

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



**Public Roundtable on**

**PR22-564**, the Director of the District Department of Transportation  
Jeff Marootian Confirmation Resolution of 2017

Testimony of Jeff Marootian

Acting Director, District Department of Transportation

Committee on Transportation and the Environment  
Mary Cheh, Chairperson

John A. Wilson Building  
1350 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Room 120  
Washington, DC 20004

Good afternoon, Chairperson Cheh and members and staff of the Committee on Transportation and the Environment. I am Jeff Marootian, Acting Director of the District Department of Transportation.

As a proud resident of Ward 6, I am honored to have been nominated by Mayor Muriel Bowser to lead DDOT. I welcome the opportunity to discuss my background, experience, and vision for the agency.

## **Background and Experience**

I started my career as a Capital City Fellow in the District Government 15 years ago. I held roles at the Department of Human Services and Metropolitan Police Department before landing at DDOT, where I would move on to become the head of customer service in the Director's Office. My passion for District Government, however, began several years prior when I was elected to serve as an Advisory Neighborhood Commissioner in Foggy Bottom/West End, where I lived for several years while attending the George Washington University for undergraduate and graduate school. I worked closely with agency leaders to resolve issues and problems within my community and have carried many of the lessons that I learned during those years with me to this day.

In 2013, I took a leap and joined the Obama Administration as the White House Liaison for the US Department of Transportation (USDOT). During that time, I worked alongside senior USDOT officials to advocate for the creation and passage of the FAST ACT, helped implement the Department's Smart Cities Challenge, and recruited the leadership of top regulatory agencies, including the Federal Highway Administration and National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. I also worked to develop the Department's position on vehicle electrification and automation and traveled to cities across the country to learn about best practices in technology deployment. Our work focused on congestion mitigation strategies, creating more environmentally sustainable transportation systems, and spurring economic development through public transit.

In 2015, I was appointed to serve as the Assistant Secretary for Administration and Chief Sustainability Officer at the USDOT, where I managed the business operations for the 55,000-employee agency. In this role, I was responsible for human resource management, workforce development, and oversight of 10,000 facilities across the country. I led the financial management of a \$182 million dollar working capital fund and oversaw the Department's issuance of grants to cities and states across the country. As the head of sustainability, I directed the agency's implementation of President Obama's Executive Order on Climate Change and led our effort to reduce electricity costs, increase energy efficiency, and reduce agency carbon emissions. During my tenure, the Department achieved a 15 percent increase in the amount of energy the agency procured from renewable sources, a 26 percent reduction in petroleum

consumption amongst its federal fleet of vehicles, and a 20 percent increase in water use efficiency in agency buildings.

### **Vision for DDOT**

During my career, I have learned that in order to achieve ambitious goals, I have had to be directly engaged in the day-to-day operations of the agency and listen to as broad a base of stakeholders as possible. It is my goal to bring the management and leadership tools that I applied at USDOT to DDOT.

Our residents and visitors interact with DDOT on a daily basis, whether they are aware of it or not. We build and maintain the District's infrastructure and ensure that all modes of transportation have safe facilities on which to operate. Our core services are critical to the District's overall vitality as a city, and it is my priority to ensure that those services meet the expectations of our tax paying residents and businesses.

But we know that transportation is much more than just asphalt and concrete. The District of Columbia is growing at the rate of 1,000 new residents each month, and our team at DDOT is thinking about and planning constantly to:

- Reimagine our transportation network to meet the needs of the future of mobility;
- Mitigate congestion through pilot programs with commercial trucking companies and performance-based parking;
- Build pathways to the middle class through construction jobs; and
- Embrace state of the art technology for everything from our tree canopy to streetlights and traffic signals.

Transportation is about connecting people to each other and to opportunity in all eight wards of our city. Ensuring that we have safe and equitable transportation and an efficient transit system is a core tenet of our values as a city. Our major projects, like the Frederick Douglass Memorial Bridge, not only provide immediate job opportunities but they lay the groundwork for people to move across the city, sometimes through connections that may not have existed before. And, for me, those values will be reflected through a focus on three key priorities across every facet of the agency. They include:

- Safety through our Vision Zero strategy;
- Innovation in all of our processes and in our technological applications; and
- Improved customer service and engagement with all of our stakeholders.

## **Goals and Performance Measures**

### **I. Service Delivery and Process Improvement**

In the past three years, DDOT has made tremendous gains. We have more than tripled our local roadway paving outputs, operationalized the Streetcar, and resurfaced close to 400 alleys as a result of the Mayor's successful Alleypalooza initiative. But we aren't stopping there, as we know that we have more roads to repave and major projects on which to break ground.

Fundamental to achieving these objectives are sound processes with clear and measureable metrics that define success. I will work to ensure that those systems are in place. One of my primary goals as Director is to develop strategies to improve our day-to-day performance and operations. To accomplish this, we will initiate process improvements across all of our lines of business.

### **II. Transparency and Accountability**

It is just as critical that those processes and systems are transparent and that the residents of the District can hold me and our agency accountable. I intend to use our website as an online tool for residents to access information, monitor our progress, and more easily connect with the agency. We have expanded the number of public meetings that DDOT hosts and participates in to ensure that our decisions are made as efficiently and transparently as possible. I look forward to continuing to work with the members and staff of the committee to ensure a collaborative and productive relationship as well.

### **III. Communications and Community Engagement**

Improving upon our communications and engagement with the public is critical to our success as an agency. Over the past several months, DDOT has taken steps to renew its commitment to collaborate with Advisory Neighborhood Commissions and civic associations across the city. We have held two successful open houses for ANC Commissioners and have worked hard to ensure that we are focused on neighborhood level priority issues. I anticipate that this level of outreach and engagement will continue to grow as we build an engagement team whose focus will be ensuring DDOT's consistent presence on the neighborhood level.

## **Conclusion**

I am excited about the opportunity to lead DDOT and am grateful to Mayor Bowser for nominating me.

I would be remiss if I didn't take the opportunity to thank and acknowledge the men and women of DDOT. I am proud to work alongside some of the finest professionals in government who come to work each and every day with passion and enthusiasm for serving this city.

Madam Chair, thank you for this opportunity to testify today. I look forward to answering any questions.