D.C. Pedestrian Advisory Council
DRAFT Meeting Minutes
April 27, 2026 – 6:30 p.m.
Remote Public Meeting

Attendees
PAC Members: Paul Harrison, J.I. Swiderski, David Tumblin, Cheryle Adams, Joe Bishop-Henchman, Heather Foote
Agency Representatives: Karyn McAlister (DDOT), Sgt. Terry Thorne (MPD Traffic Enforcement Unit), Elizabeth Jo (Office of Planning)
Members of the Public: Abby Roth, Angelo Licastro, Oliver Schofield

Introductions and Call to Order
The meeting was called to order at approximately 6:34 p.m. Members, agency representatives, and members of the public introduced themselves and identified their affiliations.

Approval of the Agenda
PAC members approved the April 2026 meeting agenda by voice vote.

AGENCY REPORTS
Metropolitan Police Department (MPD): Sgt. Terry Thorne

Sgt. Terry Thorne provided updates regarding recent pedestrian fatalities and ongoing traffic enforcement efforts. He reported that one pedestrian fatality had occurred since the previous PAC meeting involving a pedestrian on a freeway ramp near Suitland Parkway and South Capitol Street.

According to Thorne, the pedestrian was struck while standing in a travel lane near a bend in the roadway that limited driver visibility. The driver involved was described as traveling cautiously and below the speed limit.

Thorne stated that this represented the third pedestrian fatality on a freeway corridor within approximately six months, which he described as highly unusual based on his experience in crash investigations. He indicated that impairment appeared to be a contributing factor in multiple incidents and that MPD continues to examine potential causes and prevention strategies.

Members discussed possible contributing factors, including impairment, freeway access, visibility limitations, and whether additional signage encouraging motorists to report pedestrians on freeway corridors might be beneficial. Thorne stated that MPD had no evidence suggesting the incidents involved intentional self-harm, though investigations remain ongoing.

Swiderski referenced an additional pedestrian fatality involving a hit-and-run crash near 23rd and L Streets NW. Thorne stated that the investigation remains active and that additional information could not yet be discussed publicly.

Thorne also reported that MPD continues coordinated enforcement efforts with the Department of Public Works to remove dangerous vehicles from District roadways. He described ongoing identification and towing of vehicles associated with excessive speeding, red-light violations, and repeated automated enforcement citations.

He further noted that MPD continues extensive impaired driving enforcement and officer training efforts, including monthly academy instruction and continuing education for active officers focused on impaired driving detection and enforcement.

District Department of Transportation (DDOT): Karyn McAlister

Karyn McAlister provided updates on active sidewalk gap projects and Safe Routes to School improvements across multiple wards.

McAlister reported substantial completion of a sidewalk project along Portal Drive in Ward 4 connecting East Beach Drive to 16th Street. She described the project as particularly challenging due to constrained right-of-way conditions between retaining walls and mature trees. DDOT utilized porous flexible pavement material in areas adjacent to critical tree root zones to preserve existing trees while maintaining pedestrian access.

McAlister also provided updates on ongoing sidewalk gap work along Massachusetts Avenue SE in Ward 7 near Fort Dupont Park. She explained that the project is intended to incrementally fill missing sidewalk segments and improve connections between existing sidewalks, parks, and transit access points over multiple construction phases. Additional updates included:

- sidewalk installation near Deanwood Metro and Kenilworth in Ward 7;
- construction along Raleigh Street SE in Ward 8 involving retaining walls, fencing adjustments, and grading challenges; and
- multiple Safe Routes to School projects involving raised crosswalks, thermoplastic pavement markings, daylighting treatments, and bicycle safety improvements near schools.

McAlister highlighted work at Columbia Heights Education Campus, Kramer Middle School, and Oyster-Adams Bilingual School, noting that warmer spring temperatures allow crews to resume thermoplastic pavement marking work and high-visibility crosswalk installation.

Foote raised concerns regarding limited public understanding of daylighting treatments and other pedestrian safety infrastructure. She suggested that DDOT and Safe Routes to School develop educational handouts or materials for students and families explaining the purpose of daylighting, flex posts, and related safety improvements.

McAlister agreed that additional educational materials could be beneficial and stated that staffing transitions within the Safe Routes to School program had delayed earlier efforts to advance the idea. She indicated the concept could be revisited once new staff are onboarded.

Swiderski noted that consultant teams working on Safe Routes to School projects already provide some educational outreach to school administrators and are developing additional parent-focused engagement materials, including surveys and QR-code signage associated with project kickoff efforts.

Adams raised concerns regarding tree roots causing sidewalk uplift near Jefferson Academy in Ward 6, creating accessibility and safety concerns for pedestrians. McAlister encouraged submission of a 311 request to ensure the condition enters DDOT's tracking and maintenance system and offered to follow up if the issue stalls administratively.

Harrison asked about contractor availability for sidewalk work following labor shortages discussed during prior meetings. McAlister stated that contractor availability has stabilized compared to the previous year, though maintaining a consistent pipeline of work remains important to retaining subcontractors and construction crews. McAlister also discussed the complexity of sidewalk projects, including permitting, homeowner coordination, erosion control review, and design constraints. Harrison requested future discussion regarding coordination between sidewalk work and other DDOT infrastructure programs such as stormwater retrofits and traffic calming projects.

Licastro raised questions regarding the effectiveness and design philosophy of daylighting treatments in Georgetown, particularly around loading behavior and short-term scooter parking near flex-post-protected areas. McAlister explained that daylighting infrastructure is intended to discourage parking near intersections while remaining traversable for emergency access if necessary.

Members discussed balancing operational flexibility with pedestrian visibility and safety objectives. Swiderski noted that bike racks are frequently incorporated into daylighting zones as an additional deterrent to vehicle parking.

Office of Planning (OP): Elizabeth Jo
Elizabeth Jo provided brief updates from the Office of Planning related to ongoing urban design and planning initiatives. Members discussed continuing interest in transportation-related planning coordination and future agency engagement opportunities.

<u>OLD BUSINESS</u>
Snow Response and Accessibility Follow-Up
Members briefly referenced ongoing concerns regarding snow clearance responsibilities and accessibility of curb ramps and pedestrian infrastructure during winter weather events. Follow-up with District agencies remains ongoing.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Members of the public participated throughout the meeting and engaged in discussion related to daylighting treatments, curbside behavior, pedestrian visibility, and neighborhood transportation conditions.

ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS

Next Meeting: The next PAC meeting is scheduled for May 2026.

Adjournment: The meeting adjourned following completion of agency reports, public discussion, and administrative business