

**GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA  
Department of Transportation**



**Public Roundtable on**

**PR24-326 - Director of the District Department of Transportation  
Everett Lott Confirmation Resolution of 2021**

Testimony of Everett Lott

Acting Director, District Department of Transportation

Committee on Transportation and the Environment  
Mary Cheh, Chairperson

John A. Wilson Building  
1350 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20004

October 26, 2021

Good afternoon, Chairperson Cheh and members and staff of the Committee on Transportation and the Environment. I am Everett Lott, resident of Ward 4, and Acting Director of the District Department of Transportation (DDOT); and I am honored to have been nominated by Mayor Muriel Bowser to become the confirmed Director of DDOT.

I welcome this opportunity to discuss my background, experience, and vision for transportation in the District. Transportation and public administration are part of my personal ministry, and I have had the good fortune of having a career spanning more than 28 years that has given me the opportunity to effect meaningful change in these fields.

I began my career in the District government back in the early 2000s as budget director for DC Public Schools. Later as part of the Executive Office of the Mayor, I helped create a new District government agency, now known as the Office of Unified Communications (OUC). Faced with a struggling, decentralized 911 emergency system, I helped develop and implement plans to merge three separate organizations and three different collective bargaining units into one agency to better triage and respond to emergency calls. I developed standard operating procedures and personnel policies that improved individuals' performance by 40% and increased dispatching performance by 35%.

By 2009, I had joined the federal government, taking advantage of opportunities at the United States Peace Corps, Health Resources and Services Administration, and the United States Department of Transportation. At each agency, I helped enhance capacity by filling vacancies, balancing budgets, and identifying savings. As a Chief Administrative Officer at the Peace Corps, I was responsible for nine regional recruiting offices and a budget of more than \$26 million. I successfully gained support for a budget enhancement of \$20 million and facilitated

major reorganizations within the agency, which together resulted in the substantial growth of the number of Peace Corps volunteers.

I received an appointment to join the Senior Executive Service (SES) at the U.S. Department of Transportation (U.S. DOT) in 2016. I served as the Associate Administrator for Administration in the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA) and later at Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). At U.S. DOT, I was a principal member of the executive leadership team responsible for balancing a budget of \$260 million and leading the strategic human capital management initiatives and administrative operations effort responsible for 750 federal and contract employees at both the DC and regional office facilities. I developed and implemented an organizational vision that integrated operational and programmatic goals to recruit, retain, and develop a diverse workforce that was geographically dispersed throughout the country. As an executive leader at U.S. DOT, I collaborated across various modes to build strategic relationships and provide strategic leadership and direction.

These experiences and relationships prepared me for my roles at DDOT. As Deputy Director I was responsible for providing oversight over the Urban Forestry Division, Public Space Permitting Office, and other public space management divisions. I led the development of the District's 5G technology program, finalizing a process for permitting the equipment in public space, relaying our requirements and priorities to the industry, and hosting public engagement meetings. I also provided leadership and direction in managing the operations of our three transit systems—Capital Bikeshare, DC Circulator, and the DC Streetcar. As Deputy—and now Acting Director—I have offered strategic direction and leadership on planning and policy issues regarding the use of public space, maintaining transportation infrastructure, transportation safety,

environmental services, capital construction, financial management, personnel, procurement, and information technology.

As the head of the DDOT executive leadership team, I am responsible for managing a large, diversified department of more than 1,100 employees with a budget of more than \$1.1 billion that is composed of nine functionally unique administrations. My responsibilities now include setting the District's transportation policy agenda and steering priorities to solve complex transportation issues that have significant economic, social, environmental, and infrastructural development implications.

I plan to take advantage of these strengths and experiences to tackle some of the District's most pertinent transportation goals: safety, equity, and enhanced mobility. I will continue to find ways to revamp, reorganize, and restructure processes and procedures to deliver on projects more efficiently to realize these goals. This year, under my leadership, DDOT has made appreciable advances toward maintaining our assets in a state of good repair and creating enjoyable spaces. By the end of this calendar year, we will have:

- Installed seven of miles of protected bike lanes;
- Paved more than 85 miles of roadway;
- Filled two miles of sidewalk gaps;
- Implemented the dockless scooter lock requirement;
- Expanded the District's Capital Bikeshare fleet by 12 docking stations;
- Finalized plans to install 80 new CaBi stations across all eight Wards, providing more residents with a CaBi station within ¼ mile of their home;
- Added 800 new pedal bikes and 2,500 additional e-bikes to our bikeshare system;
- Added more than 67 new audible pedestrian signals;

- Refreshed more than 1,700 high visibility crosswalks;
- Increased the percent of signals with lead pedestrian intervals (LPIs) to 63%;
- Planted more than 3,000 trees and pruned more than 14,000.

DDOT's mission is to equitably deliver a safe, sustainable, and reliable multimodal transportation network for all residents and visitors of the District and, as Director, I strive toward designing a multi-modal transportation network that provides everyone with options for moving around the District.

Earlier this month, I, alongside Mayor Bowser, announced a plan to streamline the installation of traffic safety measures like speed humps, stop signs, and right turn hardening measures. Our traffic safety investigation program, which processes more than 1,000 requests in a typical year, has been updated and empowered with additional contract capacity to both complete investigations and construct identified solutions quickly. Therefore, in the coming weeks and months, I plan to build on this success and momentum to expeditiously install traffic calming measures, where warranted, to advance our safety goals.

We have to institute good transportation policies that support getting people to jobs, schools, places of worship, and services in a safe and environmentally friendly manner. I have challenged staff to take a much more assertive approach with respect to implementing safety measures on our roadways, like designing spaces to prevent reckless driver behavior. I have challenged my traffic engineers to design roads from the perspective of the pedestrians. Far too long, roads were designed to the scale of cars, moving them quickly through our neighborhoods, not to the scale of people. Thoughtful and meaningful transportation planning can have long lasting outcomes on the District's population. Misguided transportation policies and missed

opportunities can reinforce racial and economic inequality by isolating neighborhoods and people. Now is the time to build a safer, pedestrian-oriented transportation network.

During my tenure as Interim and Acting Director, DDOT has delivered on substantial projects such as:

- The Frederick Douglass Memorial Bridge and the Parkside Pedestrian Bridge—which both opened ahead of schedule;
- Our commitment to reclaiming public spaces through projects like Black Lives Matter Plaza, Open Streets on Georgia Avenue, and future Open Streets events in each of the District’s eight wards;
- The successful and friendly acquisition of private property to permit the transformation of the New York and Florida Avenue, N.E. intersection slated to begin next year; and, importantly,
- Completing our update to MoveDC, the District’s long-range multimodal transportation plan.

With MoveDC, we began the process of updating the plan by engaging with members of the community and measuring the need for transportation investments in neighborhoods across the District. The MoveDC update represents one of the largest communications and public engagement efforts ever undertaken by DDOT, garnering participation of more than 10,000 residents. During this process, DDOT experimented with new outreach strategies to meet residents where they are. In this process, the community helped us identify goals for our transportation network toward which our transportation policies and mobility projects aspire to achieve.

I plan to remain accessible and transparent to the community while streamlining processes to more quickly deliver on safety-related projects. As neighborhood projects are best discussed at the local level, DDOT will continue to engage closely with Advisory Neighborhood Commissions in all eight Wards to find solutions to neighborhood safety and mobility challenges. I also want to maintain an open line of communication between our transportation advisory councils: the Bicycle Advisory Council, the Pedestrian Advisory Council, and the Multimodal Accessibility Advisory Council. These advisory groups are a resource that can help DDOT fulfill its commitment to delivering a safe, reliable, and equitable transportation system.

MoveDC is now goal oriented, no longer project-based, meaning that individual projects are recognized as important strategies toward realizing our goals but are not the goal themselves. This reframing is significant because it is more forward looking; it highlights DDOT's long-term goals such as safety, mobility, sustainability, and creating enjoyable spaces, rather than spotlighting neighborhood projects that are best considered at the local level. This updated MoveDC seeks to improve the quality of every resident's experiences when using our transportation systems and enjoying public spaces. Having identified District neighborhoods in most need of transportation investments, as Director, I plan to use my skills and experiences in finding efficiencies, enhancing capacity, and delivering projects to advance the District's transportation goals in the most vulnerable areas.

A fair and just distribution of our investment's safety, connectivity, and sustainability outcomes is a foundational principle for equity. Safety improvements are equity enhancements. All people, no matter who they are or where they live, should be able to safely walk out of their home and travel anywhere throughout the District without the fear of being hit by a speeding

vehicle, tripping over a broken sidewalk, or not being seen while stepping into a crosswalk. In turn, DDOT must default to action.

Under my leadership, DDOT is taking a more aggressive approach toward reducing speeds and introducing traffic calming measures to force drivers to drive more cautiously. This past summer, DDOT quickly delivered and completed 70 of the 110 recommended improvements around schools and along major corridors as part of our summer blitz of traffic safety installments. Approximately 40 of the 110 projects are under active construction as I speak. Improvements include: signalizing intersections, installing pedestrian warning beacons, driver feedback signs, extending curbs, and channeling roads using flexible posts. Forty-nine of these 67 projects are located in Wards 4, 5, 7, and 8 and comprise nearly 80% of the total funds spent on summer safety improvements so far. Now is the time to bridge the gap between thriving communities east and west of the Anacostia River, emulating the opportunities afforded by the Frederick Douglass Memorial Bridge.

Transportation is the great equalizer; we all have our own personal experiences and preferences with regard to transportation, no matter the mode. Growing up in Texas, a car was a necessity. But, as a Washingtonian we have choices. And as a parent, a husband, a cyclist, and a runner, I am deeply troubled by senseless crashes that have damaged the lives of children and families throughout the District. I am teaching my son how to road cycle with me while constantly reminding him to keep his head on a swivel and be aware of his surroundings. The behavior I witness is terrifying: people driving recklessly, distracted, texting, and talking on their phones, impatiently speeding, passing cars on local roads, driving in the bike lanes, running red lights, passing through stop signs, and not yielding to pedestrians in the crosswalk. This behavior is dangerous and unacceptable and has to change.



I share the concern and frustration that members of the community have expressed about safety; that same passion is what keeps DDOT's staff committed to doing what is needed to make our streets safer. I want to be clear that when I say that safety is my top priority, I mean it. Some people's livelihoods require them to drive; others simply prefer it. And some are proud to live a car-free lifestyle. Nevertheless, no matter our preferred mode of transportation we have a right to safe streets.

I thank you for the opportunity to testify before you today and look forward to answering any questions you may have.