



Council of the District of Columbia, Committee on Transportation and the Environment

2026 Budget Oversight Hearing on the District Department of Transportation

April 27, 2026

The Washington Area Bicyclist Association (WABA), on behalf of its 5,000 members and nearly 25,000 regional advocacy supporters, appreciates the opportunity to share our perspective and position on DDOT's budget.

We at WABA thank DDOT Director Sharon Kershbaum and her staff, and Mayor Muriel Bowser and members of the DC Council, for their work and support in the fight to preserve the District's 15th St. "Cherry Blossom" bike lanes in the face of a Trump Administration attack. WABA sued the federal government, and we won.

More broadly, WABA has been proud to stand with DC leaders, Free DC, and our fellow advocates to combat other federal attacks on DC traffic safety, on No Turn on Red and on automated traffic enforcement. These are among the many egregious attacks on DC Home Rule, and we stand with you in opposing them all.

DDOT Must Return to a Safety First Transportation Policy

Sixteen individuals have been killed on the District's streets in 2026 through April 27, six of them pedestrians, one bike rider, and one scooter rider. DC is on a pace for 50 road deaths in 2026, up from 32 last year, in 2025. There have been 76 major injuries this year to date, 21 of them pedestrians and 8 bicyclists. The District has a long way to go to meet its Vision Zero commitment to reduce traffic fatalities and serious injuries to zero, a commitment Mayor Bowser made in 2014.

Yet DDOT has underperformed, particularly in building out moveDC's Bicycle Priority Network.

A 2016 NACTO report found that as cities build more bike lanes, cycling increases and the individual risk of a cyclist being killed or severely injured drops, often dramatically. A 2023 article reports: "A study that looked at 13 years of traffic data has found that protected bicycle lanes make roads significantly safer for cyclists – and also for motorists and pedestrians." Bike lanes mean safer streets.

DDOT delivered just 3.4 miles of protected bike lanes in FY25, only one-third of their stated, ten-mile target. DDOT is on pace to underperform again in the current fiscal year, FY26, given their pause of the Western Ave. NW, Jenifer St. NW, 44th St. NW, 23rd St. NW, and E St. NW projects and slowness advancing other projects that are in design stages.

DDOT further weakened their 2025 record by removing several blocks of Arizona Ave. NW bike lanes. The Washington Post's headline was "D.C. is removing bike lane barriers for the first time, calling them ugly."

In her April 21, 2026 opinion enjoining federal removal of the District’s 15th Street bike lanes, Judge Amy Berman Jackson stated, “Beauty is in the eye of the beholder, and it is not up to the Court to quibble with the federal government about whether helmeted cyclists in spandex or automobiles fitted with exhaust pipes are more pleasing to look at. But nowhere does the National Park Service” – she could equally have been referring to DDOT – “explain how the removal of the lanes advances these stated [aesthetic] objectives, even if one assumes that they are legitimate policy choices.”

Jackson’s opinion – and District officials – cited DDOT’s 15th Street before/after study, showing that the 15th Street bike lanes and improvements reduced roadway crashes by 46% and bicycle injury crashes by 91%, and increased traffic speeds by 17%. DDOT before/after analysis was pivotal. Yet DDOT did not perform a before/after analysis before removing the Arizona Ave. NW bike lanes, in contravention of our city’s own moveDC standards.

DDOT needs to change course, to revert to a Safety First transportation policy.

The FY27 Operating Budget and FY2027–FY2032 Capital Improvement Program

An immediate step that DDOT can take to rectify the agency’s FY25 and FY26 underperformance, is to unfreeze the paused Western Ave. NW, Jenifer St. NW, 44th St. NW, 23rd St. NW, and E St. NW projects. The Council should fund development of those projects through completion in the FY27-FY32 capital budget.

Looking ahead, at FY27 and beyond, WABA asks the Mayor and Council to:

Fully fund ambitious implementation of DDOT’s yet-to-be-released Strategic Bikeways Plan. The Council should insist on SBP inclusion and funding for:

- East Capitol Street (B Street SE to Southern Ave SE) protected bike lanes, noting that the only reason offered for their removal from the project was federal grant complications.
- Q/R St. cross-town protected bike lanes, as advocated by affected ANCs and community members.
- 11th St. SE protected bike lanes, as advocated by Hill Family Biking and community members.
- Planned protected bikeways, in accordance with moveDC, on Taylor St. NE, 11th St. NW, and other Bicycle Priority Network routes.

We are deeply concerned that DDOT’s proposed Safety & Mobility six-year capital budget funding drops \$22.1 million. This category includes bicycle and pedestrian safety, Vision Zero, infrastructure near schools, and safety and mobility studies. The decrease from \$46.4 million in FY27 to \$19.5 million in FY28 is precipitous. A headline in today’s Washington Post says “analysis of accident data shows pedestrians near schools are 24 percent more likely to be hit than elsewhere in the city.” What’s DDOT rationale for the Safety & Mobility cut? We ask DDOT to provide details on affected projects and programs, and we urge the Council to restore robust funding.

Given DDOT’s underperformance, WABA encourages councilmembers to include explicit funding for specific, priority bikeway projects in their wards and citywide in their budget requests.

Further, WABA asks the Mayor and Council to:

Fund a DC Decongestion Pricing Study¹ update and implementation planning for road pricing.

Fund RFK-site transportation planning to include a) an infill Metrorail station, b) capacity upgrades to the Stadium-Armory Metrorail station, c) express or priority bus service connecting the site to Union Station, east of the Anacostia River, and off-site higher-capacity parking, and d) accelerated bikeway construction to include East Capital Street, Pennsylvania Ave. SE, and Benning Road NE east of the Anacostia River and Bladensburg Road NE, north of the RFK site.

Direct and fund DC 311 update to support geolocated reporting for locations without a street address, in cooperation with the Office of Unified Communications.

Mayor Bowser has stated a framework of goals that includes safety, equity, mobility, and sustainability, to be achieved through a commitment to excellent transportation facilities and services, delivered in a manner that addresses structural injustices and inequities.² WABA applauds this commitment and asks the Council to ensure that the proposed FY27 budget and FY27-FY32 CIP deliver on this commitment.

I will end by thanking Chair Charles Allen and your colleagues and DDOT for your work to craft sensible policy and regulations for autonomous vehicles. WABA fights for a just and sustainable region where walking, biking, and transit are the best ways to get around. Of course, safety is paramount, including ensuring that for-hire AVs comply with the law and not stop, stand, or park in bike lanes or other prohibited locations. Otherwise, WABA's position is that the District needs more trains, more buses, more bike lanes, and more sidewalks. Everything else is tinkering at the margins.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

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¹ <https://ddot.dc.gov/release/dc-decongestion-pricing-study-letter-and-study>

² <https://movedc.dc.gov/>