

# A Vision for Safer Streets in ANC 1B

*Results from the Commission's first-ever survey of transportation safety*



## Background

**To accelerate our efforts to advocate for safe streets in ANC 1B, the Commission fielded the first-ever online survey of neighborhood residents' and visitors' experiences with traffic.**

The commissioners and community members of ANC 1B believe that everyone should be safe getting around on our neighborhoods' streets. We are committed to the mission of the District of Columbia's Vision Zero initiative, and share the goal of eliminating traffic-related injuries and fatalities in our neighborhoods.

Sadly, we are continually confronted with new stories of residents, students, workers, and visitors to our neighborhoods being injured or killed in traffic-related accidents. To better understand constituents' concerns and hone our advocacy, the Transportation Committee of ANC 1B developed a survey asking ANC 1B residents and visitors about their experiences walking, biking, driving, and taking other forms of transportation in D.C. city.

## Top Findings

**The responses we received paint a clear picture. While our vision is that our residents always feel safe getting around in our neighborhoods, the survey revealed that most feel consistently unsafe getting where they need to be. Many respondents had personal experiences with a traffic injury and some reported being verbally and physically harassed and attacked while driving, walking, or riding their bike.**

The volume and consistency of responses we received shows that, across all demographics, residents and visitors share similar grievances about getting around ANC 1B. Over a third of respondents were injured in or knew someone injured in a traffic-related accident in ANC 1B in the past two years, and over 40% felt less safe getting around ANC 1B than other areas of the city (compared to nearly 10% who felt safer in 1B).

Numerous residents reported specific instances of being struck by a vehicle; verbally or physically harassed or attacked by drivers while walking or biking; and/or witnessing traffic accidents or close-calls. We found that:

- 70% of respondents said that biking was one of their top three forms of transportation, but of those, nearly every single one (99%) said they *sometimes or rarely feel safe* biking in ANC 1B.
- Only 16% of people who walk around ANC 1B said they *always felt safe*, with the vast majority saying that they *sometimes or rarely felt safe*.
- While respondents felt safest when driving in a car or taking a WMATA service (bus, rail, etc.), these are not the most preferred ways residents get around. Only half of respondents indicated a WMATA service was one of their top three forms transportation and only 30% said driving was.

All respondents were asked to identify the most dangerous street or intersection in ANC 1B. Respondents identified over 50 separate locations as the most dangerous, with some having experienced or seen a traffic accident or close call occur at that location. Respondents proactively recommended dozens of ideas to fix these dangerous locations, showing strong and consistent support for:

- **More and safer biking infrastructure.** Over half of respondents called for more bike protected bike lanes. Even among those respondents who indicated that they do not bike, over 35% proactively suggested protected bike lanes would be a solution to the issues they raised.

- **Better enforcement of existing laws.** A significant number of respondents called for enhanced enforcement of existing traffic laws, including speeding, double parking, stopping at red lights, and parking in bike lanes. This includes several calls for better automated enforcement/cameras.
- **Clear and safer pedestrian infrastructure.** Many residents called for lower speed limits, clearer signage and signals (including HAWK lights), more speed humps, pedestrian scrambles, and other pedestrian-friendly changes.

## Top Areas of Concern

Despite the diversity of responses and experiences, there were six areas that received disproportionate attention from respondents, indicating that these locations merit urgent attention. Below, we outline problems that respondents identified and solutions they proactively proposed to address these problems. Top areas of concern include:

*“I used to live at Sherman near Girard. I specially moved out of the neighborhood because it lacked safe bike infrastructure. [I was] repeatedly harassed and physically attacked while riding my bike down 14th and on U.”*

### 1. 14th Street and U Street

Over 30 respondents identified areas on 14th Street as the most dangerous in the neighborhood, with the vast majority specifically citing the intersection at U Street.

Problems include:

- *Cars making right turns on red, endangering pedestrians*
- *Cars stopping in the bus stop to pick up passengers*
- *Cars making dangerous left turns*
- *Vehicle speeds too high*
- *Double-parked cars blocking bike lanes*

Proposed solutions include:

- *Wider sidewalks on U Street*
- *Bike lanes on U Street*
- *Remove vehicle lanes*
- *Left turn light at 14th and U*
- *Move rideshare drop zone to NW corner of 14th and U, along U Street where there is no bus stop*

Solutions underway:

- The Commission is aware that DDOT is planning a shared bus and bike lane pilot on 14th Street between Euclid and Irving Streets. We have supported the measure and are eager to see its successful and speedy implementation.
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*“Georgia Ave NW between Euclid St and Florida Ave NW is a deathtrap of speeding vehicles. I’ve seen several pedestrians struck at Georgia Ave and Florida NW, walking northbound on the east side of the street.”*

## **2. Georgia Avenue Corridor**

Over 20 respondents identified Georgia Ave as “generally dangerous,” with one respondent calling it “the Wild West.” Specific hotspots include the intersections with Florida Ave and Columbia Ave.

Problems include:

- *Unsignalized intersections*
- *Drivers speeding and ignoring crosswalks*
- *Narrow sidewalks*

Proposed solutions include:

- *Speed bumps*
- *Make sure walk signs are facing the proper direction*
- *Protected bike lanes*
- *Better enforcement of bus and bike lanes*
- *HAWK signals*

Solutions underway:

- The Commission recommends, as it has in the past, the full implementation of the recommendations contained in DDOT’s [\*Lower Georgia Avenue Transportation and Streetscape Report \(2009\)\*](#).
  - The Commission is not aware of any other current projects underway to improve traffic safety on Georgia Avenue.
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*“On 9th Street near the 9:30 Club, I was struck by a moving vehicle and got a concussion. A month later, I saw the same thing happen to someone else.”*

## **3. Florida Avenue from Sherman Avenue to 9th and U Street.**

Over 20 respondents identified the three-block stretch of road from Florida from just north of Sherman Ave to its intersection with 9th as the most dangerous intersection in the ANC.

Problems include:

- *No bike/scooter lanes*

- *Unsafe crosswalks*
- *Better signaling - especially with construction*
- *Massive amounts of construction and confusing new lanes*

Proposed solutions include:

- *HAWK signals*
- *Leading pedestrian intervals (signal retiming)*
- *Protected bike lanes - including a clear path connecting V St lanes*
- *Clearer lanes and signage during construction*

Solutions underway:

- The Commission has supported DDOT's plans to redesign the area of Florida Ave between 9th and U Streets, and recommends that project move forward without delay. Further, we recommend that DDOT take all necessary measures to ensure safety and clear signage during construction.

*“The entire stretch of 11th from Florida to Vermont that doesn't have a bike lane is terrifying. I am constantly dodging cars not willing to share the road.”*

#### **4. 11th between Florida and T Street**

While several bikers and pedestrians said they prefer 11th over other corridors for their commute, over 10 responded that the area between Florida and T Street was dangerous.

Problems include:

- *Large gap in the bike lane*
- *Vehicles not coming to a complete stop at the stop sign at 11th and T St NW*
- *Intersections that do not have four-way stop signs*

Proposed solutions include:

- *Connecting the bike lane through ANC 1B*
- *Blinking red lights at stop signs*
- *Adding more four-way stop signs*

Solutions underway:

- The Commission is aware that DDOT is considering bike lane alternatives for 11th Street and encourages further public comment on street design along these blocks.

*“My friend was cycling down the hill heading south on 13th when a cab made a right turn from 13th heading south onto Florida and cut her off. She had broken bones, a concussion, and stitches on her face.”*

## **5. 13th between Florida and U Street**

Over 10 respondents identified areas on 13th Street as most dangerous, with several pointing to the intersections with U Street and T Street as the worst.

Problems include:

- *Cars turning into crossing pedestrians*
- *Speeding vehicles*

Proposed solutions include:

- *Pedestrian scrambles and light retiming*
- *Stronger enforcement of speeding*

Solutions underway:

- The Commission is not aware of projects to address traffic safety on 13th Street.
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*“[I had a] friend in car collision at very dangerous intersection of Florida, NJ, and Rhode Island avenues. Driver had to suddenly change lanes to avoid pedestrian crossing (lawfully, but driver was confused by many lights) and hit another car. That whole complicated series of intersections surrounding the traffic island and post office needs a revamp. Very dangerous for cars, pedestrians, and bikers alike. Need much safer walking paths, and clearer lanes and signs for cars.”*

## **6. 4th Street Corridor, especially near the Florida-Rhode Island intersection**

Nearly 10 respondents pointed to areas of 4th Street as the most dangerous, with many citing the multi-road intersection with Rhode Island and Florida as particularly bad.

Problems include:

- *Vehicles ignore crosswalks*
- *Children are hard to see*
- *Speeding drivers*
- *Drivers blocking intersection at 4th and Florida*

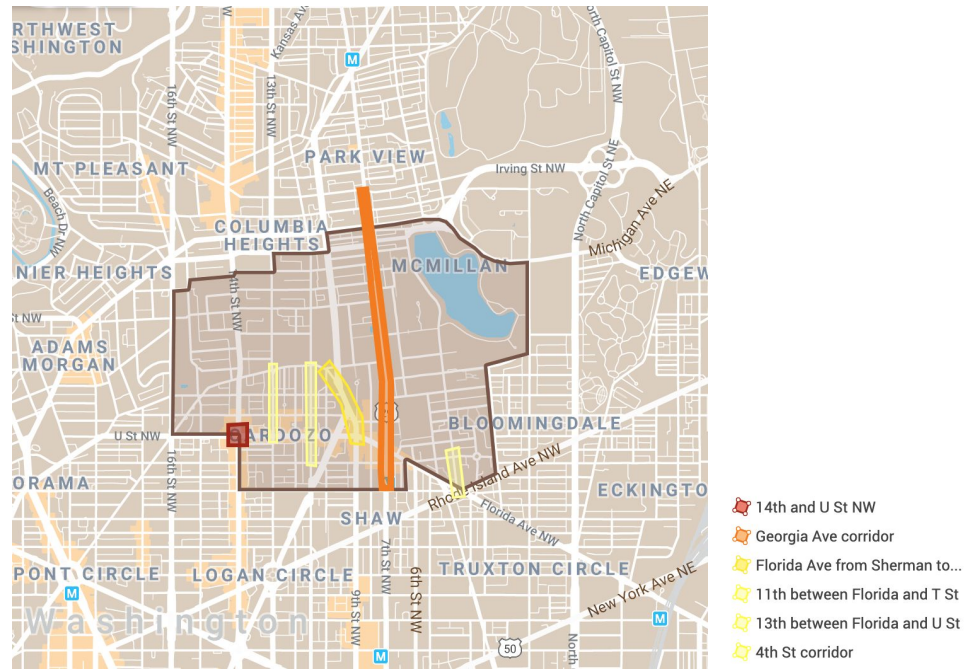
Proposed solutions include:

- *Enforcement of speeding and crosswalk laws*
- *Speed bumps and stop signs*

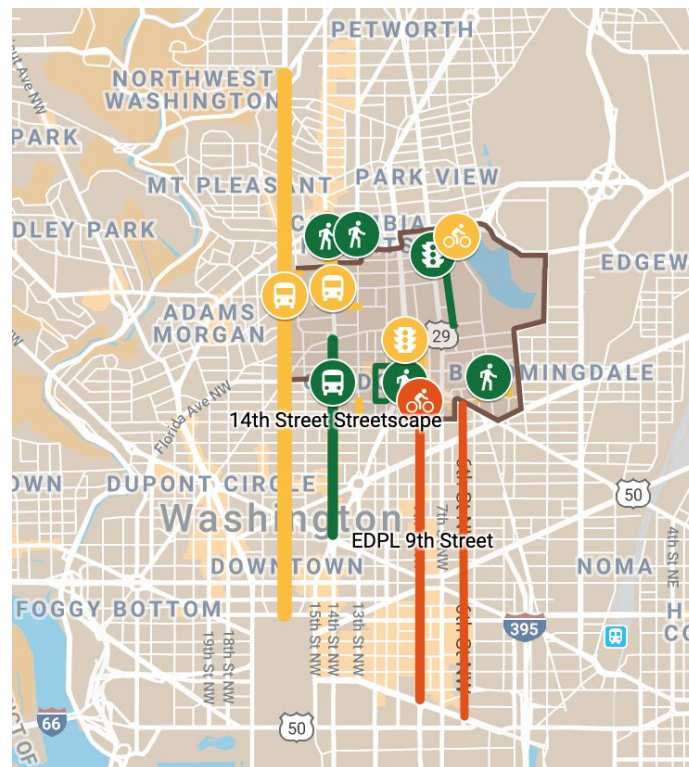
Solutions underway:

- The Commission is aware of the addition of some flex posts on 4th Street and anticipate street repaving in the area, but no other plans to address transportation safety.
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## Map of Hot Spots



## Existing DDOT projects impacting 1B



**DDOT has undertaken multiple projects.**

See this [map](#) for further information.

## Recommendations

- 1. D.C. should increase investments in biking and pedestrian infrastructure and focus on enforcement of existing laws.**
- 2. Policymakers should prioritize current traffic plans that address top problem areas.**
- 3. Policymakers should develop plans to address problem areas where no plans currently exist.**

## Notable Responses

“I have had many close calls with death on my bike riding on Vermont north of S St. The intersections at Warder/Park Place/Columbia are not safe for pedestrians or cyclists. I’ve almost been hit many times.”

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“[I’ve seen] several near-misses, both at the crosswalk at 2nd and U, and at the intersection of 3rd and Elm. Drivers rarely stop at the stop signs, and I’ve been inches away from being hit by a car because they “didn’t see” me (and also didn’t stop). I’ve watched children nearly be hit at 3rd and Elm during the farmstand there for the same reason.”

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“I commute by bike so I face death twice a day, every day, due to cars parked or standing in the unprotected bike lane on 14th Street, but especially on the 3100 block. I’ve also been honked at/verbally abused many times for 1. passing vehicles blocking the bike lane 2. \*not\* passing vehicles blocking the bike lane 3. ringing my bell to notify vehicles of my presence 4. \*not\* ringing my bell to notify vehicles of my presence...you get the picture. We know what safe and accessible street design looks like and we deserve to have it here in DC.

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“[I had a] fender bender driving. Having 2 lanes during rush hour versus 1 lane during off hours on Columbia, Harvard, etc. (West of Warder St.) creates a lot of accidents or near accidents. There should just be one lane for traffic and two lanes for parking, because cars park in the second lane anyway, causing a lot of congestion, confusion, and near accidents.”

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“I don’t drive that much or walk that much in the greater ANC neighborhood, mostly just in my few blocks of the neighborhood but in general, I fear driving because I’m worried I’m going to hit a pedestrian, and I fear walking -- and



ESPECIALLY riding a bike because people drive crazily, there are no great bike lanes, and many intersections are extremely confusing.”

“Feb 5th road rage murder of Daniel Olaya at 4th and T is directly a result of a roadway design that encourages speeding through the neighborhood instead of using appropriate through-street corridors of Georgia and North Cap. It is indicative of dangerous speeding that neighbors experience everyday.”

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## Survey Method and Sample

The Transportation Committee’s survey gathered 132 respondents over the course of seven months. Approximately half of respondents live in ANC 1B, while the other half identified themselves as residents of the region who work, go to school, or spend a significant amount of time within ANC 1B on some other capacity. The survey instrument was distributed via outreach to educational institutions, including Howard University’s community listserv; outreach to churches; posting on neighborhood distribution lists; coverage on local media and blogs; tabling at street fairs/festivals; and personal outreach to community leaders.

## ANC 1B Personnel

### ANC 1B Commissioners

- Anita Norman (1B01)
- Dan Orlasky (1B02), Chair
- Sedrick Muhammad (1B03)
- Deborah Thomas (1B04)
- Chris Calton (1B05)
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- Robb Hudson (1B11)
- Dan Winston (1B12)

### Transportation Safety Committee Members

- Dan Winston (1B12), Chair
- Nicole Cacoza, Co-Chair
- Sharon Dreyfuss
- Ben Klemens
- Andrew Peters
- Nick Semanko

### **Survey and Report Managers**

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### **Contact**

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