

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
DEPARTMENT OF BUILDINGS



Confirmation Resolution Hearing

Testimony of
Brian J. Hanlon
Acting Director
Department of Buildings

Before the Committee of the Whole
Council of the District of Columbia
The Honorable Phil Mendelson, Chairman

Via Virtual Platform

October 18, 2023
12:00 p.m.

Introduction

Good morning, Chair Mendelson, Chair Lewis George, Councilmembers, and staff. I am Brian Hanlon, Acting Director of the DC Department of Buildings (DOB). It is an honor to have this opportunity to testify before you as you consider my nomination as the first permanent Director of the Department of Buildings (DOB).

I wish to convey my gratitude to Mayor Bowser for inviting me into her administration and entrusting me with the responsibility of helping to steer this agency through the monumental task of supporting and executing DC's Comeback Plan.

When the Department of Buildings Establishment Act of 2020 took effect in October of 2021, DOB's predecessor agency, the Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs (DCRA), began the complex and multifaceted process of separating into two brand-new agencies: DOB and the Department of Licensing and Consumer Protection (DLCP).

When DOB began to service the District at midnight October 1, 2022, it was the culmination of a long preparation process to ensure a seamless transition with no service interruptions for District residents, businesses, and visitors. With this in mind, I would like to take the opportunity today to thank my predecessor, former Acting Director Ernest Chrappah, for his tireless work in shepherding a widespread agency transition and standing up the current digital infrastructure at DOB. His dedication to initiating a digital transformation has provided me and my team with a robust starting point to address any remaining gaps so that we can build better processes to ensure excellent customer service for the residents, businesses, and visitors of the District of Columbia.

Before I continue, I also want to thank my DOB colleagues who welcomed me with open arms. One cannot truly know what an organization is like until you join it, and this group has rallied together through significant internal and external organizational change, all while bearing the heavy weight of expectation from engaged stakeholders who rightly hold us accountable to our responsibilities. Upon my arrival in

May 2023, I have been fortunate to find some of the most talented and committed professionals that I have had the privilege to work with in my entire career. I am grateful for this, and feel confident that together, we can achieve great things for our city.

I am here today to present my qualifications for this important leadership role and share my vision for where I would like to continue guiding the agency if I am afforded the privilege of confirmation as permanent Director. Fortifying my qualifications is a clear and steadfast dedication to serving my hometown.

I had the pleasure of serving the District when I was appointed by Mayor Vincent Gray as the inaugural Director of the Department of General Services (DGS) after working in the former Department of Real Estate. I was directly responsible for guiding the merger of the separate departments that became DGS, aligning resources and responsibilities to ensure a smooth transition and a sound, measured path forward for the new agency.

It was during my tenure as Director of DGS that I discovered that my core ideals of giving back to my community were most fully realized through serving our city. To put it plainly, I realized that I had fallen in love with public service. I am proud of my tenure as Director of DGS, and the many milestones and accomplishments we reached together under my leadership. We modernized the preventative maintenance and portfolio management of the District's approximately 30 million square feet of real estate, set new standards for sustainable design, and spearheaded the District's renewable energy portfolio as we established the District's first power purchase agreements for solar and wind energy.

I am proud of our performance but know that I cannot simply rest on what was accomplished previously. It was my experience in DGS that taught me what a group of people sharing common goals and ideals can accomplish, and I always hoped that I would receive another opportunity to convey my deep commitment to our city.

When Mayor Bowser first approached me about joining DOB, it became so clear to me that I wanted to return to spending my days focused on looking forward to what can be done – and what must be accomplished – if we are to make our city stronger, more vibrant, and more resilient than ever before. It has been an honor to dedicate my energy each day to this most important role of leading DOB as we seek to usher in DC's Comeback.

As I look at the District, I see so much potential to engage intentionally and intelligently with our built environment. DOB is a key contributor to enhancing the District by committing to excellent customer service, investing in efforts to streamline stakeholder interactions with our agency to generate economic development, and operating effectively as a trusted advisor and regional leader to promote community resilience.

This agency is at the center of the economic revitalization of the District of Columbia. It is the heartbeat that lives within each of our neighborhoods. DOB is uniquely positioned to elevate the quality of life for the residents, businesses, and visitors.

As a lifelong District resident, I view this as an opportunity to help unlock economic development opportunities and collectively strengthen our neighborhoods to make them better places to live, work, and play. This makes for a more vibrant and resilient city—one that is more sustainable and equitable. The composition of our city is a tapestry that is full of life, bursting with stories to tell and dreams to realize. This is about families with deeply held roots, newcomers who are just beginning their DC stories hoping to establish themselves, entrepreneurs looking to cultivate their fledgling ideas into feasible enterprises, and innovative businesses coming to and staying in Washington, DC.

At its core, DOB is a regulatory and enforcement agency. However, we don't do it alone. Through collaboration with other District authorities including, but not limited to the Office of Administrative Hearings (OAH), Real Property Tax Appeals Commission (RPTAC), District Department of Transportation (DDOT), Metropolitan Police Department (MPD), and Department of Licensing and

Consumer Protection (DLCP), DOB is committed to the difficult work of achieving compliance to District law for the safety and security of residents, businesses, and visitors. We collaborate every day to help ensure a safe, vibrant, and dynamic built environment. These are all important elements of DOB's work, but they can and must be guided by a collective sense of purpose focused on favorable outcomes that can be delivered with confidence.

Agency Posture

Since being named Acting Director, it has been a great privilege getting to know DOB's people and seeing first-hand the tangible impact that they make in our community daily. From our front-line inspectors, our ward-based account managers, customer service professionals, to all our internal teams, I have found a host of mission-oriented individuals committed to elevating their performance.

I have met with many individuals and teams, and have spoken with them about their careers, their unique roles, and what they want to accomplish. I have met with our vacant and blighted building inspectors to listen to them, and to convey my deep respect for the work that they do as front-line workers who represent our agency. I have exchanged ideas with our ward-based account management team, who possess a deep passion for our mission and addressing customers' concerns and questions with grace and accuracy.

I have also been able to assemble a senior leadership team that is aligned in our shared philosophy of dedicated public service. It is a team that is focused upon developing processes that ensure positive outcomes that keep our buildings safe and make our city stronger.

With DOB's emergence as a new agency and my arrival as its leader, we had a vital opportunity to rethink many of our previous standard operating procedures (SOPs), workflows, structural arrangements, and collaboration with our sister agencies. It is important to note that DOB consistently receives high customer service ratings and handles a high volume quite efficiently; this fiscal year, we resolved

customer inquiries within 3 days or less over 97% of the time, and I am very proud of the work so many do to attain these numbers.

However, we cannot rest on the assumption that we will simply be able to maintain that level of performance by continuing to do things the way they have always been done. We must continue to put ourselves in our customers' shoes every day if we are going to be able to innovate and figure out paths forward that spark positive change to enable residents and businesses to hold a deeper level of trust in our agency.

Through my team's review, and from speaking with various stakeholder groups, it became apparent that some of our processes in the past may not have always been as clear as they could be, sometimes leading to less-than-optimal effectiveness. Thus, we have been working with the utmost urgency to get vital reforms to our processes defined, established, and on track.

This is an ongoing effort as we seek to keep pace with the very fluid changes brought by our national economy, our emergence out of a global pandemic, an evolving and increasingly unpredictable climate, and many other factors. Unpredictability will not stop, but our work must continue. These factors require innovative thinking and sound solutions to very difficult challenges; couple this with a heavy daily workload that we rise to meet every day, and we have our work cut out for us.

Our path to the future is not a sprint, but a marathon, and through intentionality and sound design with our customers in mind, we will stand up every day and keep moving forward, with our steps remaining focused on the basics that will keep us grounded and resolute.

Our next steps are focused on developing responses and procedures to address the challenges posed above that are rooted in clarity, consistent communication, and excellent customer service. These responses must be generated and based upon our intentional pursuit of in-depth resident, industry, and staff feedback. As we develop these answers to the difficult questions we are facing, they must be operationalized effectively, forged with agility and evolution in mind to meet an era of constant change.

I have also been able to review DOB's agency performance metrics to get a sense of the volume of work that we perform and the many vital deliverables that DOB achieves. DOB manages an enormous workflow, and we memorialize customer service interactions to help keep us be accountable and to execute on a data-driven path.

Democratizing data and making our services more accessible is the core initiative that drives our work. Earlier this fiscal year, we released our enhanced DOB Public Dashboard that gives access to a wider variety of information and increases transparency for stakeholders.

By reimagining how we share data for public consumption, we can present more information in a clearer way, with greater access and opportunity for analysis. Of course, this opens us up to increased scrutiny, but we are confident that the result will be one of stronger data quality, deeper understanding of our agency's work, and greater value placed on data available through DOB.

I want to share some data-driven context on the volume and breadth of our work to help further position my remarks today. In Fiscal Year 2023:

- we processed an average of nearly **3,800 customer inquiries per week via phone and web**
- we averaged just under **9,500 property maintenance inspections each quarter**.
- we **increased our vacant property inspection rate output by nearly 20%** when compared to FY22, and **brought over 1,000 vacant properties back to productive use**.
- we issued just over **51,000 total permits, which comes out to just under 4,300 per month**.
- we have issued **11,862 Notices of Infraction (NOIs)**. Our FY23 efforts represent a **14% increase** in total NOIs issued.
- we met or exceeded every single one of our 15 Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) outlined in our FY23 Performance Plan.

Data can tell a riveting story, but I am cognizant that the setting and achieving of targets displayed by numbers and graphs on a page is not always the best indicator of optimal outcomes. People's stories and

experiences matter. We must continue to be intentional in garnering feedback from key stakeholders across the District to ensure that our strong performance is mirrored by an open dialogue with the public, providing education where necessary and partnering with them to address their issues promptly and sufficiently.

The Council, Advisory Neighborhood Commissioners (ANCs), and other District organizations will continue to be crucial partners in ensuring that we are meeting the mark. Ensuring a consistent line of communication with our partners and stakeholders allows for more potential to collaborate and gives us an opportunity to enhance our services based on relevant and actionable feedback.

As I discussed earlier, DOB is an essential component of the engine of economic development in this city. Our efforts with vacant and blighted properties, residential inspections, plan review and permitting, ensuring safe and legal construction, and code and zoning enforcement all affect the neighborhoods where we live, work, and play. Notably, our work also directly affects the livelihoods of many. Both things – neighborhoods and livelihoods-- play direct roles in affecting the quality of life, resiliency, and the economic vitality of the District. This is a responsibility that our agency cannot take lightly; we must be focused on embracing the influence we have and striving every day to meet our moment. I would now like to take some time to delve into some of our business units and subject areas to share what we have been working on recently.

Business Unit Development and Initiatives

There are three business units which all others within DOB must support to optimize service delivery and regulatory compliance. These are the **Office of Construction and Building Standards, the Office of Zoning Administration, and the Office of Strategic Code Enforcement**. These business units are supported by the Office of the Director and General Counsel; in turn, they also support all our customer-facing personnel – inspectors, customer service staff, and Account Managers.

The **Office of Construction and Building Standards** is responsible for permitting, construction compliance, building inspections, zoning administration, green building, and third-party inspections. FY23 saw this Office make excellent strides to better serve our customers. For example, a new initiative was approved to offer residents a fee reduction for a limited time when converting a Tax Lot into a Record Lot. The program reduced the fee from \$440.00 to just \$100.00. This brought benefits for both the residents and the city, providing savings for customers, and helping raise the market value of properties, which benefits the city's tax base

Another initiative was undertaken to streamline our submission and review process for Certificates of Occupancy (C of Os) and Wall Checks. Once complete, this will result in the simplification of the C of O and wall check application, review, and issuance processes by consolidating these actions in a single platform capable of issuing a variety of different types of certificates of occupancy and final wall check certification. Customers' answers to a series of questions in a wizard-based approach will guide them to the type of certificate that they need for their specific project. This single platform drastically reduces the time for review and approval, while also providing notifications to owners and stakeholders at every step of the process.

Another initiative that I am very proud of is the Career Pathways Program. One of our FY23 Strategic Initiatives, the Career Pathways program was designed to build and invest in the next generation of professionals. Through this program launch, we created a pipeline for careers within DOB, providing exposure to opportunities available within our organization through training and substantive collaboration. As a result of this program, we were able to hire several former interns for full-time jobs.

A critical ongoing initiative for the Office of Construction and Building Standards will involve several facets. These include a reexamination of two key areas:

1. Plan review and permitting

2. Construction Inspections and Illegal Construction Enforcement.

I look forward to sharing our forward progress in these critical areas over the coming months. These improvements are paramount if DOB is to be even more effective at supporting the Mayor's Comeback Plan and ensuring the built environment is safe and in compliance. I am confident that under the leadership of Acting Chief Building Official Nicole Rogers, we will collectively advance and improve this division.

The **Office of Zoning Administration** is now under new leadership as well. Acting Zoning Administrator Kathleen Beeton is working with me and the entire team to fill critical vacancies and to ensure that our customers have access to feedback at all critical stages of project development.

The **Office of Strategic Code Enforcement** has been under the leadership of Acting Strategic Enforcement Administrator Keith Parsons. Adjacent to this division are two key areas which also require a thoughtful reexamination of past practices. These are:

1. The Office of Residential Inspection
2. Vacant and Blighted Building Inspections and Enforcement.

It is critically important that DOB refines our approach in these two areas.

The District's diverse neighborhoods are the foundation that makes the city the vibrant place that it is today. When a building becomes and remains vacant, this can detract from that vibrancy, particularly if the property suffers general disrepair and/or other safety issues.

DOB's work plays a key role in the process of bringing vacant buildings back to productive use. We respond to complaints through inspections to make determinations about building occupancy status, notify owners regarding vacant and blighted buildings, and maintain a complete list of vacant and

blighted buildings in the District of Columbia. This information is shared with the Office of Tax and Revenue (OTR) to ensure that these properties are taxed accordingly. I encourage you to visit the link to our public dashboard on our website. I also encourage those that are interested to take part in our public outreach sessions to understand the dashboard itself. We have had several of them with the Council, ANC commissioners, and with industry representatives.

We must collectively work to convert these properties into productive use as quickly as possible. DOB does not have the authority to do this on its own, and we are grateful to the Chairman for the opportunity to play a leading role in the Vacant and Blighted Building task force.

It is important also to remember that these properties all have different background stories. Some have been owned by families for many years, but who may be struggling to find a path to improve the property. Others have been acquired by young families who wish to improve the property, but perhaps run into momentary lapses in their ability to finish the work and occupy the property due to financial challenges beyond their control. Still others are owned by limited liability corporations (LLCs); often, these LLCs protect themselves behind layers of other LLCs who are, in many cases, headquartered out-of-state and unresponsive to local concerns. Our **Office of General Counsel** has been a key player in our work, creating a robust vacant and blighted buildings review practice where we are able to help ensure that these properties are properly classified and their owners encouraged to bring them back to productive use. Additionally, our legal team has been successful in defending our Vacant Property inspection program group's vacancy and blight determinations when needed at the Real Property Tax Appeals Commission (RPTAC).

With all of this in mind, I want to make it clear that we take the issue of vacant and blighted properties seriously. We are dealing with a complex issue without easy solutions, which is why we must continue to work together on this. We want to continue to cultivate our communication and collaboration efforts with OTR and other agencies to ensure that everyone is operating on the same page. This enhances our ability to have accurate data that informs our decision-making processes.

Another function of our work that we have been focusing a great deal of attention on is that of **residential inspections**.

During the building process, safe construction requires collaboration between a qualified team of building professionals in partnership with the government, with both the private-sector and DOB playing key roles. Once a residence has been completed following the proper building and permitting process, the responsibility falls on us to help ensure that the living environments in which people reside are safe and not adverse to their health.

While our focus is on life-safety violations, we continue to explore ways that we can take steps to protect residents from other violations. DOB wants to ensure residents' buildings and their units are healthy and safe. We believe that one of the best ways we can accomplish this is through empowering tenants to be able report any suspected housing violations. Since District law requires landlords to provide apartments that are in safe, habitable, and livable condition, the landlord has a duty to make all repairs necessary to keep their buildings in this state. DC law also requires landlords to maintain buildings and apartments according to many established standards. We have these standards listed on our website under the DC Housing Code Standards section for easy review.

It is important that our processes are very clear to our customers. If residents feel that their housing provider is falling short on their responsibilities in the eyes of the law, they should always first contact the provider to give them an opportunity to abate the issue. In the cases where that does result in issues being addressed, we want residents to feel empowered to request a DOB property maintenance inspection for their home by using the service selector on the homepage of dob.dc.gov or through our Housing Inspection and Property Maintenance Request Form via the Contact Us button on our website. If that inspection is being requested due to an emergency, DOB will dispatch an inspector within one day. For all non-emergency inspections, scheduling will take place in the order that requests are received.

To be clear, DOB *is* an enforcement agency, but we want to encourage a spirit of collaboration to help ensure prompt abatement of any property maintenance issues. This means we must be ready to have conversations with involved parties, focusing on the facts and not seeking to be antagonistic. When a property owner fails to comply within a reasonable period, DOB enforces compliance with a variety of processes and tools available under the law. Achieving compliance is a complex process that requires strategy, engagement with various stakeholders. This often involves wide-ranging timelines depending on the complexity of the case or if it involves other agencies. A large part of this equation is ensuring that all involved agencies have the capacity to handle the high volume of property maintenance cases in the District that require enforced compliance. We must collaborate with our agency partners to continue to discern methods of streamlining our processes to deliver results faster. This is the only way forward. In our conversations with stakeholders and government partners, it has become apparent that quite often, those properties that are tangled in the complicated webs of LLCs tend to be the most difficult to address and bring into compliance. Though technically legal, these arrangements present a unique challenge for us when it comes to determining the owner of an umbrella LLC, contacting them, and ultimately returning properties to productive use.

While our Strategic Enforcement team has worked long hours to uncover and make sense of these arrangements, we have been forced to think innovatively to tackle this issue. One thing that I am very excited about is our development of a master list of the owners of these LLCs. This allows us to act upon relevant data that enhances our efforts to get these violations abated.

We hope that the steps we are taking to create, maintain, and share live databases of repeat offenders and bad actors will help to keep residents informed and equipped. Having accurate and updated data enables DOB to hold offenders accountable by issuing notices of infraction (NOIs) for unabated violations. As an example, our Public Dashboard provides real-time data under our Violations and Abatement section. Users can search for housing and property maintenance violations and the status of associated notices or fines. Additionally, we have a Landlord Violations Tool that allows users to search for the address or

name of a landlord to see if they have any unaddressed housing violations. Users can even check to see how often property violations have been properly taken care of by address. Our data transparency is intended to empower this city's residents with the information they need.

On a related front, our **Office of Strategic Code Enforcement** has made significant strides in DOB's first year of operations. As outlined in the Department of Buildings Establishment Act of 2020, they were tasked with the creation of a Strategic Enforcement Plan for Fiscal Years 23-25. This Plan sets strategic goals for our agency for the next three years regarding our enforcement efforts. An important part of this plan was the establishment of the Built Environment Enforcement Working Group, which is made up of several internal and external stakeholders for the purpose of advising the agency on enforcement needs and planning for potential impacts. By implementing community-based dialogues on these issues, we can bring a more holistic approach to tackling these challenges.

All our work on these and other issues continue to be informed every day by the feedback of our internal and external customers. Ours is a journey of perpetual improvement, and it takes a high level of buy-in each day to meet our responsibility. I would like to now take a few minutes to discuss some of the critical principles my team and I have been focusing on to help us as we move forward.

Critical DOB Principles and Direction

As my team and I have ramped up our efforts to pinpoint ways to further improve our agency these past few months, I have placed an emphasis on hearing new ideas, gathering community feedback, and exploring novel areas where we can enhance our approach. This allows us to discern which capabilities, processes, or functions we may need to sunset, which ones we can add to or modify, and which ones we need to continue in order to provide the best possible experience for our customers.

I have had the pleasure of meeting with each of you and your staff, and I have actively listened to all your concerns on where DOB, and DCRA before it, may have fallen short of the community's expectations. It was important to me that in my early days, I sourced feedback from you due to the unique perspective you

bring in support of the citizens you represent. I want to assure you again today that we have been working diligently to implement improvements, and, where we can, find opportunities to better serve the District through optimizing our customers' experience.

I have initiated a concerted outreach program with industry stakeholders – these include collectives and organizations such as DCBIA, AAREPDC, AOBA, SMOA, architects, engineers, builders, and other industry professionals. I have solicited feedback from real people — the customers we serve every day. While some feedback was difficult to hear, I am also encouraged by the opportunities that have been presented to us to grow and evolve to be the agency that this city needs. What I have heard consistently from our stakeholders is that agency transformation must be intentional in providing adequate focus on the basics.

Our improvements will not come primarily from new technology platforms or innovative digital systems – although these are excellent tools that we have historically invested a great deal of time and energy cultivating. Moving this agency forward will not solely rest upon adding new staff – although attracting and retaining great talent will be essential to achieving our goals where we have effectively communicated personnel needs. Ultimately, our improvements must be founded upon the consistent and diligent discipline of fundamental things. In short – we must be focused on providing **clarity** regarding our work and capabilities, practicing open and consistent **communication** with our stakeholders, and delivering excellent **customer service**. These characteristics must define our work, and DOB should be a national model for other government agencies to emulate.

In seeking **clarity**, we must ask ourselves: are our processes, our authority, and our capabilities as an agency presented as plainly and accessibly as possible? Are they equitable? Are they logical, and do they help customers access and navigate our services amidst a myriad of regulatory complexities?

When we discuss the practice of open and consistent **communication**, we must ask ourselves if we are communicating clearly and effectively with our customers, our sister agencies, and with our industry

partners. Are the contact methods accessible, simple to use, and connecting customers with the correct people and resources? Are we answering and addressing inquiries in a timely manner? Are we following up when necessary both internally and externally to address any pending items to solve customers' issues?

Finally, in seeking to enhance our **customer service**, I am consumed with ensuring that we are looking to craft the most reasonably effective outcomes that ensure a safe, healthy, and sustainable built environment that helps nurture a growing economy and invests in vibrant neighborhoods. After interacting with our agency, I want customers to come away thinking, *“Wow, I feel like DOB was focused on listening to and hearing me, and they actually cared about helping me with my issue.”*

To some, these broad categories may sound simple and rudimentary when compared with the prospect of creating cutting-edge digital applications, or the launch of exciting new technological initiatives.

However, the application and execution of these principles are not easy. They require daily, intentional discipline and focus amidst an enormous – and sometimes unpredictable – workload.

However, what we *can* control is how much our agency is committed to taking care of our business and doing things the right way. This starts at the very top of the organization with my daily efforts, and ripples throughout DOB. Each day, I focus my efforts to be intentional in setting the tone of doing what I say I will when I say it; when that happens, the rest follows. When we can nail the basics, we have more room to grow in our capacity, foster innovative thinking, and deliver vital services to residents, businesses, and visitors in a powerful way.

As I mentioned earlier, I have been sourcing a great deal of face-to-face feedback from our stakeholders. Sometimes, that feedback can present me with an opportunity to share my heart for what I believe DOB can and should be focused on. Recently, an older gentleman admonished me while on a community walk.

I had shared with him that while I was focused on carrying out our agency's role as a regulatory and enforcement authority, I **cared** about our customers' outcomes. He admonished me and said, "Effective government should not be reliant upon public servants caring about outcomes".

Our government, laws, and systems are all born from the same source: people. We can have the best and most dedicated public servants ready to execute and enforce the most in-depth and sound legislation in the world, yet we can still sometimes miss the mark since all these processes, functions, and agencies can be flawed. They are all crafted by fallible humans.

It is in caring about outcomes that we move past the inherent flaws of all human systems towards the central purpose of public service, which is to elevate the quality of life for all.

However, we must do more than simply care. We must be disciplined about continuous learning and improvement. Therefore, before I close, I would like to mention one final initiative which will be ongoing at DOB to achieve the outcome-focused culture that will help elevate DOB's service delivery:

DOB-STAT.

DOB-STAT is an internally focused, results-driven process that examines key measures in each of DOB's business divisions, unpacks and discusses current processes, and outlines future recommendations and requirements to help us achieve our mission. Through collective discovery, we discover root causes of issues, identify solutions to shore up and improve our operations, and enhance our customer service delivery and operational outcomes.

We are confident that in our exploration of process maps, parsing through performance data, and isolating choke points or communication gaps, we will identify opportunities for resource allocation adjustments and policy adjustments to better serve our internal and external customers. DOB-STAT will also enable us to identify and memorialize best practices, driving our performance management determinations.

DOB-STAT will ensure that our key performance indicators (KPIs) and metrics are directly aligned with our agency's vision and mission. We will also verify that we have transparent and shared Standard

Operating Procedures (SOPs) to address agency intersections both internally and externally. Lastly, our efforts with DOB-STAT will help to forecast the consequences of practices and mitigation strategies designed to empower our senior management team to make informed decisions to better serve our stakeholders.

This brings me to our vision. When I arrived, I noticed there was a lack of a clear statement regarding our agency's vision. Therefore, I wanted to memorialize our vision in a statement that may seem overly aspirational to some, but will shape and guide our agency's efforts:

We are a national model of customer service and value creation, a catalyst for responsible economic development, social diversity, and environmental sustainability, and essential to a thriving and resilient city.

This is supported by the DOB Mission:

- *DOB protects the safety of residents, businesses, and visitors.*
- *DOB advances the development of the built environment through permitting, inspections, code enforcement, addressing vacant and blighted properties, and zoning administration.*
- *DOB seeks solutions for customers.*

The last bullet is new. We are a customer service agency, and we will work to make sure each transaction is conducted to ensure resolution and the best possible outcomes.

Conclusion

Members of the Council, thank you very much for your time and consideration today. In conclusion, I am returning to District government because I know that I have a lot more to give to my community. I am confident that by focusing on the principles of **clarity, communication, and customer service**, we can make positive strides.

I am hopeful that the approaches in customer service and the critical initiatives I have outlined today will lead to DOB making and improving outcomes for our residents and business partners. Our work is only possible through the continued trust of the people we serve.

It is truly an honor to be nominated for this position. I look forward to cultivating an even deeper and more collaborative relationship with the D.C. Council, under the leadership of Mayor Bowser.

With that, I am happy to address any questions you may have at this time.