

**ADVISORY NEIGHBORHOOD COMMISSION 4C**

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**Grant Circle Traffic Safety Resolution**

February 14th, 2024

Muriel Bowser, DC Mayor

Sharon Kershbaum, DC Department of Transportation (DDOT) Interim Director

Timothy Spriggs, DC Department of Public Works (DPW) Director

Phil Mendelson, DC Council Chairman

Janeese Lewis George, Ward 4 Councilmember

Anita Bonds, At-Large Councilmember

Robert White, At-Large Councilmember

Christina Henderson, At-Large Councilmember

Kenyan McDuffie, At-Large Councilmember

Charles Allen, DC Council Committee Chair on Transportation and the Environment

The Advisory Neighborhood Commission (ANC) 4C considered proposed safety improvements for Grant Circle by the District Department of Transportation (DDOT). With a quorum of X out of 7 Commissioners in attendance at a duly noticed meeting on February 14, 2024, the ANC approved the following resolution by a vote of X Yeas, X Neas, and X Abstentions.

Since at least 2015, there have been over 200 reported accidents in and around Grant Circle, [including the 2022 death of Cherice Allen](https://mpdc.dc.gov/release/traffic-fatality-unit-block-grant-circle-northwest); dozens of accidents reported by neighbors not captured in official DDOT statistics; and anecdotes from neighbors about countless near-miss accidents across all modes of transport (e.g., vehicle, bike, scooter, pedestrian, etc.). Residents cite dangerous vehicular speeding and confusing and treacherous pedestrian crossings as consistent sources of concern and the reason they avoid using the Circle.

DDOT and residents agree that Grant Circle’s current design is unsuitable for shared, safe use due to long pedestrian crossings, conflict vehicular angles, illegal parking, and visibility issues. Multiple DDOT and DC agency studies of this location––including the Rock Creek Livability Study II in 2017––consistently concluded that travel lanes should be narrowed and pedestrian crossings shortened, among other design change recommendations, yet have failed to be implemented. [Numerous studies across different U.S. cities](https://www.npr.org/2023/11/13/1212589284/skinny-roads-save-lives-according-to-a-study-on-the-width-of-traffic-lanes) have shown lane narrowing is a key intervention to *reduce vehicular speed and reduce crashes*, including the 2017 DDOT trial period in Grant Circle that found minimal impact on travel duration during peak transit times (approximately 60-90 seconds additional travel time).

From November 2023 through February 2024, ANC 4C held four community meetings on DDOT’s initial Grant Circle redesign proposal for neighbors to provide input and ask questions. Community meetings were held on November 8, November 28, December 19, and February 7 on a variety of days of the week with varying meeting times and locations, and both in-person

and virtually to provide accessibility to all community members. ANC 4C also conducted a multi-month online survey open from November 2023 to February 2024 as an additional tool to gain further input to the proposed Grant Circle design changes. Additionally, ANC 4C distributed flyers to all houses on Grant Circle and other nearby neighbors, knocked on doors, and engaged one-on-one with residents for full inclusion of all those affected.

Based on three months of community meeting input, emails, informal outreach, in-person conversations, and survey data, ANC 4C residents overwhelmingly support the primary implementation elements of DDOT’s initial design—all of which prioritize safety for all users of Grant Circle. ANC 4C fully supports DDOT’s intent to implement robust road design changes and traffic calming measures to Grant Circle with the goal of slowing traffic and improving safety for drivers, pedestrians, and bicyclists. **This support extends to DDOT plans for the following within Grant Circle:** 

* Reducing the number of circulating lanes from 2 lanes to 1 lane, while providing pocket exit lanes to maintain traffic flow
* Installing concrete turn lanes and splitters
* Implementing the features of a Dutch-style roundabout
* Implementing a protected bicycle lane
* Installing concrete bump-outs at crosswalks
* Decreasing the distance pedestrians must travel to cross the circle

ANC 4C has also received feedback from some residents noting specific areas of feedback with the proposed plan, including concern over the planned reduction in parking spots directly on Grant Circle, as well as opposition to changing traffic patterns on 5th Street and Illinois Avenue NW (south of Grant Circle) absent interventions to address long-standing road design hazards and reckless driving at Illinois Avenue and Uphsur Street NW.

**ANC 4C requests the following additional actions from DDOT, DPW, and Mayor Bowser:**

* DDOT should identify opportunities to minimize parking spot losses on Grant Circle and create alternative parking locations adjacent to the Circle as they move from preliminary design to final design phase. *For example, DDOT could create a “drop-off” zone of 1-2 floating parking spots on the block of Illinois Ave NW immediately north of Grant Circle and on the block immediately south of Grant Circle during church special events, such as weekday funerals, to provide accessibility to elderly and/or disabled church parishioners who need to be dropped off closer to the church before their cars are parked elsewhere.*
* DDOT should install Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacons (RRFBs) at all Grant Circle crosswalks in the near term to improve pedestrian visibility to motorists.
* DDOT should implement a phased approach that immediately address the most needed safety design changes in Grant Circle during Phase I, while providing time to understand the impact and study additional changes for Phase II. In Phase II, DDOT would decide whether to proceed with the proposed changes to traffic patterns on 5th Street and Illinois Avenue NW (along with any needed traffic signal additions to ensure safety) south of Grant Circle. Phase II analysis should be shared with the community for input, consistent with the overall approach to Grant Circle.
* Once installed, the Department of Public Works should regularly deploy resources to help clean the protected bike lane of trash and debris.
* Mayor Bowser should include explicit funding for this project in her budget planned for release in mid- to late March 2024 and the DDOT Interim Director should track this project as a Ward 4 priority for 2025.

**ANC 4C implores DDOT to implement traffic calming measures in adjacent blocks that are likely to experience increased traffic coming off Grant Circle resulting from the changes, including**:

* Install a RRFB at the east/west pedestrian crosswalk at the intersection of New Hampshire Ave NW and Allison St NW—one block from Grant Circle—to enhance pedestrian visibility and prevent motorist crashes and pedestrian injuries.
* Install speed bumps on the 509-699 block of Webster St NW to slow down high-speed traffic off Grant Circle, as this block contains a large church and a school and needs traffic calming.
* Install a 4-way traffic signal at the New Hampshire and Taylor St NW intersection.

ANC 4C seeks ongoing transparency, communication, and coordination from DDOT and city leaders throughout the project’s phases to allow for Commissioners to advise the community on the DDOT process, project timelines, opportunities for community input, and ensure community input is considered. To that end, ANC 4C seeks to establish regular meetings with representatives from DDOT’s Grant Circle design team to improve the community’s visibility into these efforts and strengthen coordination with the ANC 4C. ANC 4C believes these measures will ensure continued progress and strengthen the overall project outcomes.

Thank you,

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Karen Livingston                                         Daniel Alexander

Chairperson, ANC 4C         Vice Chair, ANC 4C