Re: Vision Zero Recommendations

Dear Councilmembers Allen and Cheh:

On May 8, 2019 at a regularly scheduled, duly noticed monthly meeting of ANC 6C, with a quorum of 5 out of 5 commissioners and the public present, the above-mentioned item came before us. The commissioners voted 4:1:0 to send this letter with our recommendations for achieving Vision Zero.

As you are aware, much attention has been paid recently, and rightfully so, to the dangerous conditions our streets pose to residents and visitors of the District. We know that you recognize the urgency of the situation, through your statements and recent legislation proposed, and we thank you for your efforts. For the District to make any progress on Vision Zero, large-scale changes need to be made to the District’s routine processes — addressing issues individually will not remedy what are inherently flaws in the system. In that spirit, we offer the following suggestions for broad, District-wide actions that will help to make our streets safer for all.

1. Ban all right turns on red. The federal money the District retains by not implementing this measure is not worth the cost of serious injuries and the emotional and physical impact on people’s lives.

2. Include leading pedestrian intervals (LPIs) at all signalized crosswalks.

3. Install all-way stop signs or traffic lights at all intersections.

4. When repaving requires removal of infrastructure, ALWAYS reinstall THE NEXT DAY. This includes bike lane protection, lane/crosswalk striping, turn hardening, etc.

5. Every time a street gets rebuilt, add curb extensions (bulbouts by default).

6. If bike infrastructure is damaged more than once, require replacement with more substantial of measures. For example, after flexposts are run over, replace them with K71 bollards or similar stronger flexible bollards; if these are again run over, install metal bollards, concrete planters, and/or metal rail barriers.

7. When a street is redesigned, include protected bike lanes by default. Discussions of street design should be about how best to implement bike lanes, not whether to put them in.
8. For any bike facility more than one bike lane wide, require a center guard post to prevent or deter drivers from entering and/or obstructing the facility.

9. Require DDOT to inspect and mechanically sweep every bike facility on a fixed regular schedule, and promptly repair, replace, or upgrade any missing or damaged elements.

10. Reconfigure traffic light timing to prioritize safety, i.e., slower speeds, rather than traffic throughput.

11. Remove all rush hour parking restrictions in the District. In many instances, these effectively turn what should be a residential street (e.g., K Street NE) into a minor arterial roadway for purposes of weekday commuting.

12. Create a dedicated traffic division within MPD to facilitate enforcement of traffic laws, which is severely lacking.

13. Tie the city's budget to match the modeshare goals as described in the Sustainable DC plan.

We recognize that some of the recommendations above are ambitious. We feel such aggressive measures are necessary to curb the rising cost in injuries and deaths of our unsafe streets. It is imperative that we act quickly and boldly to ensure that additional lives are not lost on the District’s streets.

Thank you for giving great weight to the recommendations of ANC 6C.

On behalf of ANC 6C,

Karen Wirt
ANC 6C Chair

cc: Jeffrey Marootian, Director, DDOT