

Janeese Lewis George
Councilmember Janeese Lewis George

A PROPOSED RESOLUTION

IN THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

To declare the existence of an emergency with respect to the need to amend the School Proximity Traffic Calming Act of 2000, to require the installation of speed tables, a raised crosswalk, or all-way stop control at the intersection of Iowa and Arkansas Avenues N.W..

RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, That this resolution may be cited as the “Iowa and Arkansas Avenues Traffic Calming Emergency Declaration Resolution of 2022”.

Sec. 2. (a) The intersection of Iowa Avenue NW and Arkansas Avenue NW is in Ward 4 and located near several schools, child development centers, churches, small businesses, and recreation centers – each drawing significant foot traffic during commuting times. Peoples Congregational United Church of Christ is adjacent to this intersection. Dorothy Height Elementary School is 2 blocks away at 1300 Allison Street, NW. Curious Explorers Child Development Center is 2 blocks away at 4704 14th Street, NW. MacFarland Middle School is 2 1/2 blocks away at 4400 Iowa Avenue, NW. Roosevelt High School is also 2 1/2 blocks away at 4301 13th Street, NW. Upshur Park, including a public pool, basketball court, baseball court, soccer field, and dog park, is located 3 blocks away at 4300 Arkansas Avenue, NW.

33 (b) The intersection of Arkansas and Iowa has a long and troubled history of speed-related
34 crashes including at least 7 incidents in the last year and 3 in the last 3 months: October 22, 2021,
35 as well as January 22nd, April 22nd, June 21st, August 22nd, September 30th, and October 16th
36 so far in 2022. Each crash resulted in significant damage to all vehicles involved and varying
37 degrees of personal injury.

38 (c) Residents living in the area have been fighting to improve this intersection for years. A
39 petition from 2013 garnered nearly 800 signatures from area residents seeking traffic calming at
40 this intersection. Councilmember Lewis George hosted a traffic safety walkthrough with the
41 District Department of Transportation (“DDOT”) Director Everett Lott in November 2021 where
42 DDOT committed to analyzing and collecting data about the intersection amidst several ongoing
43 traffic safety investigations already underway. Unfortunately, in July 2022, DDOT shared that,
44 after analysis, the intersection would not get a traffic light or all-way stop control but instead could
45 receive additional warning signs, striping and flexible posts – features already in place at the
46 intersection from a previous traffic safety study that did not yield adequate improvements.

47 (d) Arkansas Avenue, NW is classified as a “Minor Arterial” according to the District’s
48 Functional Classification Map of streets. According to the most recent average daily traffic
49 (“ADT”) data available, about 6,000 cars drive on Arkansas Avenue daily. DDOT’s Guidelines on
50 Vertical Traffic Calming Implementation say the following: “Vertical traffic calming devices shall
51 not be placed on roads classified as minor arterials with ADT higher than 7,500 vehicles per day
52 or on higher classification roads. Speed tables and/or raised crosswalks may be considered on
53 minor arterials with ADT lower than 5,000 vehicles per day, following an engineering assessment.
54 Additionally, installation of raised crosswalks can be considered on minor arterials with ADT
55 between 5,000 and 7,500 vehicles per day in unique circumstances following an engineering

56 assessment with special considerations given to proximity to schools and higher concentration of
57 vulnerable road users at uncontrolled crossings along these arterials.”

58 (e) Earlier this month following the most recent crash, DDOT shared that their current
59 evaluation of the intersection is not expected to be completed until quarter 2 of Fiscal Year 2023,
60 between January and March 2023. After the completion of this evaluation, there is no guarantee
61 that DDOT will install new or adequate traffic calming measures that promote pedestrian safety.
62 Additionally, the standard installation process for any approved traffic calming measures takes
63 several months, or even a year depending on the complexity of the improvements. We cannot
64 afford to wait until next spring or summer to improve safety at an intersection that’s averaging one
65 crash per month.

66 (f) Emergency legislation is necessary to ensure meaningful traffic control or traffic
67 calming measures, infrastructure like speed tables, a raised crosswalk, or all-way stop signs, get
68 installed in the next two months before someone gets seriously hurt or killed.

69 Sec. 3. The Council of the District of Columbia determines that the circumstances
70 enumerated in section 2 constitute emergency circumstances making it necessary that the Iowa and
71 Arkansas Avenues Traffic Calming Emergency Amendment Act of 2022 be adopted after a single
72 reading.

73 Sec. 4. This resolution shall take effect immediately.