

2022 Primary Election Candidate Questionnaire for Ward Races

Dear Candidate,

We ask that you complete our questionnaire so we understand your views on the pressing transportation issues facing DC. Your answers will be given to our membership and shared on social media for strictly education purposes only.

The questions are yes or no as well as questions that require you to elaborate for your response. We ask that you return the questionnaire by COB 4/18. Please email the questionnaire responses to advocacy@waba.org. If you have any questions please email us. Thank you for taking time out of your busy schedule to complete the questionnaire.

WABA **does not endorse** candidates for any political office.

Sincerely,

Jeremiah Lowery
Advocacy Director
Washington Area Bicyclist Association

Bike Network

Despite the Mayor's pledge to eliminate all traffic deaths on DC streets, fatalities from car crashes reached its highest levels since 2017, even while other Vision Zero cities are saving dozens of lives every year.

Question: Do you support [DDOT's plan](#) to expand the protected bike lane network by 10 miles every year for the next 3 years – including and all the bike lane projects in your ward?

Yes No

Question: What will you do to ensure the protected bike lane projects in your ward get completed in a timely manner?

If we are just talking about fully protected bike lane projects, right now we have five of them confirmed for Ward 1: Kenyon Street, Warder Street, Park Place, 9th Street, and Columbia Road. I unequivocally support all of them, even going so far as to introduce emergency legislation to unstick the several-year log jam on 9th Street. Kenyon, Warder, and Park will be

completed this year, and I am very excited to champion an ambitious project on Columbia Road that protects all vulnerable road users.

There are a few different roles a Councilmember can play in this process. First and most definite is advocating for and voting to approve budgets that give the DDOT Active Transportation team (and other divisions that work on bike projects) the resources, staffing, and capital budget they need to do this work effectively.

Beyond that is my oversight role; as with all my work on the Council, I do not consider performance oversight to just be a time that comes around once a year. In this case, for example, it is not enough to ask the DDOT Director every spring whether they're building that bike lane or not. For transportation projects, oversight looks more like deep engagement with the agency to shape and shepherd projects. Me and my team work extensively with ANCs and residents and often help facilitate and broker conversations with the agency.

I have found it is very helpful to directly work with project leads and engineers at DDOT — making sure they are aware of neighborhood context and desired outcomes and helping them feel confident in moving forward and doing the right thing — much better than asking for their manager and demanding to know why something isn't happening.

As opposed to the budget, this kind of oversight is much more soft-skilled and dynamic, but is often what greases in the gears (as opposed to throwing sand in them).

For a concrete example, a Notice of Intent was just issued to extend the Kenyon Street ("Crosstown") cycle track from its current terminus at Warder Street west to 11th Street. Originally, that phase of the Crosstown project was only going to bring Kenyon one block further west, to Georgia Avenue. This was not a budget constraint. I was able to work with the ANC and DDOT to ensure that the project was extended further west to connect to the rest of the network; this happened by publicly expressing support, discussing neighborhood context, and understanding what the agency needed to be able to expand the scope of the project. This all is able to translate into much clearer and more robust community engagement, where we are elevating residents as partners in executing a vision for greater safety, rather than drawing battle lines for or against a project.

For lack of a better term, there is also the political influence a Councilmember can have on this process. Ultimately, I think we need to move away from this. People are dying on our roads everywhere, and I think the Council has very clearly expressed our policy priorities in our climate goals, Vision Zero legislation (including the PBL mandate provision), MoveDC, and the budget. Those policies need to be swiftly executed rather than needing to be consistently re-litigated.

Beyond the confirmed projects in the works for Ward 1, I want to actively get more on the docket in the near term. Part of that can come from PBLs being installed alongside dedicated bus lanes, of which we have several in the works.

Ward 1 is the least car-oriented part of the District and we still have work to do to make sure our streets actually reflect that truth.

Budget

Bike lanes are an incentive for District residents who choose to travel in ways that conserve land, energy, and fuel and they also fight climate change. DDOT's long-range plan envisions miles of protected bicycle lanes – which makes bicycling safer, easier and more popular and also reduces fuel use.

Question: Will you press DDOT to accelerate plans for more protected bike lanes (which may repurpose driving lanes and street parking) and budget adequate money for DDOT to build these bike lanes? Including ensuring DDOT has the staff and resources in the budget to complete the projects at a rapid pace?

Yes No

Question: What other budgetary biking and transportation items will you fight for and prioritize?

Bus priority is at the top of my list, expanding use of smart technology and using dedicated lanes to ensure Metrobus is reliable for all those who depend on it. Transit infrastructure is inextricably linked with bicycle infrastructure, because both are needed to create a system in which it is viable for more people to no longer need a car.

I bike with my two children, which gives me the opportunity to see firsthand where our infrastructure is lacking. We must continue to connect our bike infrastructure across the District so we don't have large gaps, and ensure it is properly maintained. I look forward to approving an FY23 budget that includes a new dedicated fund for bike lane maintenance, as well as a program to revisit old tactical projects and start hardening infrastructure with actual bollards and concrete.

I am also very excited about the nascent Streets for People program, which activates and repurposes street space. Through my work on the Council, we are now moving forward with a plan to pedestrianize 18th Street in Adams Morgan, and I hope that is just the beginning. Ward 1 especially is ripe for more pedestrian plazas and shared street concepts, and I am committed to ensuring we have the resources necessary to make that a reality.

It is also hard to avoid talking about enforcement in all of this. I think the work I've done on the Council recently has aided the scrutiny of DPW and our ticketing, booting, and towing process. All of the automated enforcement in the world isn't going to mean much when a vehicle with several thousands of dollars in tickets, or one with an obviously counterfeit or expired tag, is allowed to continue to be on our roads.

Trails Network

The Capital Trails Coalition seeks to create a world-class network of multi-use trails that are equitably distributed throughout the Washington DC region. The Coalition is in the process of finding funding to complete 800 miles of planned trails into pavement that people can walk and bike on. Trails are an economic boost for local economies and improve the health and well being of communities, would you support DC, alongside MD and VA, dedicating funding to complete our regional trail network?

Yes X No _____

Further explain how you would advocate for the completion of the DC's portion of the Trail Network?

I am thrilled to have the opportunity in just a few weeks to vote in support of \$125 million for new or rehabilitated trails to improve connectivity to the regional trail network. As it turns out, this is an agenda item I had prioritized for the next meeting of the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments Region Forward Committee, of which I am chair for 2022.

The Trail Network is a critical part of keeping our region connected, and can be a way of creating better access for marginalized or historically disconnected communities. I would support a regional dedicated funding mechanism, similar to how all jurisdictions stepped up in recent years for WMATA.

Vision Zero

Do you support the recent bills before the Transportation Committee, that would ban right turn on reds and permit the so-called Idaho stop?

Yes X No _____

Vision Zero - is it working and if not, what needs to be done by the District to achieve the goal of zero deaths due to traffic crashes?

Taken one way, this is an easy question to answer: no, of course Vision Zero isn't working. Even as the total number of crashes have declined over the last year, deaths continue to rise (likely due to lower traffic volumes, higher speeds, and bigger cars). I can sense among constituents and advocates a deep fatigue and frustration in the District's Vision Zero campaign as neighbors and loved ones continue to be threatened, hurt, or killed by our roads.

If you interpret this question another way however, it's much harder to answer cleanly by pointing to statistics. "Vision Zero" is not a program, policy, or even budget item. There are bills that are now law with Vision Zero in the name, but those came later. Calling Vision Zero just a slogan isn't exactly an insult, it's just the truth.

Vision Zero to me is a way of reframing the conversation and ultimately achieving both a systemic and a cultural change in the way we treat transportation. In that way, you can point to some successes in DC. Compared to a few years ago, pedestrian or cyclist victim-blaming is no longer considered a legitimate argument. Instead, the conversation very quickly pivots to how the roads created an environment that facilitated that death or injury. There is a greater understanding that we have the ability to make it harder for cars to hurt people, and we need to use our power as a government to do so in a methodical way.

I am not resting on what we've done so far. Right now, we need to get the Vision Zero Omnibus bill fully funded. Council is also considering a slate of bills to push us further in the direction we need to go. I'm proud to have spearheaded that renewed effort with three bills of my own: [Walk Without Worry](#), [SMART Signage](#), and [Prioritizing People in Planning](#). Beyond that, we need to focus our attention on high-injury intersections and corridors, even if that means forgoing flashier projects. We also need to proactively address dangerous and impaired driving, which contribute to the significant majority of fatal crashes.

Transportation Equity Priorities

If elected or re-elected this year, what policie(s) or legislation will you pursue in your upcoming term to ensure our transportation system is equitably moving forward?

See the links above for legislation I have already introduced and will continue to champion if re-elected.

I am very interested in working on equitable traffic enforcement that ensures we are addressing dangerous driving without disproportionate impacts by race or income. That can come in the form of fines that scale to income, more automated enforcement, and many other tools; Council needs to proactively work to address this in the next Council period and I am eager to be a part of that work.

Safety in moving around DC also means feeling safe being who you are. We have seen continued incidents of harassment or assault on streets and public transit based on gender, sexuality, race, and ethnicity. In my first term I wrote and passed the country's first comprehensive legislation addressing street harassment, which we're now working on implementing. We can do more to identify how our current transportation network may not be serving all people equally. For example, women and those in caretaking roles [are much more](#)

likely to “trip-chain”; slow transit during off-peak times and disconnected bike and pedestrian networks treat those residents especially poorly.

There is also a lot we should change about how we advance new transportation projects. As we have learned time and again, a process that is focused only on listening to those who show up to evening meetings in their free time will be inherently unrepresentative and inequitable. People are showing you what they want and need already by using our transportation system, and those voices need to be heard even if they are not audible in a traditional public input process. For instance, we should not need to ask bus riders — statistically lower-income and non-white — to have to organize a mass movement in order for us to feel okay building dedicated bus lanes. You would be hard-pressed to find someone waiting at a bus stop who doesn’t want the bus to come more often and move faster. Support is often pre-supposed for something like a highway project, but transit users, cyclists, and pedestrians don’t get that same level of deference.

Transportation Equity Pledge

[Will you sign our transportation equity pledge?](#) - yes done

Link to sign: <https://waba.org/blog/2022/01/transportation-equity-pledge-for-2022-candidates/>