, I want to embed a framework of equity into the way we do business in Baltimore. Implementing my Equity Assessment Program and funding the Equity Assistance Fund, a Charter Amendment that received the overwhelming support of voters, are two important steps towards that end. For our city to be truly safe and prosperous, we must ensure all of our communities are supported, invested in, and valued.

Public policy is what sanctioned inequality and racial disparity in Baltimore, including redlining and racial covenants to segregate neighborhoods. The effects of this history are demonstrable to this day. So, public policy has a role to play in redressing that harm and making our city a more equitable place.

### 1. Implement Equity Assessment Program

As Council President, I will direct the Council Committees to hold the Administration accountable for compliance with the requirements of the [Equity Assessment Program \(18-0223\)](#) I sponsored.

In 2018, I introduced and passed important legislation that requires City agencies to conduct an equity analysis and to participate in equity training. This legislation is an important step toward redressing Baltimore's historic and current inequitable policies and practices. These requirements will move government agencies to rethink the way they formulate and implement policy.

For instance, the legislation mandates that each agency hire an Equity Coordinator. The Equity Coordinator's job is to normalize and prioritize equitable outcomes in all decision making so certain demographics can no longer be used to predict life outcomes. The outcomes for all groups are thereby improved. To bring the

necessary transparency to this process, the City Council will hold hearings that will track the agencies' progress in the public.

Additionally, my office will hire an Equity Coordinator and require the Council and all Council staff members to complete equity training.

## 2. Establish Funding Stream for the Equity Assistance Fund

As Council President, I will identify a funding source for the [Equity Assistance Fund \(18-0222\)](#), a Charter Amendment I sponsored that received the support of voters in 2018.

Baltimore City's long history of segregation and discrimination is embedded in the law and manifests itself in countless ways, from the lack of access to safe, affordable housing, to real-world, lived experiences with the criminal justice system. In order to create a means to address this history, I created a fund to assist with efforts that reduce inequity based on race, gender, and economic status in Baltimore.

Nearly 80% of voters approved the Equity Assistance Fund when it appeared on the ballot in 2018. Now, it's time to identify a funding source for the Equity Assistance Fund so that we can get to work.

## 3. Require Legislation to Have Fiscal and Equity Analysis

As Council President, I will pass a law requiring all ordinances to have a completed fiscal and equity analysis.

Good policy starts with a deep understanding of the issue at hand. Before it votes on any bill, the City Council should know what the bill does, how much it will cost taxpayers, and what impacts it will have on all Baltimoreans. In the Maryland General Assembly, every piece of legislation is analyzed for its policy and fiscal impacts. This means that before our state legislators vote on a bill, they have a clear understanding of what it does and how much it will cost.

We will make sure the City Council has the same benefit. This ordinance will support a more responsible, fiscally sound, and equitable legislative body. By mandating this analysis, the City Council will be better equipped to introduce and consider thoughtful legislation to support all Baltimore City residents.

The analysis will include an estimate of the fiscal impact to City government, residents, and the local economy, using the best available data. Additionally, it will analyze the proposed policy and offer recommendations or explore other policy options, when appropriate.

Finally, the analysis will be required to consider the impact of the proposed legislation through an equity lens, including race and ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, and economic status. This section would include an examination of the historical context of the policy in question.

#### 4. Investigate Racially and Economically Disparate Impact of Fines and Fees

As Council President, I will establish a task force of government officials, residents, community partners, and experts to study and provide recommendations on how to address the many ways our city government places burdensome fees and fines on individuals.

Every day, Baltimoreans across the city are fined for a range of infractions; from parking tickets, to high grass and weeds, also known as “quality of life” citations. These fines often tax poverty and can send a person or family into a debt spiral. The average citation amount in a high poverty neighborhood in Baltimore is \$213 versus \$110 in a low poverty neighborhood. The average citation amount in a predominantly Black neighborhood is \$221 versus \$111 in neighborhoods where Blacks make up 30% or less of the population.

Not only do these fines place a financial burden on our families, they highlight deep structural inequities in how city services and city resources are distributed. Families should not be subjected to unjust fees that put them at risk of losing their home, going into debt, or being jailed simply because they could not afford to pay a citation.

We can look to other cities who are pioneers in this work. The San Francisco Fees and Fine Task Force looked at the following areas related to fees and fines: cash bail, child support debt, driver's license suspensions, "quality of life" citations, transportation fines/fees, and ability to pay. This important work ultimately led to more than 40 recommendations implemented in departments across San Francisco.

As Council President, I will conduct a comprehensive assessment of the schedule of fines and fees in the City of Baltimore. The data suggests that poor people and Black people are disproportionately affected. Through this task force, we will begin to tackle all the ways in which the City unfairly relies on punitive fees from our most vulnerable residents.

## **Centering Public Engagement**

As Council President, I will host a series of town halls to solicit feedback on this policy proposal and new ideas from Baltimore's residents, which will guide the Council's work moving forward.

We will take this legislative proposal out of City Hall and into neighborhoods across Baltimore. The goal of these town halls is to solicit feedback from residents across the city on the City Council's priorities through the end of 2020. We will work to incorporate feedback and new ideas we collect into the policy outlook.

The forums will promote transparency by providing the public with information about what the government is doing; accountability by detailing my goals thus allowing people the ability to measure my success; collaboration by improving the effectiveness of government by encouraging partnerships and cooperation across all levels of government and between the government and private institutions and citizens; and participation by allowing members of the public to contribute their ideas and expertise so that their government can make policies with the benefit of a wide range of views and information.

Policy impacts people, so people should impact policy. In addition to the nine town halls announced below, residents can share their impressions and ideas on social media with the hashtag #BaltimoreCanBmore or by emailing [councilpolicy@baltimorecity.gov](mailto:councilpolicy@baltimorecity.gov).

## Town Hall Details

**Thursday, August 8 – 6:30-8:00pm**

Cherry Hill Elementary  
801 Bridgeview Road, Baltimore, MD 21225

**Tuesday, August 13 – 6:30-8:00pm**

Weinberg Y in Waverly  
900 E 33rd St, Baltimore, MD 21218

**Thursday, August 15 – 6:30-8:00pm**

Baltimore City Community College  
2901 Liberty Heights Ave, Baltimore, MD 21215

**Tuesday, August 20 – 6:30-8:00pm**

Edgewood Lyndhurst Recreation Center  
835 Allendale St, Baltimore, MD 21229

**Thursday, August 22 – 6:30-8:00pm**

Lillie May Carroll Jackson Charter School  
2200 Sinclair Ln, Baltimore, MD 21213

**Tuesday, August 27 – 6:30-8:00pm**

Enoch Pratt Free Library – Southeast Anchor Branch  
3601 Eastern Ave, Baltimore, MD 21224

**Wednesday, August 28 – 6:30-8:00pm**

Online Virtual Forum  
Details Forthcoming

**Thursday, August 29 – 6:30-8:00pm**

Mount Pleasant Church and Ministries  
6000 Radecke Ave, Baltimore, MD 21206

**Thursday, September 5 – 6:30-8:00pm**

TBD