

2020 Performance Oversight Pre-Hearing Questions

Pedestrian Advisory Council

1. Please provide a list of the Council’s current members. For each member, please provide the following:

- The member’s name.
- The Ward, agency or organization the member represents.
- Who appointed the member.
- When the member’s term expires.
- Attendance Record.

Response: Please see table below.

D.C. Pedestrian Advisory Council Membership and Meeting Attendance				
Member	Representing	Appointed By	Term Expiration	FY 2019 Attendance
Priscilla Magee	Mendelson	Mendelson	12-18-2020	64%
Jim Elliott	Grosso	Grosso	Reappointment in Progress	100%
Mark Rodeffer	R. White	R. White	8-30-2021	73%
Ivy Benjenk	Silverman	Silverman	8-10-2020	82%
Heather Foote ⁱ	Bonds	Bonds	5-29-2022	100%
Katharine Gray ⁱⁱ	Ward 1	Nadeau	8-1-2022	100%
Janice Ferebee ⁱⁱⁱ	Ward 2	Evans	2-10-2020	100%
Eileen McCarthy	Ward 3	Cheh	10-3-2021	82%
David Tumblin	Ward 4	Todd	2-21-2020	91%
Moira McCauley	Ward 5	McDuffie	2-9-2020	91%
Cheryle Adams	Ward 6	Allen	11-6-2020	82%
<i>Vacant</i>	Ward 7			
Ameen Beale	Ward 8	White	5-10-2020	82%
George Branyan	DDOT	NA	NA	91%
Terry Thorne	MPD	NA	NA	82%
Kristin Calkins	OP	NA	NA	82%
<i>Vacant</i>	DPR			
<i>Vacant</i>	DCPS			

i. Appointed May 2019
 ii. Appointed Aug. 2019
 iii. Appointed Sept. 2019

2. Please provide a list of the Council’s meeting dates, times, and locations for FY 2019 and FY 2020 to date.

Response: The PAC met on the following dates in FY 2019 and FY2020 to date:

<u>FY19</u>	<u>FY20</u>
October 22, 2018	October 28, 2019
November 19, 2018	November 18, 2019
December 17, 2018	December 16, 2019
January 28, 2019	
February 25, 2019	
March 25, 2019	
April 22, 2019	
May 20, 2019	
June 24, 2019	
July 22, 2019	
September 23, 2019	

All meetings were held at 6:30 p.m. at 441 4th St NW, Room 1117.

3. Did the Council receive funds in FY 2019? If so, please provide the following:

- The amount of the funding.
- The source of the funding.
- A list of all expenditures.
- A description of how these funds furthered the Council’s mission.

Response: In FY 2018, the PAC received its annual \$10,000 allocation from DDOT. Expenditures were \$9875 in payments to administrative staff and \$149.55¹ for office expenses, largely photocopying. The administrative staff position is responsible for keeping meeting minutes, posting meeting agendas, posting information on the PAC website, researching and compiling information that informs PAC discussions, sharing pedestrian-related items on Twitter, and assisting PAC members in drafting PAC testimony and comments to the Council or agencies. These funded areas furthered PAC exposure and public involvement.

4. Please describe the Council’s activities in FY 2019.

Response: By statute (DC Code §§ 50-1831 and 50-1931), the Council’s mission is “to serve as the advisory body to the Mayor, the Council of the District of Columbia, and the District

¹ Payments total more than \$10,000 because we were permitted to use a small amount left over from FY18.

agencies on matters pertaining to the improvement of pedestrian safety and accessibility” and to designate a representative to participate on the District’s Major Crash Review Task Force. During FY 2019 (October 1, 2018-September 30, 2019), in keeping with these responsibilities:

- The Council regularly discussed pedestrian safety and accessibility issues with DDOT and MPD representatives at Council meetings, including the Spring and Fall Street Smart campaigns, Vision Zero initiatives, sidewalk construction and maintenance, budget issues, pedestrian signal issues, concerns about dockless vehicles, and issues affecting specific members of the public who contact us and that have not been or cannot be resolved through the 311 process.
- The Council testified before the D.C. Council about the District’s approach to autonomous vehicles; MPD’s budget request, especially the need to connect funding for the Automated Traffic Enforcement program to safety improvements; DDOT’s budget request, focusing on funding for sidewalk repair and maintenance; and Fire/EMS budget request, primarily regarding the size of emergency vehicles.
- Submitted written statements to the D.C. Council, with recommendations for improvements in several bills: B23-89 (Health Impact Assessment Program Establishment Act of 2019), B23-248 (Autonomous Vehicle Amendment Act of 2019), and the B23-232 (Autonomous Vehicles Testing Program Amendment Act of 2019).
- The Council was briefed by DDOT on its new Traffic Safety Assessment process and questionnaire and expressed concern that DDOT’s new process appeared to require concerned residents to obtain support from their ANC commissioner or other official prior to even submitting a request (March 2019).
- The Council was briefed by the Washington Area Bicyclist Association’s (WABA) Ward 8 community organizer about WABA’s Vision Zero work and their Advocates for Safe Streets group, which will be active in Wards 4, 7 and 8.
- The Council was briefed by an attorney in private practice who handles cases involving pedestrians injured on sidewalks and in crashes about the types of issues he sees and his recommendations for improvement of the District’s handling of sidewalk maintenance issues.
- Council representatives regularly attended all monthly meetings of the Major Crash Review Task Force and provided significant assistance in drafting and finalizing the Task Force’s first annual report, which was submitted to the D.C. Council in July 2019. As part of our work on the Task Force, we also have spent significant time analyzing the available crash data and have provided feedback to the Office of the Chief Technology Officer and DDOT concerning problematic data.
- Council representatives attended meetings of the Vision Zero Omnibus Summer Working Group and provided input on the bill’s provisions and additional proposals discussed during the meetings.
- The Council analyzed and developed positions on B23-288 (the Vision Zero Enhancement Omnibus Amendment Act of 2019), B23-292 (the Curb Extensions Act of

2019), B23-257 (the Mandatory Protected Cycling Lane Amendment Act of 2019), B23-359 (the Electric Mobility Devices Amendment Act of 2019), and B23-405 (the Motor Vehicle Insurance Modernization Amendment Act of 2019). (Our testimony and extensive written statement were submitted to the D.C. Council during FY 2020, but much of our work on and discussion of these bills was done during FY 2019.)

- Individual Council members attended DDOT’s “high crash” intersection visits to the extent possible, as well as DDOT meetings/open houses on planned improvements for the District’s streets (including Florida Avenue NE and Alabama Avenue SE) and provided informal feedback to DDOT staff.

5. Please describe the Council’s three biggest accomplishments in FY 2019.

Response: The Council’s three biggest accomplishments in FY 2019 were:

- Providing substantive formal comments and testimony to the D.C. Council on pending legislation (Health Impact Assessment Program Establishment Act of 2019, Autonomous Vehicle Amendment Act of 2019, and Autonomous Vehicles Testing Program Amendment Act of 2019), as well as during the budget oversight process.
- Analyzing and participating in the Committee’s informal Summer 2019 task force discussions of the Vision Zero Omnibus Enhancement Amendment Act.
- Creating public awareness about pedestrian safety issues by meeting with District agency representatives, members of the public, and sharing information via social media.

6. Please describe the state of pedestrian safety in the District.

Response: We are heartened by the steps DDOT and other agencies have taken to improve pedestrian safety and accessibility in the District, many of which are described in DDOT’s first bi-annual report on Improving Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety (July 2019). In particular, DDOT has been increasing use of leading pedestrian intervals, “No Turn on Red” signs, rapid rectangular flashing beacons, left-turn hardening infrastructure, and various “tactical urbanism” efforts to calm vehicle traffic. These are all great steps forward in increasing safety and accessibility for pedestrians, as well as other travelers.

Despite these steps, however, we obviously are discouraged by the news earlier this month that there already have been four traffic fatalities, including two pedestrians, in 2020. Pedestrian fatalities in the District fell from 14 in 2018 to 12 in 2019 and that is welcome news. Looking solely at fatalities from one year to the next, however, does not provide a complete picture. As we discuss in our more detailed response to Question 10, it is difficult to gauge whether long-term pedestrian safety from traffic crashes is increasing, decreasing, or remaining stagnant. We are cautiously hopeful that the decline we are seeing this year will continue.

The PAC also continues to be concerned about the District's snow removal process and other impediments to pedestrian infrastructure. Some of the issues we have discussed with the D.C. Council, DDOT, and other agencies over the past year include ongoing issues with access to sidewalks, crosswalks and curb ramps during and after snowstorms; delayed sidewalk repairs, scooters and other objects (e.g. cars, garbage cans, shrubbery) blocking sidewalks and curb ramps; motor vehicle speeds; and pedestrian signal timing that is too short and/or erratic. We would like to see District agencies become more proactive and focused in addressing these issues.

7. Please describe the Council's goals for FY 2020 and the plan/timeline for completion.

Response: The Council's goals for FY 2020 are below. Unless otherwise noted, these activities are ongoing and include:

- Contribute comments to the D.C. Council, DDOT, and other relevant agencies on proposed legislation, rules, and policies.
- Hold at least one joint meeting with the Bicycle Advisory Council and DDOT Director Jeff Marootian to discuss issues of mutual interest. Timeline: Meeting held October 2019. Followup will be ongoing.
- Monitor DDOT's progress in implementing its new traffic safety assessment process.
- Continue to follow and advise DDOT regarding sidewalk and crosswalk repair and maintenance, responsiveness to 311 requests, comprehensive and timely enforcement of Safe Accommodations requirements, implementation of requirements for dockless vehicles, and automated traffic enforcement.
- Continue to follow and advise DDOT and other responsible agencies about the Vision Zero program.
- Continue to follow the Comprehensive Plan amendment process.
- Work throughout the year to increase public awareness of pedestrian safety and accessibility issues through testimony at Council hearings, participation in public discussions on pedestrian safety and accessibility issues, and posting information on the PAC website.
- Participate in the budget process for DDOT and other agencies with responsibility for pedestrian safety and accessibility.
- Research and review pedestrian signal timing issues more thoroughly and, as appropriate, develop a legislative or policy proposal to ensure that pedestrian signals are timed to meet the needs of all pedestrians and/or that other accommodations are made.
- Actively participate in the Major Crash Review Task Force and work with other Task Force members to fulfill its mission.

8. What challenges does the Council face, if any?

Response: Attendance at Council meetings improved significantly in FY19, which has enabled us to be more active than we have in the past, although we currently are still missing participants from the Department of Parks and Recreation, DC Public Schools, and Ward 7. Still, as with many other largely-volunteer organizations, it is sometimes difficult for members to commit as much time as we would like to achieving our goals. In addition, although DDOT and MPD, as regular participants in our meetings, are generally responsive to our requests for information, other agencies are often slower to respond and require repeated efforts. Finally, we have encountered some challenges with respect to timely payments to our administrative staff. The District's Office of the Chief Financial Officer (OCFO) requires the Council to compensate our administrative staff via checks that are mailed by the OCFO to the PAC Treasurer. These checks are often delayed in the mail, are lost in the mail, or are delayed because of staff travel. Ensuring quick payment can often cause the PAC Treasurer to spend unwarranted time obtaining and delivering checks. The use of checks to compensate administrative staff places and the undue burden on the PAC Treasurer and a financial burden on administrative staff given checks are often delayed.

9. Please provide a copy of all official correspondence sent by the Council in FY 2019 and FY 2020 to date.

Response: The Resources page of the Council's website contains all of our testimony, letters, resolutions and other correspondence. Documents sent by the Council in FY2019 and FY2020 to date are listed and linked below:

- [January 2020 Letter to DDOT Regarding FY '21 Budget Recommendations \(January 2, 2020\)](#)
- [Comment on the Electric Mobility Devices Amendment Act of 2019 \(Nov. 4, 2019\)](#)
- [Comment on the Motor Vehicle Insurance Modernization Amendment Act of 2019 \(Oct. 28, 2019\)](#)
- [Comment on the Ignition Interlock Program Amendment Act \(Oct. 24, 2019\)](#)
- [Testimony at Vision Zero Hearing \(Oct. 24, 2019\)](#)
- [Comment on Autonomous Vehicle Legislation \(July 16, 2019\)](#)
- [Comment on the Health Impact Assessment Program Establishment Act of 2019 \(May 9, 2019\)](#)
- [Fire/EMS Budget Hearing Testimony \(April 24, 2019\)](#)
- [DDOT Budget Hearing Testimony \(April 11, 2019\)](#)
- [MPD Budget Hearing Testimony \(March 27, 2019\)](#)
- [Oversight Hearing Testimony \(Feb. 25, 2019\)](#)
- [Oversight Hearing Responses \(FY 2018\)](#)
- [Testimony at Automated Vehicles Roundtable \(Jan. 31, 2019\)](#)

10. What are the Council’s opinions on the progress of the Mayor’s Vision Zero program in FY 2019, specifically as it relates to pedestrians?

Response: Vision Zero calls for reducing traffic fatalities and serious injuries to zero. In the approximately four years since Mayor Bowser announced the District’s commitment to Vision Zero in February 2015, both overall traffic fatalities and pedestrian fatalities have fluctuated from year to year, with pedestrian fatalities in 2019 being lower than in 2015 (but higher than in 2016-2017):

	<u>2015</u>	<u>2016</u>	<u>2017</u>	<u>2018</u>	<u>2019</u>
Total Traffic Fatalities	26	28	30	36	27
Pedestrian Fatalities	15	9	11	14	12

Source: MPD data (<https://mpdc.dc.gov/page/traffic-fatalities>) and information provided by the Office of the Deputy Mayor for Operations and Infrastructure. (These figures reflect calendar year data.)

It also is important to note, in considering the success of Vision Zero, that although pedestrian fatalities have decreased, overall fatalities have increased since 2015, notwithstanding the significant drop from 2018 to 2019.

Looking at fatalities in isolation, however, does not give a full picture. It also is important to look at serious injury data because Vision Zero calls for reducing *both* fatalities and serious injuries to zero. Unfortunately, as we have discussed with the Committee previously (see our [September 2018 PAC Vision Zero Roundtable Testimony](#)), it is much more difficult to find reliable information about injury numbers. The most recent official DDOT report with “serious injury” data appears to be the District’s [FY2017 Annual Report to the National Highway Safety Traffic Safety Administration](#), which shows serious injuries to pedestrian rising from 370 in FY2015 to 516 in FY2017 (see page 7). The District’s [FY 2020 Highway Safety Plan](#) shows 528 total pedestrian injuries for FY2018 (see page 71) but it is unclear whether this total includes non-serious injuries along with serious injuries.

For public injury data for 2019, the only option available appears to be the DC Opendata [Crashes-in-DC](#) site.² This site provides raw data and, as we have pointed out previously, is not 100% reliable in our experience (though we acknowledge that OCTO and DDOT have been working hard to improve reliability). This dataset shows both “major” and “minor” injuries, which makes

² Differences between the 2015-2018 information from Opendata’s Crashes-in-DC dataset and the 2015-2018 data from DDOT’s reports may be due to the MPD procedural and training changes discussed in the reports, errors in the Opendata information, and/or use of calendar year information in Opendata. The overall trends, however, should be comparable.

comparisons to the “serious injury” data in the FY17 Annual Report problematic -- as that report indicates, “serious injuries” also may include some non-disabling injuries (see page 6) and those may be classified as “minor” in the Crashes-in-DC dataset because of changes to MPD’s crash reporting procedures in late 2015. With those caveats in mind: As of January 5, 2020, the available Opendata Crashes-in-DC information appears to indicate that total pedestrian injuries may have finally fallen this year, after rising steadily from 2015 to 2019 (but remain higher than when the Vision Zero program launched in 2015):

	<u>2015</u>	<u>2016</u>	<u>2017</u>	<u>2018</u>	<u>2019</u>
Total Pedestrian Injuries	783	827	950	1002	925
“Major” Pedestrian Injuries	200	122	120	123	122
“Minor” Pedestrian Injuries	583	705	830	879	803

“Major” pedestrian injuries fell in 2015 and have remained in the 120-123 range since then. Minor injuries increased from 2015-2018 and appear to have fallen slightly in 2019 -- but, again, are higher than they were in 2015. As noted above, the “minor” injury category includes some serious injuries and it is impossible to tell how many minor injuries fall into the “serious” category or whether injuries previously classified as “major” have now been recategorized as “minor” but serious. At any rate, total pedestrian injuries appear to have increased from 2015-2018 and to have fallen in 2019. The earlier increase is disturbing; the recent decrease is good news, but represents only one year of raw data.

Consequently, at the end of the day, we are cautiously optimistic but reiterate -- as we have said before: Effective implementation of Vision Zero requires a fundamental, systemic paradigm shift. It is necessary to reconsider the traditional engineering standards that have guided road design for decades. Our streets must be designed to protect everyone from death and serious injury, even if this means that people driving will not be able to travel as quickly or conveniently as accustomed. We hope that DDOT’s forthcoming “Vision Zero 2.0” plan will reflect this needed change and will continue to monitor the District’s implementation.

11. Please provide an update on the status of the Council’s goals as identified in last year’s oversight responses, including what action, if any, both the District and the Council took on them in FY 2019 and FY 2020, to date. [*They are listed below*].

Analyzing the topic of autonomous vehicles and considering and responding to legislative proposals.

Response: PAC members participated in DMPED-hosted meetings of the Autonomous Vehicles Working Group. The PAC also made recommendations to the D.C. Council regarding the Autonomous Vehicle Amendment Act of 2019 (B23-0248) and the Autonomous Vehicles Testing Program Amendment Act of 2019 (B23-0232).

Monitoring DDOT's progress in revising its traffic calming policy and providing input once the new policy becomes available for review.

Response: DDOT issued its new Traffic Safety Assessment form and process this year, which reflected the Council's input. (As noted above, we had informally recommended that the process not require endorsement by a public official such as an ANC Commissioner. The final form and instructions indicate that a letter from the requester's ANC Commissioner "is requested" but not required.) Our current understanding is that no further revisions are contemplated. During FY 2020, our attention will turn to reviewing and discussing DDOT's implementation of the new process.

Actively participating in the Major Crash Review Task Force and giving input to maximize its effectiveness.

Response: Council Co-Chair and Ward 3 representative, Eileen McCarthy, represents the Council on the Task Force; Ameen Beale (Ward 8) is the designated alternate. McCarthy and/or Beale have attended every Task Force meeting and McCarthy provided extensive drafting assistance to DDOT on the Task Force's first annual report, which was submitted to the D.C. Council in July 2019. The Task Force continues to meet monthly, usually on the last Wednesday of the month. With input from other DCPAC members, McCarthy developed a template that she initially created for her own and Beale's use as the Pedestrian Advisory Council representatives. The template, however, has evolved and expanded over time to include additional information and is being used by other Task Force members as well.

Continuing to follow and advise about the Vision Zero program.

Response: The Council met with Linda Bailey, the head of DDOT's Vision Zero office, in March 2019 to discuss her plans for Vision Zero. She and her staff are working on a "Vision Zero 2.0" plan and we have invited her to brief us as soon as the plan is ready. During or after that briefing, we will provide our comments and any recommendations to her. In addition, the Council Co-Chair and the Chair of the Bicycle Advisory Council requested the opportunity to attend a meeting of the Mayor's Interagency Vision Zero Task Force and we have been invited to the January 31, 2020 meeting.

Continuing to follow the Comprehensive Plan amendment process.

Response: In October 2019, the Office of Planning (OP) published a document making recommendations to the Council on proposed Comp Plan amendments. Of the 39 Comp Plan amendments proposed by the Council, OP recommended that 24 be incorporated or incorporated with modification. The Council will follow up with OP about the proposed amendments not recommended for approval, as well as developments for the Comp Plan.

Continuing to work with MPD and DDOT on officer enforcement, particularly in the spring and fall during the Street Smart campaigns.

Response: DDOT briefed the Council on the Fall and Spring Street Smart campaigns. We provided some informal input. This is an ongoing activity.

Continuing to work with MPD and DDOT on possible ways to improve the effectiveness of the automated enforcement program.

Response: Due to both member time constraints and the ongoing uncertainty about which agency is administering the automated enforcement program and how it will be administered, the Council did not undertake any activity during FY 2019.

Working throughout the year to increase public awareness of pedestrian safety issues through testimony at Council hearings, participation in public discussions on pedestrian safety issues, and posting information on the PAC website.

Response: This is an ongoing task, as the Council continues to attend D.C. Council hearings, public meetings, and otherwise participate in public discussions on pedestrian safety and accessibility issues. We have provided links to all of our written comments and testimony in our response to Question 9.

Participate in the budget process for DDOT and other agencies that impact pedestrian safety.

Response: The Council was briefed in January 2019 on both the Council's and DDOT's budget processes. We then participated in the FY 2019 budget hearings for DDOT, MPD and Fire/EMS. We also informally discussed DDOT's FY 2020 budget in October with the DDOT Director and, earlier this month, sent a letter to DDOT Director Marootian with our recommendations for DDOT's FY 2020 budget. Our response to Question 9 includes links to our testimonies and letter, which explored sidewalk repair and maintenance; the need for DDOT to become more proactive in identifying and addressing problems, rather than relying as heavily upon 311 and other complaints; and the importance of connecting automated enforcement revenue to safety improvements. We also urged the D.C. Council and Fire/EMS to move toward acquiring the smallest vehicles possible that can meet the District's emergency response needs. All documents we have submitted also are published on the [Resources](#) page on the Council's website.

Contribute comments to the D.C. Council and DDOT on proposed legislation, rules, and policies.

Response: The Council provided comments to the D.C. Council on twelve occasions on a variety of subjects, including dockless vehicles, motor vehicle insurance requirements, the ignition interlock program, Vision Zero, automated and autonomous vehicles, health impact assessments, and budget and performance oversight. Our response to Question 9 includes links to our

testimonies and other comments. In addition, all documents we have submitted are published on the [Resources](#) page on the Council's website.

12. Please identify the Council's top recommendations for the District's priorities related to pedestrian safety in FY 2020.

Response: The Council's top recommendations for the District's priorities related to pedestrian safety in FY 2019 are:

- The District, especially DDOT, must commit to the fundamental, paradigm shift that is needed to meet the District's Vision Zero goals, including a commitment to reducing vehicle speeds whether via adoption of reduced speed limits via legislation (as proposed by B23-0288, the Vision Zero Enhancement Omnibus Amendment Act of 2019) and/or via adoption of the "Safe Systems" approach to speed and street design, as previously recommended by the Council in our [September 2018 Vision Zero Roundtable Testimony](#).
- District agencies, especially DDOT, must become more proactive in addressing pedestrian infrastructure issues, including ensuring that accessible sidewalks and crosswalks are installed, maintained, and rehabilitated on a regular schedule, rather than relying as heavily on 311 reports.
- We need more rigorous compliance with, enforcement of, and education about "Safe Accommodations" requirements, as well as regulations governing dockless and other vehicles or objects parked in or encroaching on public space.
- Committing to full implementation of the Bicycle and Pedestrian Safety Act of 2016, including continued improvements to reliability of information available through the District's Opendata website and implementation of pedestrian and bicycle priority areas.

13. Please provide any additional recommendations for how the District government can further improve pedestrian safety.

Response: DDOT and other involved agencies need both community and -- more important -- political support in order to make the institutional and environmental changes necessary to transforming our city into a place where everyone, regardless of means, can travel safely.