

**GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA**  
**ADVISORY NEIGHBORHOOD COMMISSION 3B**  
**GLOVER PARK AND CATHEDRAL HEIGHTS**



September 9, 2021

Mr. Everett Lott  
Director  
District Department of Transportation  
250 M Street SE  
Washington, DC 20003

Dear Mr. Lott:

Our Advisory Neighborhood Commission appreciates the work of DDOT's Bike Program Analysts and the Active Transportation Branch to evaluate options for improving safety and mobility on the New Mexico Avenue/Tunlaw Road/37<sup>th</sup> Street. That corridor runs the length of ANC3B and plays an important role in meeting a wide range of transportation needs and interests in our area.

DDOT has presented several diagrams of potential designs for bicycle facilities on the corridor through the earlier months of 2021, and has requested feedback from the public on prospective alternatives, as part of a Community Engagement Process. In February the Commissioners sent a letter to DDOT asking for additional study of existing use patterns on the corridor and analysis of likely effects of various changes, including effects on key transit services, pedestrian safety and mobility, deliveries and pick-ups/drop-offs, and other motor vehicle use as well as parking. DDOT did not respond directly, but later in the spring, the ANC submitted to DDOT a short list of requests for specific data, most of which DDOT has provided.

DDOT made a second presentation to ANC3B at our July 15 public meeting, but had not yet developed fuller descriptions of the alternatives it was or would be considering. In that meeting, the DDOT team committed to completing a new analysis of the traffic in major segments of the corridor and also coming back to the community and ANC3B this fall with more details on what they are thinking about for improved bike facilities on the corridor and getting more comments. We are looking forward to those steps, before DDOT moves to select an actual proposal and prepare a Notification of Intent and Public Comment Period.

The ANC3B Commissioners have not taken an official position on any alternatives to date, but we have been seeking comments from constituents and gathering information and perspectives. As DDOT continues to compile information and evaluate public comments submitted to date, we would like to share key points we have put together related to potential bike facilities and their effects on mobility and safety on the corridor.

Like most residents, ANC Commissioners care about:

- Safety for everyone who uses or is affected by the transportation system;
- Effective use of public space including streets, sidewalks and curbsides;
- Improved bus service to the Commission area, which is highly dependent on buses for public transportation;
- Safer crosswalks for pedestrians, bicyclists, and others, such as through improved signage to announce approaching crossing points, high-visibility crosswalks, curb extensions or pedestrian islands, potentially stop signs at additional intersections, and enforcement of traffic speeds and other regulations;
- Adequate space at curbside for package deliveries, pick-ups and drop-offs, and parking for residents, visitors and those providing essential services such as contractors, health aides, and household goods movers.

Based on those priority interests, it would be useful if DDOT would:

- Undertake targeted safety improvements at intersections on the corridor in ANC3B, notably at Tunlaw and 42<sup>nd</sup> Street, Tunlaw and Fulton, Tunlaw and Davis Place, Tunlaw and Calvert, and Tunlaw at 37<sup>th</sup> Street;
- Install better signage on Tunlaw and on 37<sup>th</sup> Street south of Calvert, to alert drivers about the existence of the bike route as well as speed limits and approaching intersections, crosswalks, and driveways;
- Support continued and expanded Metrobus and Circulator service to Glover Park and Cathedral Heights and surrounding neighborhoods;
- Preserve curbside space needed for local residents, visitors, employees and service workers to park and handle deliveries, pick-ups and drop-offs;
- Work with the ANC to bring sidewalks along Tunlaw Road north of Calvert up to standards. In particular, we would like to see resumed discussions with Pepco about consolidating or moving power lines and relocating utility poles that block passage for pedestrians on many of the sidewalks between 39<sup>th</sup> and Calvert Street;
- Do not install a two-way protected bike lane along the north/east side of Tunlaw Road north of Calvert Street. Having bicyclists crossing the intersecting streets and driveways from two directions, where there is limited sight distance, would introduce too many safety risks for bicyclists and motorists.

South of Calvert Street, we have not seen any proposed changes in the configuration of bike facilities on the corridor that appear to be practical or feasible. The two potential designs DDOT has presented as the primary options would remove all existing on-street parking spaces on the corridor along Tunlaw Road and 37<sup>th</sup> Street south of Calvert Street. That has raised serious concerns on the part of the large majority of residents who have shared comments with us from those blocks, where there are more than 170 houses, most of them attached or row houses. Many of those houses do not have off-street parking or enough spaces to accommodate the private motor vehicles of the property owners and/or tenants. DDOT has not proposed practical solutions to meet demands for parking or curbside deliveries to those homes, which would not have any street parking if the proposals were adopted.

Though DDOT has not provided sufficient details on possible changes to the bicycle facilities to allow the public to develop a full understanding of how they would work, the Commission has collected comments from the community, including more than 200 responses received online in June and July.

We have received numerous requests from constituents related to the proposals for the corridor, including to:

- Ensure that all modes of transportation work together effectively and provide safe, efficient alternatives that serve people of all ages and needs for all trip purposes in the Commission area.
- Increase the frequency of bus services to interior Glover Park and Cathedral Heights, including on and near the New Mexico/Tunlaw/37<sup>th</sup> corridor, as an important part of achieving the District's goals to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, raise the share of commuter trips on public transit to 50% by 2032, and decrease reliance on private automobiles.
- Provide safe options for students to get to local schools, including Stoddert Elementary and Hardy Middle School.

- Maintain on-street parking in front of residences on Tunlaw and 37<sup>th</sup> Street in ANC3B for daytime resident and visitor parking, pick-ups/drop-offs, deliveries, and service workers on at least one side of the street.
- Preserve overnight parking for residents, which is generally in extremely short supply after 9 pm in the ANC3B area.
- Maintain as many as possible of the RPP spaces along the corridor for use by residents during the day.
- Retain as many as possible of the unregulated parking spaces on the north/east side of Tunlaw Road north of Calvert Street, which are heavily used by workers in the Glover Park commercial area who do not have access to any other unregulated parking in the community and cannot use RPP spaces when the employees are working lengthy shifts through the day and into the evening. Particularly in the first block of Tunlaw north of Calvert Street, that unregulated parking was one of the main solutions to the chronic parking challenges in the commercial district that identified in DDOT's 2007 Glover Park Transportation Study, and the parking remains important for sustaining workers and local businesses.
- Improve protection for bicyclists on the corridor where traffic volumes are the highest and traffic speeds are 25 mph or over.
- Extend the climbing lane on Tunlaw between 39<sup>th</sup> and Calvert Street so it covers the entire hill and curve.

Those are important values and objectives. We hope DDOT is also paying close attention to the public comments in preparing the next materials to present to the community.

We urge that DDOT take the points from the Glover Park-Cathedral Heights community into careful consideration and return to the ANC in October with alternatives that balance those interests and meet community transportation goals.

We will be glad to meet with DDOT on this matter or answer any questions that you may have.

Thank you again.

Sincerely,



Brian Turmail  
Chairman

cc. Councilmember Mary Cheh  
George Branyan  
Mike Goodno  
Gilberto Solano  
Christian Piñeiro  
ANC3D  
ANC2E

This letter was approved by the Commission by a vote of 5<sup>0</sup> at a duly-noticed public meeting on September 9, 2021, at which a quorum was present. (Three of the five Commissioners constitute a quorum.) By the same vote, the Commission designated the Chairman or his designee to represent ANC3B on this matter.