

Muriel Bowser
Candidate for Mayor



This purpose of this survey is to gather candidate thoughts about DC's central public library. Responses will be shared with library users and voters on DC-LRP contact lists.

1. Should the renovation budget and expenditures for the Martin Luther King Jr., Memorial Library be open for full public review? (Yes or No?)

Background: The planning budget for the King Memorial Library has not been available for the public to see in any detail.

Candidate response: YES. I am a strong proponent of transparency and openness in budgeting.

I would like to see the budget for MLK renovations shared widely, so all District residents can know exactly how our tax dollars are being spent, or proposed to be spent..

2. Do you believe city-wide ANC input should be sought for the MLK renovation? (If so, would you ask DCPL to facilitate it? If not, why not?)

Background: A central library serves residents from across the city, more so than any other public building. As the elected officials closest to the electorate, ANC's have taken a oath of office to serve and advise on local concerns and those that affect citywide interests. An Advisory Panel just put together by DCPL in January 2014 consisted of participants who were almost exclusively downtown-based, including the two local ANCs (but only those ANC's). Other areas of the city were not well represented at all. This seems unfair and shortsighted as residents from outside of downtown may have different expectations for and needs from their central library.

Candidate response: YES. I served as an Advisory Neighborhood Commissioner, so I know how very useful they can be to development projects in DC. The Martin Luther King, Jr. library holds a very special place as our main library branch and our monument to a great leader. I see no downside to receiving the input of a wider selection of ANCs.

TO SUBMIT YOUR COMPLETED QUESTIONNAIRE: Type your answers into this document and **Email To:** rdiener@savedclibraries.org ~OR~ **Print & Fax to:** 202-234-5176



3. Do you support the idea of selling the air rights over MLK for private development? (If so, what do you understand the financial benefit to be? If not, why not?)

Background: In a 2011 study funded by the Board of Library Trustees, the Urban Land Institute found DC to be the most growth oriented city in the US with extremely high land value “that continues to outperform the nation.”¹ Following on the recommendations in the ULI report,² DCPL paid for an financial analysis of options for MLK, and then reported to the DC Council Committee on Education (& Libraries) that the return revenue from privatizing the public air rights over MLK would total approximately \$40 million dollars. The total cost to renovate MLK has been estimated by the Board of Library Trustees at \$225 to \$250 million.³ Do you agree with the City selling the publicly owned space if it raises less than 20% of funds needed?

Sources: (1) <http://dclibrary.org/mlkfuture#Background>; <http://tinyurl.com/uli-report-on-mlk> [page 12]; (2) <http://dclibrary.org/mlkfuture#Background>; (3) <http://dclibrary.org/mlkfuture#selected>

Candidate response: I would be willing to investigate the possibility of selling the MLK air rights, as a way to raise a portion of the capital required. But not without updated analysis.

4. Would luxury condominiums atop the central public library of the District of Columbia be an appropriate addition to a building named in memory of slain civil rights leader Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr? (Yes or No?)

Candidate response: Affordable Housing would be appropriate, and would be part of any such development.