



PRESS RELEASE

Council of the District of Columbia

Office of Chairman Vincent C. Gray
The John A. Wilson Building
1350 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C. 20004

For Immediate Release:
March 4, 2008

Contact: Doxie A. McCoy
202-724-8032
202-664-9862 – cell
dmccoy@dccouncil.us

Chairman Gray Releases Council Strategic Plan Update on OTR Investigation Presented

Washington, DC—At his monthly press briefing on the eve of the Tuesday, March 4, 2008 Legislative Meeting, Council Chairman Vincent C. Gray released and discussed “A Shared Vision for High Performance,” the Council of the District of Columbia Capacity Building Strategic Plan, 2008 – 2010. Gray also invited William McLucas, senior partner with the Wilmer Hale law firm, to give an update on the Council’s independent investigation of the alleged fraud and embezzlement in the D.C. Office of Tax and Revenue (OTR).

McLucas stated that the firm has been going through tens of thousands of documents, hard copy and emails associated with the OTR, to determine how the alleged theft occurred, when it happened, and what can be done to prevent future acts of this kind. McLucas said that there was no timetable for completing the investigation, but consultants were hoping to complete their work “ASAP,” without getting in the way of the separate criminal investigation the U.S. Attorney is conducting. Chairman Gray noted that the Council’s auditors and consulting attorneys are providing a valuable service to the District by performing this analysis on a pro bono basis. Gray announced in December that Wilmer Hale along with PricewaterhouseCoopers would perform the Council’s investigation.

In outlining the Capacity Building Strategic Plan, Gray said that the Council is attempting to improve operations and performance through a number of forward-thinking mechanisms, by improving its governance and administration through efficient and effective procedures; fiscal integrity and oversight to ensure public confidence in the fiscal health of the District of Columbia; auditing and general accountability; policy, protocols and constituent services to ensure attention to critical issues; and its communications to promote the Council’s legislative priorities.

(More)

Work on the plan began in September with consultants conducting interviews with Councilmembers and providing them with opportunities for feedback. Some of the nuts and bolts steps that have been completed or will be implemented include upgrades in information technology; the hiring and retaining of well-trained staff; greater use of Channel 13 in conjunction with the Office of Cable Television to improve transparency of the budget process and other Council business; monitoring bills that are enacted to determine whether laws are being implemented; and building internships on the high school, college and post-graduate levels.

“This plan is a work in progress that we believe will translate into the Council’s vision of becoming an even stronger and innovative legislative body, more effectively serving the residents of the District of Columbia,” Gray said.

The Capacity Building Strategic Plan is available upon request.

###