



Council Member Patrick Dowd

Councilman Patrick Dowd represents over 30,000 residents in District 7 who reside in the neighborhoods of Highland Park, Lawrenceville, Morningside, Stanton Heights, and parts of Bloomfield, East Liberty, Friendship, Garfield, North Oakland, Upper Hill, and the Strip District.

Councilman Dowd chairs the Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs and serves on the board of the Pittsburgh Water and Sewer Authority.

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NEW PUBLIC CALENDAR:

We provide our constituents with a publicly available calendar of City events relating to Councilman Dowd's schedule. Get involved with public hearings, council sessions, and more.

Dear Neighbor,

When I took office in January of 2008, I promised you I would listen to your concerns and work to reform city government. These two priorities have guided my efforts this year. To keep you informed, my staff and I have prepared this annual report, which is only a snapshot of our year, but helps offer insights into the work we do to serve you.

Back in May 2008 I launched Council to Go (CtG) with the idea of meeting regularly and one-on-one with constituents in their neighborhood. This roaming office enables me to listen to your concerns and hear your great ideas. I have also been able to take the information gathered at these sessions directly to the Council. CtG enabled us to increase our constituent services by 22% and has been a great way to stay connected with residents. Enclosed in this report you will find times and locations for the CtG session nearest you as well as some photos and statistics.

One theme that I hear often is the need for change in government. This year, as an independent voice on Council, I have taken stands on important issues that have not always been popular, but have been necessary for change. In recent weeks, I have challenged the oversight body for attempting to take power away from city elected officials. I also pressed the administration for greater accountability regarding the use of \$45 million of the City's surplus. Earlier in the year, I led the effort to block a backroom deal for the city's largest LED sign, and I didn't use taxpayer dollars in the effort.

City-County consolidation was a hot topic last year. In these pages you'll learn about an initiative I spearheaded to convene the first-ever meeting of the City of Pittsburgh and its neighboring municipalities. Leaders from these 36 communities gathered and talked about our common challenges and the need to work together. This is a common sense approach to the region's fragmentation and one I hope will improve the quality of life for all.

In this report you'll read about my work on a bold set of initiatives designed to improve infrastructure and education for cyclists, pedestrians as well as motorists. Our goal is make Pittsburgh safer for all users of our roadways.

In 2009, the City will amend its five-year financial recovery plan, but it must also step up its commitment to making Pittsburgh a more attractive place to live, work and raise a family. These are not mutually exclusive options, but they will require bold leadership and strategic use of our limited resources. The City of Pittsburgh needs clear vision and decisive leadership which, I believe, is best founded in solid connection with the people one serves. I will continue to reach out to you directly, but please take a moment to stop by the Council to Go session nearest you and share your vision and ideas for Pittsburgh's future.

Sincerely,

SAFE STREETS

Last August, together with Mayor Ravenstahl and members of the cycling community, we announced a set of initiatives aimed at encouraging cycling and walking in the City of Pittsburgh. Our goal: safe and vibrant streets for all of us—drivers, riders, and pedestrians.

It makes economic sense to have bicycle and pedestrian-friendly roadways, but it's also a quality of life issue. Let's transform how we use our streets.

We'll begin to create walkable communities, thriving neighborhood business districts, and ultimately attract new residents to the City of Pittsburgh.

The initiatives we announced address a spectrum of traffic, engineering, and infrastructure improvements and call for enforcement of traffic laws designed to protect cyclists and pedestrians. In concert with a set of educational initiatives and events, the City plans to apply for Bicycle Friendly Community Status in 2010, a designation awarded by the League of American Bicyclists. Pittsburgh would be the first city in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania to achieve that designation.

I am proud to be part of this effort and confident that this is just our first step toward a more wholistic approach to transportation policy and planning.



Councilman Patrick Dowd visits students at Pittsburgh Montessori PreK-8 school in Friendship. Photo courtesy of Brian Cohen.

PROGRESS REPORT FOR 2008

Reforming the City's pension board to increase accountability. Passed April 15, 2008. *Sponsored legislation modifying the membership of the Municipal Pension Trust Fund Board to include the City Controller and the Council President in lieu of two appointees by the Mayor.* This Board is responsible for the City's pension assets. Changes to its membership are designed to ensure that all branches of city government are held accountable for its performance.

Campaign finance reform. Vetoed by Mayor Ravenstahl on June 9, 2008. *Supported legislation to place caps on campaign donations and require greater transparency and public access to campaign finance reports.* Though passed by Council, this legislation was vetoed by the Mayor.

Faster access for first responders. Passed October 21, 2008. *Council unanimously approved new rules for street numbering and addressing in the city of Pittsburgh.* The new rules are designed to aid in the delivery of emergency response services by creating a systematic and public-safety oriented approach to street naming and addressing.

Tracking lost & stolen handguns to keep our streets safe. Passed December 2, 2008. *Supported the passage of legislation to crack down on straw purchasers of handguns.* The legislation requires owners to report lost or stolen guns within 24 hours of discovery or face fines and possible imprisonment.

For a complete list of legislation, please visit our website.

HOT TOPIC: CITY-COUNTY CONSOLIDATION

There has been much talk this last year about City-County Consolidation. In these tough financial times, I believe strongly that there are many opportunities for the City and its surrounding municipalities to save money by sharing services and operations. To tackle these issues, I created the *Task Force for Intergovernmental Cooperation* which Council unanimously approved in March.

The Task Force, together with the Mayor, the Controller and the GSPIA Innovation Clinic at the University of Pittsburgh, convened the first-ever meeting of the City of Pittsburgh and its contiguous municipalities. In October and again in December, leaders from these 36 municipalities met at the University of Pittsburgh.

We are calling this group **CONNECT**. We represent more than half of Allegheny County's population and more than 90% of the county's jobs. We face similar challenges and are looking for ways to work together as we do things like plow streets or seek federal support for infrastructure redevelopment. Working together with our neighbors is a common sense approach to the region's fragmentation and one I hope will benefit us all.

For more info on CONNECT, go to: <http://www.innovate.gspia.pitt.edu/CONNECT/>.

COUNCIL DISTRICT 7 NEWS WRAP-UP

Residential Permit Parking Expansion

May 2008—For years, expansion of the residential permit parking program has stalled for lack of funds and from a long backlog of new permit area requests. For residents of communities like Lawrenceville and others, the program is necessary to ensure available on-street parking for neighborhood residents. By increasing the fine for permit parking violations from \$25 to \$35, we made it possible for the program to grow in time to meet the parking demands of the new Children’s Hospital on Penn Avenue. Communities around the city will finally have access to this popular service administered jointly by the Pittsburgh Parking Authority and the City of Pittsburgh.

Brereton Street Demolition

July 2008—Two months before I took office, 3107 and 3109 Brereton Street in Polish Hill burned in a fire determined to be arson. They were condemned and the owners were ordered to tear down these public safety haz-



Photo of Brereton St. properties prior to demolition courtesy of the Polish Hill Civic Association

ards by November 14, 2007. After months of inaction by the property owners and growing concern by the Polish Hill community, we took action.

In the spring and summer, I repeatedly demanded that these buildings be torn down by the City of Pittsburgh. Finally, in July, the buildings came down and the City agreed to lien the property owners and pursue legal action to recover the cost of the demolition. Those cases have been filed with the Court of Common Pleas.

St. Mary’s Academy

December 2008—At the end of the year, Council voted to designate a new

City historic landmark in Lawrenceville, the former St. Mary’s Academy on 46th Street. Completed in 1854, St. Mary’s Academy was the first building built on the former St. Mary’s Parish complex, and it is one of the last remaining free-standing examples of Greek Revival architecture left in the City. This historic designation protects an architectural treasure dating from Lawrenceville’s earliest days.

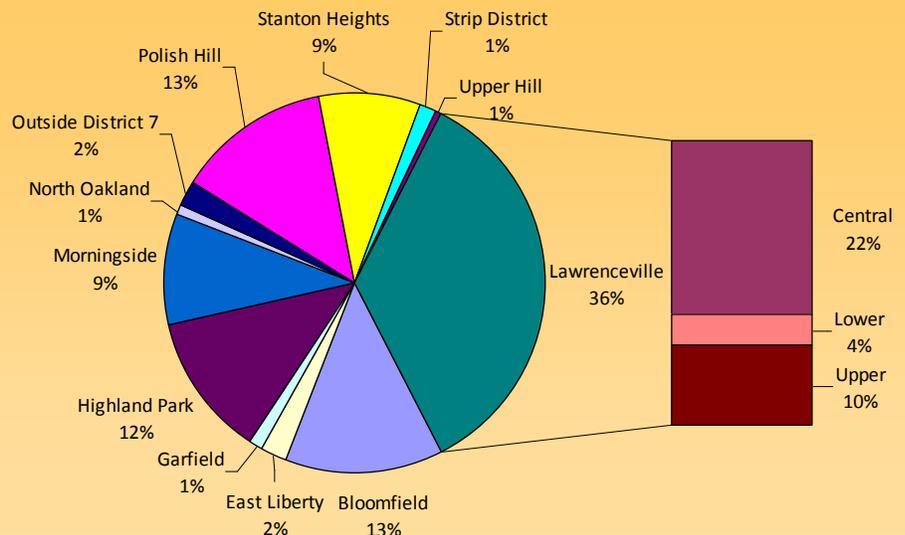


Photo of St. Mary’s Academy courtesy of the City of Pittsburgh.

Please join me in thanking Keith Cochran and Carol Peterson for leading the nomination effort.

CONSTITUENT SERVICES

When I was elected to Council, I made a pledge to improve transparency in government. This pledge starts with my Council office. In September, my staff and I developed a new constituent service tracking system that makes programs like Council to Go possible. The graph here is just the beginning of the information that I will be sharing with you about my office’s activities. Over the coming months, I will be posting more statistics on my website as my staff and I explore the capabilities of this new system.



2008 constituent services cases by neighborhood

COUNCIL TO GO ANNOUNCES...

Last May, we launched Council to Go as our roving district office to better serve you in the neighborhoods where you live. With sites across the district from Polish Hill to Highland Park, we found that we can service 22% more requests than we could by phone from our downtown office.

“With sites across the district...we found that we can service 22% more requests than we could by phone from our downtown office.”

- Patrick Dowd

- Learn how to use 311, the Mayor’s Service Center
- Share thoughts with Councilman Dowd about legislation in Council
- Learn about ordinances in the city code
- Check on ongoing requests you have already made through our office



Councilman Dowd describes the City Seal to students from Pittsburgh Public Schools in Council chambers.

After listening to your comments and learning from our experience last year, we are announcing the 2009 schedule, with more evening sessions.

What can we do at Council to Go? Just about everything we can from our downtown office:

In 2008 at Council to Go, we helped you make sure the city’s streets, walkways, and infrastructure were maintained, provided opportunities for you to improve your homes, businesses, and communities, and helped you access municipal government.

We are looking forward to talking to you at Council to Go this year.

Where to Find COUNCIL TO GO

NEW SCHEDULE

Bloomfield:

Closed until Farmers’ Market opens in May

Highland Park:

Enrico’s Tazza D’Oro
1125 North Highland Avenue
5:30—7:00 pm

Every 4th Wednesday in odd months beginning on January 28

Lawrenceville:

Perk Me Up
4407 Butler Street
7:30—9:00 am

Every 3rd Friday in even months beginning on February 20

Morningside:

Morning Glory Café
1806 Chislett Street
5:30—7:00 pm

Every 4th Wednesday in even months beginning on February 25

Polish Hill:

Polish Hill Civic Association
3060 Brereton Street
6:30—8:00 pm

Every 3rd Wednesday in odd months beginning on January 21

Please call us or check our on-line calendar for updates, cancellations, or directions.



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