

DDOT Post-Oversight Hearing Questions
January 29, 2020
DDOT Responses Provided on February 11, 2020

1. Please explain the main areas of disagreement between DDOT and the Streetlight Advisory Panel at this time, and any renewed efforts DDOT has planned to ensure their voices are heard.

The Streetlight Advisory Panel (SAP) is a group of nine community members selected by the Mayor to serve on the panel from the procurement phase through design, construction, and first year of operations of the DC Smart Street Lighting Project. Starting in November 2018, the SAP has met almost every month to be briefed on and discuss key issues of the project. The next two meetings are scheduled for Tuesday, February 25, and Tuesday, March 10, both from 4:30 to 6:00 PM at DDOT headquarters at 55 M Street SE.

The panel members have a wide range of interest in and knowledge of streetlight design and operations. To increase everyone's expertise, DDOT has taken the lead on developing discussion topics, including arranging guest speakers and field trips around the District. Topics covered have included: roadway lighting principles, streetlight maintenance and operations, innovations in LED technology, perspectives of federal partners, public-private partnership (P3) structures, and any discussion items from the panel members. There is often open and constructive conversation between panel members and DDOT at meetings.

The panel members also bring with them a variety of perspectives on proper light levels within the District. Some feel as though their neighborhoods are more than amply lit, causing light trespass into homes and pollution into the night's sky. Others are concerned that streets are not lit enough to ensure a sense of safety for all residents. DDOT has made an effort at every opportunity to inform the conversation with data and real-life examples. For example, DDOT receives an average of one resident request for enhanced lighting per day through 311. MPD also regularly expresses that it is a priority to increase brightness throughout large swaths of the District. Comparatively, there are almost no 311 requests for reduced light in the past few years. And on two different occasions, the SAP met in the field to evaluate test LEDs, sometimes finding that light levels were insufficient.

Notwithstanding the balance of resident opinions on streetlighting levels, DDOT takes issues presented by the SAP like glare and light trespass seriously. DDOT will hold a future developer to strict standards on backlight, uplight, and glare (BUG) reduction, as has been discussed with the SAP on numerous occasions. Many lights will be pre-installed with house shields. (Now and in the future, residents may request shielding of streetlights.) Additionally, LED technology offers enhanced uniformity and performance from high-pressure sodium. This means less

light, measured in either lumens or foot-candles, from the luminaire to achieve an equal or better distribution on the road and sidewalk.

To say that an LED conversion will result in brighter lights and more light pollution is factually incorrect. DDOT has modelled LED lighting on District roads using AGi32, a simulation tool, as requested by one member of the SAP. In almost every scenario, LED equivalents to existing HPS fixtures will reduce the illuminance of streetlight fixtures, even at their maximum wattage. (This presentation was made at the November SAP meeting and is available on the project website: <https://ddot.dc.gov/streetlightp3>) Moreover, after conversion pursuant to the requirements of the P3, each fixture will be equipped with remote monitoring and control. This smart system will enable real-time dimming capabilities. DDOT will be able to fine tune streetlights to meet traffic and public safety needs at the same time as resident preferences. The dimming capabilities have been discussed extensively during SAP meetings as a response to SAP members' concerns regarding the lighting levels.

All involved in this project have come to appreciate that lighting is as much a science as it is an art. Where we have found common ground is on the color temperature of the light. DDOT has committed to installing LEDs no cooler than 3,000 Kelvin, also known as warm white light. Most fixtures (and all residential ones) will be 2,700 Kelvin, or extra warm white light. These specifications are in line with guidelines from the American Medical Association on blue light exposure and are responsive to feedback from the SAP. (DDOT's LEDs will be warmer than those installed within the District by the National Park Service and the Architect of the Capitol.)

DDOT has always been committed to a balanced approach to achieving optimal safety and comfort for District residents. The SAP is one part of the intense stakeholder engagement conducted by DDOT during the procurement of this project to achieve that balance. In addition to leveraging 311 data, we have held public meetings in every Ward, engaged repeatedly with District agencies and the council as well as federal partners, and solicited ANC input. More than 100 meetings have been held on this project. And as focused deep dives, the regular meetings with the SAP have informed DDOT's perspective on this project in many ways. As mentioned, DDOT will continue to meet with the panel, present them with new information about the project, and hear their feedback.

2. Has the Urban Forestry Administration looked into the claims brought by Casey Trees that an LLC is removing Special Trees at the Kenilworth Court Apartment complex development in Ward 7 without paying the costs associated with removing such trees? They allege that this is being done through a public-private partnership which may allow them to skirt the law.

Please provide UFA's response to these claims and whether UFA plans to address this issue.

Despite the minority participation of DCHA in the LLC which has been formed to deliver this project, DDOT has concluded that this development proposal is subject to the Urban Forest Preservation Act of 2002, including its subsequent amendments. There may however be disagreement among other stakeholders in this project, such as DCHA, regarding this conclusion. Nonetheless, DDOT has communicated to the development team that this project is subject to the Urban Forest Preservation Act of 2002, and that DDOT will furthermore enforce any violations thereof.

3. DDOT undertook a permit process for dockless scooters and bikes that would reduce the number of scooter operators from eight to four. However, some operators have appealed this decision and DDOT has put off implementing the new terms and conditions until April 1.

- a. Please explain how the appeals process works.

Please see attached the appeal process guidelines, which have been shared with dockless vehicles operators. These guidelines are also on the DDOT Dockless [webpage](#).

- b. Will DDOT still limit the number of scooter operators to four?

For permit year 2020, DDOT intends to continue to limit the number of scooter operators to four. In previous correspondence from Councilmember Cheh (dated November 6, 2019), DDOT was asked a similar question and provided three reasons for the limited number of operators in our response (dated November 22, 2019). These reasons are still relevant:

- Having a large number of operators, each with a limited fleet, reduces utility for users. Users cannot reasonably anticipate availability of their preferred operator at their trip origin point, unless they load their phone with multiple apps. Differences in the user agreements between operators and customers and differences in technology, education and communication methods, customer service response methods, and pricing also can create confusion for users.
- Having a large number of operators has also created challenges for the general public in interacting with companies. Residents have persistently expressed confusion regarding the most appropriate and effective methods of communicating with companies about concerns regarding parking or unsafe riding.
- The current number of permits creates management challenges for DDOT including having multiple touch points to effectively

communicate our expectations and receive feedback from operators. Reducing the number of permit holders while increasing the total number of permitted vehicles will allow DDOT to increase access to sustainable mobility options while reducing the current duplication of effort. The resulting efficiencies in program management will allow DDOT to focus more efforts on analyzing data to identify program improvements (including opportunities for additional infrastructure to support scooting and cycling).

- c. If a company wins their appeal, and the number of operators is increased to five or six, will DDOT look to limit the number of operators to four again next year?

If this is an outcome of the appeal process, DDOT will operate the program with the increased number of operators for the remainder of the 2020 permit year. The agency will assess program management, data, community feedback, and user demand as we consider limiting the number of operators in future permit years.

- d. The new terms and conditions would increase the number of permitted scooters to 10,000 with the potential to increase in time to potentially 20,000. Does DDOT anticipate getting to 20,000 scooters in the next year?

Currently, the agency does not anticipate an increase that would bring the total program size to 20,000 scooters during calendar year 2020. DDOT will take a data-driven approach in deciding whether to increase the permitted number of shared dockless vehicles, both for individual permit holders and for the program as a whole. The agency will continue to monitor the daily distribution of shared dockless vehicles compared to the total number of permitted vehicles to determine whether an increase is warranted for 2021. If an increase is likely, DDOT will make this publicly known through the application instructions for the 2021 permit.

- 4. This year the District has gotten off to poor start in its pursuit of Vision Zero. Within two weeks of the new year there was already four traffic related deaths in the District. This comes after last year when we saw some improvement, traffic deaths were down nearly 25% from the previous year.

- a. Has DDOT conducted site visits or incident reports for the deadly accidents that occurred early this year?

DDOT staff have performed multiple site visits to the sites of the fatal crashes in 2020, in coordination with MPD and the Mayor's Office of Community Relations and Services (MOCRS). DDOT has identified short-term changes to make the locations safer for all users, as well as identified other interventions that will require further DDOT evaluation. Starting in

2020, specific incident reports will be posted for all fatal crashes on the Vision Zero web site within 60 days of the crash.

b. Has DDOT implemented any changes to those locations to make them safer for all road users? If so, please explain the changes.

Specific updates for the sites of fatal crashes in 2020 prior to oversight hearing:

- Minnesota Avenue SE and L’Enfant Square SE (January 1):
 - SHORT TERM: Improve signage on Minnesota Avenue approaching L’Enfant Square, including signage noting right turn ahead; Add pedestrian signs at crosswalk at Minnesota Avenue and L’Enfant Square.
 - FURTHER EVALUATION: This location is part of a larger capital project for the Minnesota Avenue and Pennsylvania Avenue corridor, that will make the location safer for all road users. In the short term, DDOT will evaluate the corridor for additional safety improvements, including reviewing recommendations from the Penn Branch Civic Association.
- North Capitol Street and P Street (January 3):
 - SHORT TERM: Add speed limit markings on roadway; Add pedestrian signs; Refurbish crosswalks.
 - FURTHER EVALUATION: DDOT is evaluating options for safety improvements to this corridor, including reviewing studies produced by the NoMa BID.
- 13th Street SE and Alabama Avenue SE (January 4):
 - SHORT TERM: Add speed limit signs along Alabama Avenue; Refurbish pavement markings at intersection and approach, including refurbishing crosswalks at intersection.
 - FURTHER EVALUATION: This location is part of the larger Alabama Avenue SE Corridor Safety Study and DDOT is currently working with stakeholders to implement recommendations from that study.

5. The DC Municipal Regulations require contractors to have “Safe Accommodations” for cyclists and pedestrians when construction is occurring in the Public Space. Safe accommodation is defined as “a safe and convenient route for pedestrians and bicyclists that ensures an accommodation through or around a work zone that is equal to the accommodation that was provided to pedestrians and bicyclists before the blockage of the sidewalk, bicycle lane, or other public bicycle path.” The Committee has heard from many residents who do not believe contractors are following this rule and that DDOT is not doing much by way of enforcement.

- a. Last year you spoke of a Rapid Response Team to investigate lack of safe accommodations. Is this team now functioning?

Yes, Public Space Inspections (PSI) instituted the Rapid Response team in the first quarter of FY20 relying in part on the additional FTEs allocated by the Council.

- b. How does a resident call the Rapid Response Team? Is it through 311? Residents can report through 311, either by calling or submitting a request via the DC 311 App. They can also tweet @ddotdc or call DDOT's call center at (202) 671-2700.

- c. How many citations has the Rapid Response team written since its creation?

PSI's Rapid Response Team, Public Space Enforcement Officers have received and responded to more than 85 requests for inspections related to a lack of safe accommodations. As instances of non-compliance, PSI has issued 53 Notices of Violation (NOV) generating over \$46,550 in fines and penalties assessed to violators.

6. The performance oversight responses indicate that the permitting system for 5G Small Cells has been open since April 26, 2019, but that an enhancement to the permit application system was implemented in November 22, 2019, and that only a handful of small cells have been installed thus far. What was the enhancement implemented in November and why was it necessary?

The enhancement was a substantial upgrade to the application submission and processing workflow that has and will continue to save time, reduce errors, and increase transparency. DDOT uses an innovative online permitting tool, the Transportation Online Permitting System (TOPS), to process tens of thousands of permit applications annually. The initial applications submitted to TOPS in April utilized the existing functionalities of the permitting database which required manual processing for each application. DDOT worked collaboratively with the TOPS designers, utility partners, and the small cell companies to develop a robust automated and transparent permitting process that increases efficiency. The TOPS update was released in November with the following major enhancements:

- Using a GIS map-based interface
- Streetlight validation
- The ability for small cell applicants to add locations for existing utility poles
- Automated frequency/distance checks to avoid applicants submitting invalid applications
- Automatically generated validation letters.

7. The vehicle inventory provided by DDOT indicates that the Office of the Director operates 18 separate vehicles owned by the DC government.
 - a. For what purpose are these 18 vehicles used?
 - b. How many employees in the Office of the Director have access to one of these vehicles?

DDOT has reviewed the inventory originally submitted to Council on January 14th. The correct number of vehicles that are assigned to the Office of the Director in the list should be three. During the first pull of these data there were some errors that had not been corrected in a recent inventory, leading to errors in the January 14th submission. Attached to this response, please find an updated list of vehicles for this question. The Office of the Director serves multiple programs within the agency. Some examples are Civil Rights, Risk Management, General Counsel, Davis Bacon, Community Engagement, Deputy Director, Vision Zero Chief of Staff, Facilities and Office of External Affairs. The three vehicles assigned to the Office of the Director are used by approximately 25 employees within these various programs.

8. What is the proper method for ANCs, including ANC 1A, to submit a resolution to DDOT?

ANCs can upload their resolutions to the Mayor's ANC portal (<https://resolutions.anc.dc.gov/Documents.aspx>). This is the centralized system created by the Mayor's office for the intake and tracking of ANC resolutions, regardless of the agency. Once received, the Mayor's Correspondence Unit will forward the resolution or letter to DDOT for review and response, and the agency will acknowledge within seven business days from the date received. Responses are posted in the portal. ANCs have been instructed by the Mayor's office to use this system to submit their resolutions. If an ANC needs assistance they can email (engagement.dc@dc.gov.)