



On January 2, 2011, Vincent C. Gray was sworn in as the sixth elected Mayor of the District of Columbia.

Mayor Gray is moving forward in accomplishing four top priorities: ensuring high-quality public education for all District children, creating jobs and economic development opportunities, making sure residents are safe in their neighborhoods, and ensuring that the city is fiscally sound. Mayor Gray also is focused on creating a more sustainable and greener city, achieving autonomy and full democracy for District of Columbia taxpayers, and improving health outcomes.

A native Washingtonian, Mayor Gray has tirelessly advocated for residents of the nation's capital for more than 30 years. His dedication to children and families has been the hallmark of his service in both the public and nonprofit sectors. His lifetime of public service can be best summed up by a singular governing philosophy—that the District of Columbia works best as "One City."

Mayor Gray served as Chair of the Executive Council for part of 2012 and all of 2013, for the initial drafting of the Draft Chesapeake Bay Agreement. As such, he oversaw his jurisdictional colleagues/states as they began the arduous process of crafting an Agreement that would carry the Bay effort and residents well into the year 2025. A big accomplishment, it is the first such agreement since the year 2000. It underwent major public review two times – making sure that the public was fully involved in its evolution and development. Mayor Gray is committed to cleaning up the Anacostia and Potomac Rivers, along with local streams and creeks, such as Rock Creek. He was succeeded as chair by Maryland's Governor Martin O'Malley at the 2013 Executive Council meeting, but remains very involved in the Bay effort to achieve clean and healthy water, public access, healthy habitats, environmental literacy, to name just a few of the new goals in the new agreement.

With the well-being of the District's children and their families in mind, the Gray Administration is implementing the Mayor's Sustainable DC Plan, a 20-year set of goals and actions to guide the District's leadership in sustainability. It sets goals such as reducing obesity by 50 percent, cutting unemployment in half, and ensuring everyone is within 10 minutes of a park. The plan presents the Mayor's overarching vision for the nation's capital: in 20 years the District will be the healthiest, greenest and most livable city in the United States.

Mayor Gray's disciplined approach to public service was born from humble beginnings. He grew up in a one-bedroom apartment with parents who never attended high school but instilled in him a solid work ethic and deeply rooted values.

Despite being scouted by two Major League Baseball teams when he was a student at Dunbar Senior High School, the Mayor chose to continue his education, studying psychology at The George Washington University. While at George Washington, he became the first African-American admitted in the GW fraternity system and the first black student to lead his fraternity.

Gray began his professional career with The Arc of DC (then known as the Association of Retarded Citizens). There, he successfully advocated for innovative policy initiatives on behalf of people with developmental disabilities.

In 1991, then-Mayor Sharon Pratt Kelly named Gray Director of the Department of Human Services. As Director, he oversaw the functions of a 7,000-person department and directed activities related to public health and mental health, social services and health care finance. In this role, Gray spearheaded the implementation of several initiatives to address the developmental needs of children.

In December 1994, he was named the first Executive Director of Covenant House Washington, an international organization dedicated to serving homeless and at-risk youth. During his decade at the helm of Covenant House, Gray helped make the organization one of the most effective of its kind, and led successful campaigns to obtain various facilities for homeless youth.

Gray's dedication to his community inspired a successful run for the D.C. Council in 2004. Two years after being elected as the Council's Ward 7 representative, he ran for the citywide office of Council Chairman. Running on the theme of "One City," he continued his focus on uniting disparate racial and economic groups, and equalizing services.

As Chairman, Gray was a leader in improving Council operations, and was a true champion for school reform. One of his biggest accomplishments in this role was to spearhead legislation that established what was believed to be the first universal pre-kindergarten program in the nation. Early-childhood education continues to be the hallmark of Mayor's Gray's education agenda.