

Minutes
ANC 6A Transportation & Public Space Committee Meeting
Monday, May 15, 2023 at 7:00 pm
Virtual Meeting via Zoom

I. Meeting called to order at 7:00 pm.

II. Introductions & Announcements.

Committee members present: Shaun Lynch (Co-Chair) and Caitlin Rogger (Co-Chair), Paul Angelone, Jeff Fletcher, Mark Sussman
Commissioners present: Amber Gove (ANC 6A Chair, 6A04), Robb Dooling (6A06), Mike Velasquez (6A02)

III. Old Business.

A. District Department of Transportation (DDOT) update on the [H Street NE Bus Priority Project](#). Mr. Zack Gambetti-Mendez presented a brief recap on the project background and an provided the output of the traffic modeling used with the project. DDOT is nearing the end of the Planning Phase (Spring 2023), to include traffic and environmental studies. DDOT last presented this project to the ANC 6A TPS Committee in May 2022 as part of the project kick-off, and then again in July 2022 to present the project concept. The Design Phase will begin by the end of Spring 2023 and continue through Winter 2024. Implementation will occur from Spring-Fall 2024. DDOT expects the 30% designs to be completed late Summer 2023, followed by Notices of Intent.

DDOT modeled the traffic conditions on H Street NE from 3rd Street NE to Benning Road NE using [Trafficware Synchro Studio](#) with traffic data collected in Fall 2021. DDOT fully expects congestion likely as drivers adjust to the new design, but two major DDOT construction projects will also begin in 2024 adjacent to the Bus Priority Project: the [H Street Bridge NE Replacement Project](#) (2024-2029); and the [Benning Road Bridges and Transportation Improvements Project](#) (2024-2026). The H Street NE Bus Priority Project will remove one lane of general travel in each direction and replace it with a bus- and streetcar-only travel lane. DDOT is estimating a 25-30% reduction in traffic volume on the H Street NE corridor during construction, consistent with estimates of diversion resulting from the adjacent projects, but does expect traffic volume to return to current levels after all projects are completed.

i. Commissioner Mike Velasquez acknowledged the vulnerabilities in the model that Mr. Gambetti-Mendez noted, but also questioned the credibility of the traffic model based on personal experience driving H Street during rush hour conditions. Commissioner Velasquez also reiterated previous concerns about DC's overall enforcement of traffic citations as WMATA plans to outfit X2 and X9 buses with lane violation cameras. He also asked about the impact of bus bulb-outs on parking along H Street NE. Mr. Gambetti-Mendez responded that (absent an existing design plan) the bulb-outs theoretically will not reduce parking spaces because they are shorter than the curb length currently allotted for buses to pull into a bus stop; it should increase parking spaces slightly. Finally, Commissioner Velasquez asked if there would be traffic signaling

included with the mid-block crossings on the 600-, 1200-, and 1300-blocks of H Street NE. Mr. Gambetti-Mendez responded that, yes, though the 30% design is not yet complete, traffic signaling would be included with any mid-block crossings that are installed.

- ii. Commissioner Robb Dooling requested that DDOT add details to their project website that include how much this project will help pedestrians, cyclists, and the neighborhood. Presently, the details focus mainly on the expected delays to vehicular traffic. The overall improvements should be noted, such as: how many more people will be able to get to work along the corridor, how much faster [via MetroBus or DC Streetcar], how many fewer parking spaces may be needed.
- iii. TPS Committee Co-Chair Caitlin Rogger asked if DDOT has any information about how this project will benefit transit riders. Mr. Gambetti-Mendez responded that the project would increase transit reliability, but did not have any specific metrics on hand. He also noted that left turns from H Street NE will likely be restricted to reduce vehicles using the bus lanes to get around turning vehicles.
- iv. TPS Committee Member Mark Sussman asked how many businesses along H Street NE has the project team spoken with about this project. Mr. Gambetti-Mendez noted that ANC 6A conducted a lot of outreach to the businesses last year after the kick-off, and that his project team has also had many conversations with H Street businesses, but he could not quantify it. Mr. Sussman noted that many of the businesses were looking for dedicated Pick-Up/Drop-Off (PUDO) zones along the route, and Mr. Gambetti-Mendez concurred with hearing similar sentiments from H Street businesses.
- v. TPS Committee Member Paul Angelone asked if DDOT is considering or planning any incentives to encourage further transit use (or any travel modes other than driving) as part of the travel lane reductions. Mr. Gambetti-Mendez stated that this project will continue to work with [goDCgo](#) to incentivize traveling via other modes, but he also expects the construction from the adjacent projects to be a catalyst for people to seek out other modes of travel. Mr. Angelone suggested for the environmental analysis that DDOT conduct air quality monitoring along the corridor to document changes as the travel modes changes, and separately requested that the H Street NE Bus Priority Project team coordinate with other teams conducting studies on intersecting streets and their related signalization priorities. Mr. Gambetti-Mendez responded that the traffic signal engineers do conduct coordination with nearby projects.
- vi. TPS Committee Co-Chair Shaun Lynch reiterated Commission Velasquez's concerns over the traffic model, where the Level of Service (LOS) Score on the DDOT traffic analysis slides appear counter to the rush hour flow of traffic both in the morning and evening analyses. Mr. Gambetti-Mendez responded that he triple-checked the numbers input into the model, but admitted he cannot explain why the greatest delays are in the direction opposite the peak flow of traffic.
- vii. Community Member Pat Bloomstine asked if all of the bus stops will have bus bulb-outs or if some would only have plastic flexposts to daylight them. Mr. Gambetti-Mendez said his goal is to have bulb-outs at all of the stops, but if that cannot be achieved the project team will prioritize stops that most often have vehicles parked in them (based on existing DDOT awareness or comments from the community).

- viii. Community Member Michael Cushman asked what year the traffic data was collected. Mr. Gambetti-Mendez responded that data was collected in Fall 2021. Similar to comments from Commissioner Velasquez and Co-Chair Lynch, Mr. Cushman noted his observations of traffic on H Street NE as not matching the DDOT traffic model. Mr. Cushman expressed concern about vehicles blocking the streetcar, which would ultimately shut down the bus priority lane altogether when it happens. Mr. Cushman asked if queuing length and queuing delays were both included in the model, and how those would change under a no-build and road diet scenario. Mr. Gambetti-Mendez responded that the team had queuing lengths, but some of the delay numbers did not match up with what the team had received from their consultants and were subsequently returned for further analysis to be provided later. Mr. Cushman noted that, in many similar projects, DDOT plans for 25%-30% diverted traffic, and he is concerned that there is not really an alternative route to that served by the X2 bus line. Lastly, he was also concerned that the north-south movement of traffic will be seriously hurt by the improvements east-west.
 - ix. In closing, Mr. Gambetti-Mendez commented that while transit and safety are the key components of the project, they are required to perform the Synchro traffic analysis and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) wanted to ensure DDOT walked through it. The project team is aware of the inconsistency between the Synchro traffic analysis results and actual traffic observation.
- B. 11th Street NE Traffic Calming. Commissioner Gove introduced Mr. Abraham Diallo, DDOT Community Engagement Specialist for ANC 6A, to provide an update on the de-signalization of the intersection at 11th Street NE and Constitution Avenue NE. Following discussion with other ANC 6A Commissioners who have 11th Street NE in their districts, the Commissioners have decided to request a more comprehensive safety study of the entire 11th Street NE corridor. Mr. Diallo highlighted current efforts underway in the area include: speed tables in each direction between K Street NE and I Street NE on 11th Street NE; daylighting of the 11th Street NE and I Street NE intersection; study for an all-way stop sign at 11th Street NE and F Street NE; hardening of the intersection at 11th Street NE and East Capitol Street; and a corridor-wide speed limit reduction to 20 mph. Many existing TSIs on the corridor will be considered only after the speed reduction goes into effect. Mr. Diallo stated that DDOT decided against converting the 11th Street NE and Constitution Avenue NE intersection to an all-way stop sign due to overwhelming opposition to the project at the May 2023 ANC 6A TPS Committee meeting.
- i. Commissioner Gove clarified that, during the May 2023 ANC 6A TPS Committee meeting, the response to the de-signalization project was not overwhelming in disapproval of the plan, but that those present wanted more information as to why de-signalization was DDOT's recommendation for the intersection. Additionally, DDOT provided no answers to six or seven questions provided in advance of the meeting. Commissioner Gove emphasized that the Committee's priority is safety, and that we are open to different ways to get there. Mr. Diallo responded that at the last meeting DDOT presenters stated that having a device (traffic signal in this case) which is not 100% warranted can have negative safety impacts based on guidance outlined in the FHWA [Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices on Streets and Highways](#) (MUTCDSH).

- ii. Co-Chair Rogger commented that the biggest challenge from the previous meeting on this topic was that the community was not convinced, based on the information DDOT provided, that the de-signalization of the intersection was going to make the intersection safer. Mr. Diallo responded that the reason the project was “scrapped” was because there was no significant net positive safety change in addition to the feedback received at the meeting.

Commissioner Gove made the motion: That ANC 6A send a letter to DDOT referencing the past and pending TSIs along the 11th Street NE corridor from East Capitol Street to Florida Avenue NE and recommending a comprehensive safety response and study, as well as response to the TSIs.

Commissioner Velasquez seconded the motion.

The motion passed unanimously, with all ANC Commissioners and TPS Committee Members present voting yes.

IV. New Business

- A. Vision Zero Hardening at 13th Street/Constitution Avenue NE and 11th Street /East Capitol Street. Discussion on this topic was limited, as no one from the Vision Zero team was present at the meeting. This topic will be added to the June 2023 ANC 6A TPS Committee meeting with a commitment from the Vision Zero team to attend. Committee Member Sussman had requested the topic following observation of work happening nearby Maury Elementary School.
- B. Public Space Application on H Street NE. Commissioner Velasquez introduced the Public Space Application #419662, which is a renewal of Public Space Permit 380565 (February 28, 2022) related to a construction project at 1101 H Street NE. The permit lapsed while the owner was awaiting related permit approvals from other DC Departments. The Public Safety Committee hearing for this project is currently scheduled for July 2023. Committee Member Angelone stated that, with the Mayor committing to building up to 36,000 housing units over the next few years, it would make sense for DDOT to ensure permitting delays do not preclude more housing production, which is critically important to our region and the people who live here.

Commissioner Velasquez made the motion: That ANC 6A support the DDOT streetscape permit application for 1101 H Street NE.

Commissioner Dooling seconded the motion.

The motion passed unanimously, with all ANC Commissioners and TPS Committee Members present voting yes.

- C. Metro’s [Better Bus](#) Network Redesign Project. This project is being managed by the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA), and not DDOT, and it is the first time the Metrobus system has had a comprehensive redesign approach in 50 years. WMATA is soliciting [feedback](#) through early June 2023, and has a [draft Visionary Network](#) posted for comment. Historically the system has favored commuting to work, and this effort is trying to take a broader view of what transit is for. WMATA understands that their data is an incomplete picture, so they do need community input. The project website also has a [lab tool](#) to demonstrate how the Visionary Network could improve your trip, where you can compare your trip today with the redesign and then provide comment specific to your trip. The

current D6 route has modifications under the Visionary Network that will impact ANC 6A residents. Commissioners are encouraged to distribute the Better Bus links through their district listservs.

- V. Community Comment. None.
- VI. Meeting adjourned at 8:24 pm.