Last month, Jeff Bezos was named the world's wealthiest person.\(^1\) Worth over $105 billion, Bezos owns a conglomerate of businesses including Amazon, The Washington Post and Whole Foods.\(^2\)

Recently, Amazon announced that The District of Columbia, Maryland, and Virginia all made the list of possible locations for their HQ2. None of the jurisdictions have been open with their tax payers about details of the incentives being offered. However, the region has collectively offered over $7 billion.\(^3\)

A redacted copy of DC’s incentive package found that Mayor Bowser is offering Amazon a deal that could be worth over $1 billion, roughly 14% of the District’s local budget. The offer includes breaks on property taxes, corporate taxes, and sales taxes, four parcels of public land, and wage reimbursements for new hires.

Marginalized District residents find it impossible to live a quality life in Washington, DC in 2018. These primarily Black and Brown people live mostly in Wards 1, 4, 5, 7, and 8 where housing prices continue to rise at levels unmatched by the jobs that are available. Residents cannot find grocery stores near their homes and adult learners can’t afford transit to school. Sick people and pregnant mothers have no hospitals and lack quality health care while students have no banks. Parents have no access to childcare and communities are increasingly surveilled, policed, and abused by law and immigration enforcement. Their trauma goes unrecognized and their pain ignored.

This year, the Mayor, Council and Administration must prioritize the District’s Black and Brown residents in the District’s policies and in the budget. They must fund housing security, food access, healthcare, community safety, and economic justice before lining the pockets of the richest man in the world and those like him.

The DC Fair Budget Coalition has compiled a list of initiatives that the District must prioritize in this year’s budget to help move us towards addressing the social, racial, and economic disparities that plague our region. The Coalition has outlined our position on several policies and programs that we believe need to be funded to create an inclusive community. The Coalition established guiding principles and values to determine which programs and policies were supported, in addition to engaging community residents and our members in issue specific education and voting.

The needs of District residents far surpass what is outlined in this report. These investments must be accompanied by bold ideas that create structural change to address the root causes of poverty.

The status quo cannot continue. The District must honor its commitments to its residents and make faster, more efficient and effective progress toward equity and justice.
A fair budget is one that is restorative and prioritizes racial justice. The Fair Budget Coalition advocates for budget and public policy initiatives that seeks to address systemic social, racial and economic inequality in the District of Columbia.

These 25 recommendations were determined through a collective process with our membership, constituents and Steering Committee. We believe that they represent programs and policies that begin to work toward a more equitable and just DC.
End Family + Chronic Homelessness
The District must make significant progress towards its commitment of ending chronic and family homelessness by investing in long-term affordable housing programs like Permanent Supportive Housing, Targeted Affordable Housing, and Local Rent Supplement Program tenant vouchers for families. In addition, to PSH, TAH, and LRSP funding should be provided toward Rapid Rehousing for individuals experiencing homelessness.

Public Housing Repair Fund
The District must repair and maintain DC's public housing stock by establishing a minimum funding level of $25M in the Public Housing Repair Fund and making up the proposed $16M in cuts from the federal government. The DC Housing Authority also must be transparent about how they spend their money by submitting annual reports and periodic audits to the Council.

Fill the Housing Need
The District must create 26,000 units of extremely low-income housing over the next 10 years, starting with 2,600 in FY19. This should be done through a mix of 1300 Local Rent Supplement Program vouchers, 1300 units of new housing production, affordable housing requirements in market-rate buildings, and researching the feasibility of locally run public housing.

Downtown Services Center
Create a centralized services center in Downtown DC for residents experiencing homelessness that offer: case management, showers, employment support, housing navigation, storage, and laundry.

Eliminate Housing Discrimination
Add 6 new staff people to the Office of Human Rights to enforce housing and employment discrimination cases. The District must also pass and enforce laws to add homelessness as a protected class and strengthen protections for housing applicants from discrimination.

Emergency Rental Assistance Program
The Emergency Rental Assistance Program provides back rent for people facing eviction and security deposits for people who need to move. It was cut by almost $2 million last year. The District should restore that cut and increase funding to serve more people.

Affordable housing is the most pressing issue affecting the District, with the crisis most concentrated among our extremely low-income residents. The District must focus its resources on creating units and vouchers for people experiencing homelessness and making 0-30% AMI, preserving affordable housing, eliminating barriers for tenants, and improving services and shelters for homeless individuals.

Housing Security

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Impacting Services and Shelters for Homeless Individuals
Increase case management services for families and individuals in shelter to adequately conduct assessments and connect them to the resources to help them exit to permanent housing. Increase funding for street outreach teams throughout the city. Improve the conditions in the District’s single adult shelters and build a smaller, community-based, service-enriched, and more humane shelter that operates 24/7.

$2.5 Million to the Department of General Services
$313 Million to DC Housing Authority and Department of Housing and Community Development
$800K for The Office of Human Rights
$40 Million to the DC Housing Authority
$12 Million to the Department of Human Services to serve 1700+ residents
$3 Million for Street Outreach to the Department of Human Services and $9.3 Million for new shelters and conditions to the Department of Human Services

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Joyful Food Markets

Joyful Food Markets are healthy grocery markets that “pop up” monthly in elementary school in Wards 7 and 8. Students, their families, school staff, and volunteers select healthy pantry staples and fresh produce while chef educators engage children in activities designed to promote healthy habits and nutrition education.

Produce Rx

Through Produce Rx, patients at risk for or experiencing diet-related chronic illness are given a prescription for fruits and vegetables. Previously a farmers market program, in 2018 Produce Rx will be expanding in partnership with Giant Foods, so that patients can fill their prescription at the pharmacy (and in the produce aisle) of Giant on Alabama Ave in Ward 8.

Produce Plus

From June 1st through September 30, DC residents who use Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), Women, Infants and Children (WIC), Senior Grocery Plus (FMNP), or Medicaid can go to farmers' markets across the city and receive up to $20/week to spend on fresh produce.

Elderly Simplified Application

The program would increase access to SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) for seniors by shortening the application down to two-three pages and waiving the requirement for an in-person interview.

$1.5 Million to the Department Of Health to expand the program to all 49 elementary schools in Wards 7 & 8

$1 Million to the Department Of Health

$1.2 Million to the Department Of Health

70% of DC’s 49 grocery stores are concentrated in the 4 wards whose residents are primarily high income and white. In comparison, DC’s lowest income wards with the highest concentration of Black residents share only 4 grocery stores, resulting in widespread food insecurity and poor health outcomes. We must work collectively to address food access and equality, while investing in programs that fill the gaps. 

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Economic Justice

DC’s poorest families have seen a dramatic loss of income since the Great Recession, as their income is now lower than in most major US cities. Income inequality is also far higher here than in almost any other US city. The District must invest in our lowest income residents, protect workers, and make sure that big money does not dominate our political systems.

### Universal Paid Family Leave

The District should provide start up funding and implement The Paid Family and Medical Leave Insurance Fund so that more than 500,000 people working in DC can care for themselves and their loved ones when a major medical or life event arises (such as illness, surgery, birth or adoption of a new baby, dying parent).

**Office of Paid Leave at the Department of Employment Services**

### Transportation Subsidies for Adult Learners

The District should continue to provide sufficient transportation subsidies for the 8,000 adult learners currently enrolled in education programs throughout the District. This subsidy would allow learners to better afford their commute to and from school.

**The District Department of Transportation**

### Fair Elections

The District should fund a small donor empowerment program that will provide public matching funds to candidates running for District offices who only accept small contributions, rather than relying on wealthy donors and special interests to bankroll their campaigns.

**$5 Million to the Office of Campaign Finance**

### Carbon Rebate

The District should support a Carbon Rebate policy to address climate injustice, boosts clean energy, and increases the incomes of low- and middle-income individuals in DC. It would hold climate polluters accountable by an increasing fee on the carbon content of energy sold in the District. The revenue would be distributed to District residents, small business tax credits and community investments.

It will raise $140 Million in revenue FY19 and up to $600 Million by 2032
There are significant health disparities between white DC residents and Black and other people of color. Poor access to quality mental and physical healthcare means that infant and maternal mortality, cancer, diabetes, obesity, and other chronic illnesses are more prevalent East of the River. These poor health outcomes can be linked generally to poverty, as housing, food and income can be lifesaving measures. However, we also need to explicitly address the mental and physical healthcare needs for our residents.

DC Healthcare Alliance

The DC Healthcare Alliance program provides health insurance for DC residents who are not eligible for Medicaid, the majority of whom are immigrants. Alliance beneficiaries have to re-enroll in the program every six months, and must complete an in-person interview. The District should reform eligibility requirements so that beneficiaries can recertify once a year to prevent people from dropping coverage reduce volume at service centers, and improve the health and health care access of Alliance beneficiaries.

$17 Million to the Department of Health Care Finance and Department of Human Services

Early Intervention/Strong Start

The District should expand eligibility for DC Early Intervention Program (EIP)/Strong Start, which provides services to infants and toddlers with developmental delays and disabilities. Therapists go to the home and child care to teach families and caretakers how to enhance the child’s development during everyday routines. Currently, DC’s eligibility criteria remains restrictive compared to a majority of states.

School Based Mental Health Services

The District should provide high intensity mental health services through hiring 72 more mental health clinicians.

$5.7 Million to Office of the State Superintendent on Education, DC Public Schools, DC Public Charter Schools and Department of Behavioral Health

Maternal Mortality Review Committee

The District should establish a Maternal Mortality Review Committee to look into pregnancy-related deaths in DC, and make recommendations to prevent future deaths and improve maternal health, and examine racial disparities in maternal deaths in DC.

$80,000 to Office of the Chief Medical Examiner
Community Safety

Though Community Safety often implies police intervention, FBC believes that addressing the District’s social problem is the best ways to create safer communities. We live in an age of mass incarceration, detention and deportation, but the Coalition believes in a District that respects the lives and dignity of all people and offers community centered solutions to violence that do not rely on law enforcement. FBC support programs that divert people away from our justice system, support victims and survivors of crime, and decriminalize poverty.

Immigrant Justice and Legal Services Grant

Make permanent the Immigrant Justice and Legal Services Grant that provides legal services for immigrants for citizenship applications, asylum applications, Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) applications.

$1 Million to the Executive Office of the Mayor, Mayor’s Offices on Latino, African, and Asian and Pacific Islander Affairs

LEAD Pre-Arrest Diversion

MPD should address low-level criminalized activities with a public health response instead of a typical criminal justice response. Rather than arresting individuals caught engaging in activities like sex-work and drug possession, law enforcement should connect these individuals to community service providers.

$1.25 Million to the Metropolitan Police Department and the Department of Behavioral Health

Decriminalizing Fare Evasion

Currently, DC residents can be cited for up to $300, arrested, and/or jailed for up to 10 days for fare evasion on Metro rail or buses. Fare evasion should be a civil offense, punishable by a fine of not more than $100, rather than a criminal offense.

Cost Saving Program

ID and Transportation for Returning Citizens

The Increasing Access to Identity Documents Act would allow any DC resident living at or below 200% of the poverty line to get a driver’s license, non-driver’s license, and birth certificate for free. The Returning Citizen Opportunity to Succeed Act would provide transportation subsidies to DC residents released from prison and jail - up to $100/month for up to 3 months.

$9.6 Million over 4 years for ID law, ($2.4 Million for FY19)
$1.2 Million to fund transportation subsidies

Domestic Violence Prevention

Expand violence prevention and education programming in District schools that address dating abuse, including healthy and unhealthy relationship patterns, warning signs of abuse, consent, and skill development necessary to create healthy relationships.

$450,000 to the Office of the State Superintendent on Education for curriculum development

Domestic Violence Specific Housing

Expand domestic violence specific housing options that would allow for over 100 families access to emergency and transitional housing, along with trauma-informed and survivor-centered supportive services.

$5.5 Million to the Department of Human Services and Domestic Violence service providers

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Fair Taxes and Public Deals

1. Reconsider subsidized development projects that don't meet basic resident needs.
2. Say "No!" to subsidizing Amazon.
3. Increase taxes on developers building high-end and luxury condos.
5. Eliminate subsidies for housing providers/property owners with substandard, unlawful living conditions.
6. Use money from fund balance and reserve.
7. Raise taxes on wealthy individuals [and families].
8. End land giveaways and enforce affordable housing regulations on land sold/leased at discounted price.
9. Withdraw all subsidies/abatements from developers/corporations not complying with local hiring, affordable housing regulations or other wage/labor laws.

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### Home Delivered Meals

The District should maintain funding for the Home Delivered Meals Program which bring free, healthy food that is tailored to the medical needs of individuals with chronic illnesses.

$825,000 to the Department of Health

### Labor Law Enforcement

The District should provide workers and businesses education and resources in English and Spanish about the District’s labor laws and increase the number of investigators at the Office of the Attorney General to address the overflow of labor law complaints at the Department of Employment Services.

$240,000 to the Department of Employment Services and the Office of the Attorney General

### Behavioral Health Rehabilitation Services

The District should provide community-based mental health and addiction treatment for 24,800 District residents with serious mental illnesses and 6,900 residents with substance use disorders.

$7.2 Million to the Department of Behavioral Health

### Culturally Specific Domestic Violence Services

In order to meet the complex challenges and obstacles that domestic violence survivors from varied cultural communities face, the District should expand funding for culturally specific domestic violence services. These service providers are better equipped to form important relationships and engage their communities in the creation and implementation of services linked to the diverse needs of each survivor.

$3 Million to the Office of Victim Services

### Filling Gaps in Homelessness Prevention

The District should maintain funding for the Homelessness Prevention Program for families and start a program for singles. The program provides mediation, flexible financial assistance, and case management to families at imminent risk of becoming homeless - either because they are facing eviction or doubled up with friends and families.

$3.075 Million to the Department of Human Services

### Public Restrooms

The District has only 3 public restrooms open 24/7 and 6 downtown open during the day for limited hours. People experiencing homelessness have no place to “go” and are criminalized when they relieve themselves outside. The District should open and operate public restrooms available for people experiencing homelessness and ensure that private facilities do not discriminate against people experiencing homelessness.

$400,000 for 2 public restrooms, $200,000 for incentives for the Department of General Services
Since its founding in 1994, the Fair Budget Coalition (FBC) has brought together human service and legal services providers, community members directly impacted by poverty, advocates, faith organizations and concerned District residents to advocate for a District budget and public policies that address human needs. We were born out of the value that human needs must be addressed in a strategic and comprehensive way. Standing together representing a variety of interests and perspectives, the Coalition brings this message and the voices of impacted residents into the local decision-making processes.

Our members:

- Academy of Hope Adult Public Charter School
- American Civil Liberties Union-DC
- Amara Legal Center
- Bread for the City
- Break the Cycle
- Capital Area Food Bank
- Capitol Hill Group Ministry
- Chesapeake Climate Action Network
- Children's Law Center
- Coalition for Smarter Growth
- Community Services Agency/ Metro Washington Council AFL-CIO
- DC Alliance of Youth Advocates
- DC Behavioral Health Association
- DC Central Kitchen
- DC Coalition Against Domestic Violence
- DC Fiscal Policy Institute
- DC for Democracy
- DC Greens
- DC Hunger Solutions
- DC Jobs with Justice
- DC Senior Advisory Coalition
- DC Statehood Green Party
- DC Working Families Party
- Empower DC
- Foster & Adoptive Parent Advocacy Center (FAPAC)
- The Future Foundation
- Good Faith Communities
- Healing Broken Wings, Inc.
- Healthy Families/ Thriving Communities Collaborative Council
- Jews United for Justice
- La Clinica Del Pueblo
- League of Women Voters
- Legal Aid Society of DC
- Local Initiatives Support Corporation
- Many Languages One Voice (MLOV)
- Martha's Table
- Metro DC Democratic Socialists of America
- Miriam's Kitchen
- ONE DC
- Open Arms Housing
- People for Fairness Coalition
- So Others Might Eat (SOME)
- Ward 3 Democrats
- Washington Lawyer's Committee
- Washington Legal Clinic for the Homeless
- And 13 Individual Members
Citations:

1- Jeff Bezos net worth: Amazon CEO now richest person in history
   The Amazon CEO's net worth reached $105.1 billion Monday -

2- One chart explains Jeff Bezos' sprawling empire


4- What's in Amazon's Package?

5- DC city officials give valuable tax breaks and subsidies to land developers. Who is really benefiting?
   https://apps.npr.org/deals-for-developers-wamu/

6- D.C. ‘Rolled Out the Red Carpet’ for a Company Accused of Wage Fraud

7- Life Is Hell for Tenants of Giant D.C. Slumlord Sanford Capital

8- In Adams Morgan, a promise yet to be filled


10- Affordable Housing: Make a Substantial Down Payment Toward Meeting the Housing Needs of All Extremely Low-Income Residents
    https://www.dcfpi.org/all/affordable-housing-make-substantial-payment-toward-meeting-housing-needs-extremely-low-income-residents/


12- A City Breaking Apart: The Incomes of DC’s Poorest Residents are Falling, While Economic Growth is Benefiting Better-Off Residents
    https://www.dcfpi.org/all/a-city-breaking-apart-the-incomes-of-dcs-poorest-residents-are-falling-while-economic-growth-is-benefiting-better-off-residents/