

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



**Fiscal Year 2017 Performance Oversight Hearing**

Testimony of  
**Jeff Marootian**  
**Director**

Before the  
Committee on Transportation and the Environment  
Council of the District of Columbia  
The Honorable Mary M. Cheh, Chairperson

John A. Wilson Building  
Room 500  
1350 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20004

February 27, 2018  
2:30 P.M.

Good morning, Chairperson Cheh and members of the Committee on Transportation and the Environment. My name is Jeff Marootian, and I am the Director of the District Department of Transportation (DDOT). Thank you for inviting me to testify on behalf of Mayor Muriel Bowser in today's hearing to discuss the activities and accomplishments of the Department of Transportation in Fiscal Year 2017.

Mayor Bowser's Fiscal Year 2017 Budget reflected our deep commitment to DC values by making investments that will provide all residents of the District of Columbia with the opportunity to succeed. We remain focused each day on creating pathways to the middle class by investing in education, affordable housing, infrastructure, public safety, and people.

It has been less than two months since I received confirmation from this body as the new director of DDOT. I appreciate your confidence in me and I'm humbled by the opportunity to build on the great successes this agency has achieved over the last three years of Mayor Bowser's administration and under the leadership of my predecessor. I am committed to expanding on that progress



and to delivering superior transportation projects and service for the residents of and visitors to the District of Columbia.

***I) Communication and Engagement***

As a service agency, ensuring that the residents of the District have a responsive and easy interaction with the department is a top priority. In the last year, we have taken a number of steps to help us reach that goal. We established the Office of External Affairs, which has responsibility for managing and coordinating DDOT's policy and legislative agenda, communications, and community engagement activities. We have brought on a Chief of External Affairs to direct this office and we continue to grow the community engagement team to help residents navigate the department and find solutions to their transportation related issues. We have filled the three community engagement positions that were funded in FY 2018 and we are currently recruiting for additional positions.

We are also making every effort to support equity and inclusion as we engage with our residents. At present, we are about to start recruitment for a new Accessibility and Inclusion Coordinator. This position in the Equity & Inclusion Division will be responsible for focusing on equity issues in transportation that impact older adults, and will act as DDOT's primary liaison to older residents in



our community. We expect this position to be filled this spring.

In addition to the 223 public meetings that department staff participated in during FY17, DDOT started holding quarterly ANC open houses to discuss transportation-related issues and solutions. These open houses serve as an opportunity to educate commissioners on how to effectively work with the agency. We are looking forward to the next ANC open house in March. DDOT also continues to look for new ways to proactively engage the community and provide clear information about our activities, such as the weekly construction updates that DDOT started in 2017.

## ***II) Infrastructure***

### ***a. Roads, Alleys, Sidewalks***

Some the most frequent requests we get from the community are about street, alley, and sidewalk conditions. Mayor Bowser has made a commitment to address all of the roads in the District in poor condition within the next five years. In 2017, we made progress toward that goal, repaving 25 miles of streets and using pavement preservation techniques for an additional 12 miles to maximize the life of those roads. While not yet final, we at DDOT have been working hard to



develop the department's plan for the 2018 paving season. This year, for the first time, we are using both road quality data and community feedback to assess roads for potential repaving. We also expect to be able to announce the department's full repaving plan in early spring, so that for the first time residents can know when and where to expect us this year. In FY17, DDOT continued Mayor Bowser's AlleyPalooza campaign and completed work on approximately 151 alleys. As we continue to prioritize rehabilitation of alleys in poor condition, we expect to announce our next AlleyPalooza later this year.

***b. Major Projects***

On February 13<sup>th</sup>, I had the honor of joining Mayor Bowser and other local and federal leaders to break ground on the South Capitol Street Corridor project, the largest construction project in the agency's history. Phase 1 is the replacement of the 67-year old Frederick Douglass Memorial Bridge over the Anacostia River and includes new pedestrian and bicycle connections. Phase 2 includes a new interchange on Suitland Parkway at Martin Luther King Jr. Avenue, plus reconstruction and streetscape improvements on South Capitol



Street north of the Nationals Ballpark and on New Jersey Avenue north of M Street SE.

The Douglass Bridge project demonstrates not only our commitment to investing in infrastructure that serves District residents, but also our strong desire to invest in those very residents. The District received special Federal Highway Administration approval allowing us to require 51 percent of all new project-related jobs to be performed by District residents. Additionally, the contractor must subcontract at least 13 percent of the total design contract and 22 percent of the construction contract to certified Disadvantaged Business Enterprises (DBEs), far outpacing DBE goals on previous capital projects.

DBEs and Certified Business Enterprises (CBE) are critical to DDOT's work. I mentioned how proud we are of our DBE achievements on the Douglass Bridge project. But every day, we are leveraging our federal dollars to create pathways to the middle class. In FY 2017, DBE firms received approximately \$22 million of the \$75 million of federal-assisted infrastructure funds. That is almost 30 percent of federal-assisted funds going to DBE firms, which is higher than the 28 percent that DBE firms received between 2012 and 2015.

In FY17, DDOT also hosted our 7<sup>th</sup> Annual DBE Summit and Networking Symposium. Last year's Summit had the most registered participants in the history



of the event. Over 500 individuals and more than 200 businesses registered. The event showcased several upcoming projects—including the Douglass Bridge, Malcolm X Avenue, and H Street projects.

**c. Managing the Transportation Network**

Building a world-class transportation network and connecting neighborhoods is about more than building, replacing, and maintaining infrastructure. We also know that we have to actively manage the transportation network so that we are getting the most efficient use out of the infrastructure we already have. We are doing this through innovative strategies like our ParkDC pilot project in the Chinatown and Penn Quarter neighborhoods, where we are testing new technologies to make parking easier and reduce congestion. The congestion pricing model used for this pilot project charges higher prices on higher-demand blocks, while keeping prices static or lowering them on blocks with lower parking demands. The pricing also adjusts during the day, recognizing that parking has peak and non-peak hours, as well. Rate changes are communicated to the customers using: decals on parking meters; real-time parking availability apps (ParkDC and VoicePark); and the [www.parkdc.com](http://www.parkdc.com) website.



We have also received national attention for a new pilot program that we initiated to test new approaches to manage access to the curbside in high-traffic areas. The purpose of the pilot program is to facilitate pedestrian and traffic flow along Connecticut Avenue and reduce pedestrian/vehicular conflicts during the night life entertainment hours. To accommodate the pilot, DDOT has prohibited parking from 10 P.M. to 7 A.M. Thursday night, Friday night, and Saturday night on Connecticut Avenue NW from Rhode Island Avenue to Dupont Circle to provide a safe pick up/drop off zone for individuals who frequent bars and restaurants in the area. This pilot was launched in October 2017 in partnership with the Golden Triangle Business Improvement District (BID). Initial results appear promising, although DDOT is working with the BID and other partners to improve enforcement and information to patrons and other drivers.

***d. Transit and Transportation Innovations***

Circulator: The DC Circulator program has gone through major changes in the last year, with more on the way. In FY 2017, DDOT initiated the 2017 update of the Transit Development Plan (TDP) for the Circulator. The TDP focused on making improvements to the reliability and performance of the existing routes. DDOT published the final TDP in December 2017 and held a public hearing on





January 4, 2018 on proposed service and fare media changes (eliminating paper passes). The proposed changes will result in increased ridership on the system, add new weekend service in Ward 8, create a new connection between Congress Heights and Union Station, and serve destinations in Southwest DC, such as the soccer stadium, the Wharf, and other cultural attractions. The public comment period for proposed changes closed on February 16, 2018.

DDOT has also taken steps to make the Circulator fleet more sustainable. We have completed the purchase of 26 clean diesel vehicles with emissions-reducing technology for the fleet, and all vehicles have been in revenue service since August 2017. The District is completing acceptance testing of 14 fully electric vehicles. The electric vehicles are expected to begin Circulator revenue service in April 2018.

DDOT has also worked with WMATA over the past few years to enhance the maintenance oversight of the fleet. The most recent January 2018 maintenance audit revealed only one safety defect out of the 22 vehicles reviewed that prevented a bus from entering service, and all Preventive Maintenance documentation was up to date and showed a 100 percent on-time completion rate.



WMATA's existing contract for DC Circulator operations expires on June 30, 2018. WMATA has informed DDOT that it can no longer contract for DC Circulator operations after that date, due to the focus of the agency on improving core Metro service delivery and safety on those core services.

The Office of Contracting and Procurement (OCP), in collaboration with DDOT, is currently in the midst of a competitive procurement process for Operations and Maintenance Services of the DC Circulator system. The Request for Proposals (RFP) was published on September 22, 2017, and proposals were due November 28. OCP, with DDOT support, is currently in the evaluation stage of the process. We are looking forward to the Council's review of the contract in the very near future. DDOT is committed to working with you to ensure that a new contract is in place in time to enable service to continue without interruption when the current service contract with WMATA expires on June 30.

Under the new contract, DDOT will implement new accountability measures to ensure that the system meets our high performance targets. The current District RFP contemplates a contract with a five-year base period with three five-year options. This term was selected to solicit competitive proposals that provide incentives for the O&M partner to develop long-term labor relationships with



drivers and mechanics and provide stability for the system, while enabling the District to evaluate service provision at regular intervals to determine whether a change in approach or operator is necessary.

Streetcar: Our streetcar system also continues its successful run. In fact, today marks the two-year anniversary of the start of service on H Street and Benning Road. DC Streetcar ridership continued to grow in FY 2017, with a year-over-year increase of more than 40 percent for the period following the launch of the system in February 2016. The beginning of seven-day service and improved service frequency beginning in September 2016 further increased ridership from an average of 70,000 riders per month in FY 2016, to an average of more than 90,000 per month in FY 2017. Total ridership for FY 2017 was 1.1 million. While it took 14 months from launch to serve the first 1 million riders, the 2 million-mark was reached in only 10 months. FY 2017 saw DC Streetcar's second-busiest day on record: January 21, 2017, the day of the Women's March, with more than 7,000 riders, second only to the launch date in February 2016.

Now that the system is in full service, with all six vehicles in operation, DDOT is working to expand the system east and west, with our first stop the Benning Road Metro station to complete the connection to the Metrorail system.



Bikeshare: FY 2017 was another successful year for Capital Bikeshare (or CaBi). CaBi celebrated its seventh birthday and surpassed 480 stations region wide, 269 of which are in the District. While around 60 percent of the CaBi stations are in D.C., approximately 90 percent of the ridership takes place in the District each year. In 2017 CaBi saw: a 13 percent increase in trips; a three percent growth in year-end annual memberships; and a 10 percent growth in ridership revenue. CaBi had a record-breaking day of ridership in 2017, with 16,862 trips on April 15th, and set a new record for annual ridership at nearly 3.8 million trips. New stations installed in FY 2017 resulted in a net increase of 30 stations in the District, including nine new stations in Wards 7 and 8—greatly expanding the reach of CaBi in all eight wards.

DDOT has continued to lower barriers to entry for residents at all income levels to use Capital Bikeshare. As of 2017, through the Community Partners Program, 19 organizations have enrolled 875 residents, who have taken nearly 60,000 trips using the five-dollar annual membership. We have launched a new bi-lingual map design that includes step-by-step, pictorial instructions on how to rent a bike and descriptive text in both English and Spanish. Perhaps the most exciting improvement in 2017 was the launch of the Capital Bikeshare app, which allows



users to register and quickly access their account information and rent a bike without a key fob, allowing people to bypass the kiosk.

Even as we build upon the successes of our now well-established regional bikeshare system—the first of its kind in the nation—we are not resting on our laurels. As new private-sector innovators bring new technologies to market in the transportation space, DDOT is actively exploring ways to harness that innovation for the public good. Our station-based bikeshare system provides a reliable, safe, and healthy transportation option for thousands of riders every day. But new technologies and new business models in bikesharing hold out the potential to bring those benefits to many more new riders. In September 2017, DDOT launched a pilot program to allow several companies to operate dockless bikeshare systems in the District under a temporary permit. Five companies so far have taken advantage of this demonstration period, and early results are promising. While overall ridership is a small fraction of our mature dock-based bikeshare system, the new companies appear to be reaching a new set of riders that, so far, CaBi has not yet attracted.

Being on the cutting edge of innovation is not always neat and tidy, and, to be frank, we have had some hard conversations with the companies about the



expectations we have of them if they are to continue to operate successfully in the District. To their credit, most of the companies have taken steps to improve their operations. We have also recently seen progress in the data they are sharing with us, so we can properly evaluate the success of the program, as well as identify areas for improvement.

Autonomous vehicles (AVs). More transportation technology changes are on the horizon, and the District is embracing them. Car manufacturers and software makers are developing new technology to allow autonomous (sometimes called self-driving) vehicles to carry passengers more safely and efficiently than human drivers can today. The potential benefits are massive—but we also have a lot to learn about how AVs will interact with human drivers, pedestrians, cyclists, and transit in dense, complicated urban environments. To that end, Mayor Bowser earlier this month made two exciting announcements: First, that the District is partnering with the Southwest Business Improvement District, which has issued a Request for Information seeking organizations that could operate an automated shuttle on 10th Street SW, carrying passengers back and forth between L’Enfant Plaza and the Wharf. The street is an ideal candidate for an AV pilot zone that will allow real-world testing in a low-volume traffic environment.



Second, the Mayor announced the establishment of the District's Interagency AV Working Group to proactively prepare the District for AV technologies and ensure that AV deployment will benefit District residents and visitors. The working group is comprised of District agencies focused on transportation, disability rights, environmental issues, and public safety. DDOT is a key partner in the working group, and I am personally committed to making sure that we get this right for the District.

***e. Green Infrastructure***

DDOT's work also supports the environment and sustainability. In FY 2017, DDOT planted 8,000 trees. As of this month, the District's total canopy cover stands at more than 150,000 street trees. By the close of the FY 2018, we will have planted an additional 8,000 trees. In addition to expanding our tree canopy, DDOT is integrating green elements into our streetscapes. We are constructing seven green alleys on behalf of DC Water, and we have an additional five green alleys that we have completed on our own. Several more are in the design phase, with construction to begin this year. Our green infrastructure team has also incorporated sustainable features in multiple other projects, including on Minnesota Avenue SE, 15th Street NW, the Klingle Valley Trail, the Metropolitan



Branch Trail, and the refurbished Oxon Run Trail, which we just reopened earlier this month.

**f. Improved Management Tools**

We continue to use TranStat to track and evaluate our work, and we meet weekly with programs to focus on performance reporting and process improvements using a data-driven approach. At TranStat, a diverse group of managers and program experts convene to review data analysis, troubleshoot issues, and plan for new or restructured programs in a roundtable format. This format has created a space to ask questions and try to solve issues or share ideas so we can all produce better outcomes. TranStat has become a more comprehensive way of looking at how the entire agency functions, with supporting programs, such as our community engagement and customer service teams, now part of process.

In FY 2017, DDOT updated ProTrack Plus, a comprehensive project management application that enables staff to manage projects through their entire life cycles (“cradle to grave”). DDOT added more functionality into ProTrack Plus based on user feedback that we should provide more integration with OCP, OCFO, and other entities who are part of the project a management process. ProTrack Plus continues to reduce the number of systems that DDOT manages so that more





information is readily available and decisions are made efficiently throughout the project management process.

In FY 2017, DDOT expanded the use of Tableau, a business analytics software application, throughout the agency, with training conducted by our performance team. DDOT worked with OCTO to set up an enterprise solution that allows programs to collaborate and share data analysis and visualizations to quickly highlight trends or areas of concerns. DDOT is also collaborating with other agencies, like DPW and the Office of the City Administrator, to share data and information to help improve service delivery or report on key performance items.

At DDOT, we are also making great strides in managing our financial and accounting systems. On October 1, 2017, DDOT launched an Invoice Tracking System and Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) and trained over 250 staff in using the system. The SOP and new system provides uniform and consistent invoice processes and procedures department wide; ensures compliance with District and Federal law; tracks invoices from receipt to submission to OCFO; rejects disputed invoices in a timely manner; eliminates processing bottlenecks; reduces late processing fees; and makes DDOT a better business partner to the



contractor community. DDOT's goal is to process invoices within 15 days of receipt to allow for initial processing, review, and approval, receipt in the PASS system, and courier delivery. In the first quarter of FY 2018, 757 invoices were processed in 12.1 days on average. Currently, DDOT is working to enhance its District Transportation Access Portal (DTAP) to include electronic submission of invoices, which will further reduce processing time while enhancing transparency.

DDOT also implemented a new process in FY 2017 to close out Local Capital projects. This process was the result of work performed by a team of District employees who participated in the Certified Public Manager Program. The purpose of this project is to establish a robust process to close out completed or inactive capital projects, reduce the project close-out cycle time, and reprogram unspent allotments more efficiently to fund other critical capital needs. Their efforts resulted in streamlined processes and a Standard Operating Procedure that are now an integral part of the agency's business practices. In FY 2017, DDOT reprogrammed \$12 million in local capital funding. DDOT intends to replicate this effort to close out of federally-funded capital projects in FY 2018.

I'm also pleased to announce that a new A/E Schedule for Construction Management and Engineering Services is being finalized in FY 2018. A total of 42



firms are receiving 98 IDIQ contract awards, of which 8 firms are DSLBD-certified and 15 firms are DBEs. The new schedule ensures compliance with federal requirements regarding selection criteria and price negotiation, and provides increased transparency to the contractor community. Additionally, DDOT is transitioning from requirements contracts, where the winning bidder provides all the requirements regardless of the dollar amount, to Multiple Award IDIQ contracts for paving. These contracts will be made at varying dollar amounts, resulting in increased competition, better pricing, and greater participation in the procurement process.

### **III) Safety**

#### **a. Vision Zero**

In February 2015, Mayor Bowser committed to Vision Zero. Since that time, it has been DDOT's top priority to eliminate all traffic fatalities and serious injuries by the year 2024. Whether you walk, wheel, bike, or drive to work or school, it is DDOT's priority to make all of our streets safe. That is why Vision Zero underpins everything we do at DDOT, and why we are planning to implement new strategies to prevent serious injuries and fatalities on our streets.

Nationally, traffic fatalities declined by one percent in 2017, but it was



the second consecutive year in which fatalities surpassed 40,000. Safety professionals hope that this represents a slowing of the steepest two-year increase in over 50 years. In the District, we experienced 30 fatalities, up from 28 the prior year. This year, we have had four fatalities to date, which represent 33 percent fewer fatalities than in February of last year. To put us on a path to zero by the year 2024, Mayor Bowser's Vision Zero initiative has made key foundational investments in safety that are beginning to pay dividends. Our plan for 2018 is to make our safe-systems approach more sophisticated and more effective.

We have established the Major Crash Review Task Force with the Metropolitan Police Department and other agency partners. This task force convenes a multi-disciplinary group of government and public stakeholders to review the causes of severe crashes and recommend systemic changes to eliminate dangerous aspects of our transportation system. DDOT is expanding our partnership with Howard University's Transportation Research Center and Open Data Nation to develop a new risk analysis model that will use current data to quantify risk factors in the roadway and provide a ranking of locations where severe crashes are most likely to occur in the future. This year, the Department of Health received a Vision Zero grant to enhance the District's



Trauma Repository, which will integrate data from hospital trauma centers with police department crash reports to more accurately detect the prevalence of traffic injuries and fatalities in the District.

Meanwhile in 2017, DDOT installed more than five lane miles of new bike lanes, and another five miles are planned for 2018, including new protected lanes. Since May of 2016, DDOT has installed 6.5 miles or 114 blocks of new sidewalks, filling critical gaps in the city's pedestrian network. In 2017, DDOT installed three new traffic signals, two new HAWK signals, and 19 new Leading Pedestrian Intervals, and made signage or pavement marking modifications in 21 locations for pedestrian safety. The Highway Safety Improvement Program enhanced safety for all modes at 25 of the highest priority locations in the District. With Council support, we have also been able to hire several new safety technicians. This has allowed us to station a safety professional at every school in the District where we had an identified safety need. In 2018, we will be evaluating intersections that could benefit from traffic control and enforcement support, due to high traffic volumes, challenging crossing environments for older adults, or other concerns.

In 2018, we will be better prioritizing our resources to ensure that we are being as proactive as possible. We are working with our partners at the



Metropolitan Police Department to implement improvements to the Automated Traffic Enforcement program, providing enhanced measures of effectiveness for each camera, and more consistent criteria for siting cameras in the locations most in need of additional enforcement to improve safety. The risk model I mentioned earlier will help us do so. We are also looking at best practices from our peer cities in the national Vision Zero Network, like Chicago and New York, to identify engineering tools that we can apply here to make the District's streets safer.

## **Conclusion**

In closing, I would like to thank you for your leadership and support. We appreciate the opportunity to share our accomplishments and plans for continuous improvement and look forward to continuing to work with the Committee. This concludes my presentation. I am happy to address your questions at this time.

