

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
Department of Transportation



Fiscal Year 2023 Performance Oversight Hearing

Testimony of
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Interim Director

Before the
Committee on Transportation and the Environment
Council of the District of Columbia
The Honorable Charles Allen, Chairperson

John A. Wilson Building
Room 500
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Washington, DC 20004

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9:30 A.M.

Introduction

Good afternoon, Chairperson Allen and members of the Committee on Transportation and the Environment. I'm Sharon Kershbaum, the Interim Director of the District Department of Transportation, commonly referred to as DDOT. Thank you for the opportunity to testify on behalf of Mayor Muriel Bowser at today's hearing on DDOT's performance in Fiscal Year 2023.

Last week, [DDOT released its first annual update](#) on our progress towards meeting the goals and strategies of moveDC, the District's multimodal long-range transportation plan. In the first year of implementing moveDC, DDOT made great strides towards making our transportation network more equitable, safe, and sustainable, and we supported our goal of shifting to 75% non-auto commuter trips by District residents by 2032.

As DDOT, we have a fundamental responsibility to our residents to ensure that we address the most dangerous roads and intersections while providing reliable and safe transportation options. The goals and strategies of moveDC reflect not only DDOT's accomplishments since updating the plan, but also the work that our agency does daily to prioritize:

1. Safety;
2. Equity;
3. Mobility;

4. Project delivery;
5. Management and operations;
6. Sustainability; and
7. Enjoyable spaces.

Today, I'd like to highlight a few of these goals and the important progress the agency has made in meeting the moveDC strategies.

Safety

Safety is not only the agency's top priority, but also the goal of every DDOT project, no matter the size or scope.

During FY23, our agency updated our Traffic Safety Input (or TSI) program to use objective factors that help us prioritize safety interventions where they are most needed. These factors include roadway characteristics, crash patterns, equity, proximity to Vision Zero High Injury Network corridors, and locations used by vulnerable road users such as schools, Metro rail stations, and bus stops. Based on these factors, DDOT's Traffic Safety Branch develops a work plan for evaluating 800 prioritized locations per year across all eight Wards. In the first three quarters since this update, we prioritized more than 1,700 service requests, leading to improvements at more than 700 locations.

Automated Traffic Enforcement (ATE) is an important way our agency is addressing TSIs. By expanding ATE,¹ we create safer streets for District residents and more equitable enforcement through automated equipment. Our ATE program is effective and is demonstrably improving safety. In a study of ATE locations that our agency commissioned, across all 29 studied speed camera locations, speeding decreased overall, injury crashes fell by 30%, and overall citations dropped by one-third. Our cameras cite fewer than 1% of passing drivers, meaning that they have a 99% compliance rate. In FY23 and FY24 to date, we have installed 148 cameras in addition to the 140 bus-mounted cameras that WMATA installed for the Clear Lanes program in partnership with DDOT.

Launched in 2021, DDOT's Annual Safety Improvement Program (ASAP) aims to proactively implement intersection and street safety improvements.² Through this program, at multiple locations recommended in past livability studies, DDOT rapidly deploys multi-modal safety improvements that:

- increase safety and visibility of pedestrians at intersections and on sidewalks;
- reduce the risk of crashes by slowing vehicle maneuvers; and
- reduce conflicts with pedestrians.

¹ moveDC Strategy #12: Expand Automated Enforcement of Traffic Laws.

² moveDC Strategy #16: Make intersections safer for pedestrians.

These interventions include Pedestrian Safety Improvements, pedestrian flashers, and driver feedback signs. In Calendar Year 2023, DDOT had 27 roadway improvements and 75 intersection improvements completed or under design and construction.

Mobility

Our next goal, *Mobility*, focuses on what helps our residents travel throughout the District: increased system reliability, improved accessibility, and safe, affordable travel options. DDOT does this in part by installing more protected bike lanes and building more trails in the Capital Trails Network.

Expanding the bicycle and pedestrian network means increased safety for all roadway users and improved connections between neighborhoods.³ Today, there are more than 100 miles of bike lanes in the District. In FY 2023, DDOT installed 7.8 miles of protected bike lanes, and we will continue to extend, connect, and improve our bikeways so we can reach our safety, mobility, and sustainability goals.

The Capital Trails Network supports a connected multi-use trail network with healthy, low-stress access to open, enjoyable space and reliable transportation for people of all ages and abilities.⁴ In FY23, the Rock Creek Park Trail and

³ moveDC Strategy #21: Install more protected bike lanes.

⁴ moveDC Strategy #22: Build more trails in the Capital Trails Network.

Pedestrian Bridge project was completed roughly six months ahead of schedule.

The project provides safety and environmental enhancements and adds one mile of new trail. DDOT's Trails Program continues to coordinate with other agencies to improve the safety and connectivity of the trail network.

In 2023, we added 26 new Capital Bikeshare stations and upgraded or replaced another 41 stations. In the next two years, DDOT plans to add 40 new stations, at which point we expect to have 90% of District residents within a quarter mile of a bikeshare station. We also added 2,000 next-generation e-bikes to our bikeshare fleet, which are a very popular option for riders. DDOT installed 31 new micromobility corrals, helping residents park their bikes and scooters in-street in both residential neighborhoods and near last-mile origins like Metro stations. More than 1,070 new bike racks were installed in FY23 to help accommodate growing bike parking demand.

We are also very proud that last year our award-winning Capital Bikeshare program saw more than 4.4 million trips taken, the highest ridership year in the system's 13-year history.⁵ This means residents and visitors alike took more opportunities than ever before to travel the District sustainably.

Project Delivery

⁵ moveDC Strategy #23: Add more bikeshare stations and implement programs to increase their use.

Project Delivery informs how we allocate resources toward projects that help us meet our mobility and sustainability goals.

In FY23, we kicked off the transformation of “Mamie ‘Peanut’ Johnson Plaza,” formerly known as “Dave Thomas Circle.” This long-awaited infrastructure project will significantly improve the Florida Avenue and New York Avenue NE intersection. The project was designed to enhance all modes of transportation and improve overall safety by adding two-way traffic to First Street NE, restoring two-way traffic on Florida Avenue NE, adding protected bicycle lanes, improving pedestrian connectivity and vehicular flow, and reducing driver confusion. Upon its scheduled completion in FY25, the project will provide better safety for all who travel through the corridor and create new enjoyable spaces for residents and visitors.

Last year, we made great progress on the construction of two important pedestrian bridge projects that provide essential connections to communities. The Lane Place NE Pedestrian Bridge and the Douglas Street Pedestrian Bridge will improve safety, connectivity, and accessibility to pedestrians and cyclists across the DC-295 corridor. DDOT is improving the bridges’ structural integrity and completing work at an accelerated schedule. The Lane Place NE project is slated for completion in November 2024, and Douglas Street is being installed overnight tonight!

New infrastructure supporting more efficient and sustainable transit options, including creating more dedicated bus lanes, is an essential part of the projects that DDOT delivers.⁶ Our Bus Priority Program is working to meet the moveDC goal of 25 lane-miles of bus lanes to be built or under construction by 2025. With 12.1 lane-miles of bus lanes completed, DDOT is on track to meet this goal.

- DDOT completed the Pennsylvania Avenue SE project in July 2023, including protected bike lanes, between 2nd and 13th Streets SE. An extension to Barney Circle will take place after the completion of the nearby Pennsylvania and Potomac Avenue SE Project.
- DDOT completed the project on Minnesota Avenue SE between East Capitol Street and Pennsylvania Avenue in March 2023, including bus bulb-outs, bus islands, protected bike lanes, and pedestrian safety improvements. A southbound bus lane approaching Pennsylvania Avenue will be added upon completion of DDOT's Pennsylvania Avenue and Minnesota Avenue SE intersection project.
- DDOT completed the 8th Street NE project in September 2023, including bus bulb-outs and traffic calming improvements, between East Capitol Street and Florida Avenue NE. Transit signal priority and a queue jump are also installed on 8th Street NE.

⁶ moveDC Strategy #32: Create more dedicated bus lanes.

Management & Operations

Management and Operations are an essential part of DDOT's daily work and this goal's strategies ensure that the District's infrastructure is in a state of good repair.

In FY2023, as part of our PaveDC plan, DDOT:

- Repaved 95 miles of roadway;
- Constructed and improved 68 miles of sidewalks; and
- Refreshed 30 miles of roadway markings.

DDOT also completed more than 1,700 small sidewalk repairs with our in-house teams, an increase of more than 70% from the previous year. On average, our staff were able to inspect sidewalk repair service requests within five business days. Quick and tactical responses to these requests are a part of both the short- and long-term strategy to providing equitable, safe, and accessible passage for pedestrians. Additionally, DDOT resurfaced 118 alleys, continuing this successful program after surpassing 1,000 total alleys resurfaced since 2015.

Streetlights are another integral part of the District's infrastructure.⁷

DDOT's DC Smart Streetlighting project is currently converting nearly 75,000 lighting assets to LED. This project is expected to reduce the overall energy consumption of the District's streetlight network by 50%, eliminating 38,000 tons

⁷ moveDC Strategy #24: Improve resiliency of transportation infrastructure.

of greenhouse gas emissions per year and helping us reach our sustainability goals. Conversion kicked off in FY23, and we are nearing 80% completion. We are expected to be substantially complete by May. A key feature of this conversion is the Remote Monitoring and Control System (or, RMCS) that will allow DDOT to remotely monitor the status of the light. The RMCS greatly reduces DDOT's dependency on the public to report concerns with streetlights, since service requests will automatically be generated when the system detects the light has an issue, improving system equity and efficiency.

Conclusion

As we highlighted in the first-annual moveDC plan update, we are proud of the progress we have made as an agency. Our work continues to keep our residents and visitors moving, both safely and efficiently, connecting everyone to work, play and opportunity. We encourage everyone to view the full report and find out more about our seven goals at movedc.dc.gov.

Thank you for the occasion to testify on the important work of DDOT, and I look forward to answering any questions.