



Celebrating
10 YEARS of
EXCELLENCE
District Department of Transportation



"During the past 10 years, DDOT has made significant strides toward making the District the prosperous, equitable, sustainable city I know it can be.

From increasing transportation options and improving the safety of our neighborhoods to maintaining our flourishing tree canopy and implementing innovative stormwater management solutions, DDOT has helped the District become a model of cutting-edge policies and practices in government and sustainability."

– **Vincent C. Gray**
Mayor, District of Columbia

d.

December 2012

As we stop to commemorate 10 years of hard work, dedication and success for the District Department of Transportation, we must recognize the essential role the agency has played in the development of the District during the past decade. We have experienced our first solid decade of population growth since World War II, but, of course, our city isn't getting any bigger physically. Accommodating this growth means using the space we have more efficiently and effectively to continue to draw businesses, residents and visitors to the District. Two major drivers of this growth have been the variety of transportation options and the sustainable, mixed-use, transit-accessible communities that DDOT has helped to develop and serve.

DDOT's accomplishments reach beyond the District's roads, bridges, sidewalks and alleyways. In my Vision for a Sustainable DC, I set a target of a 50% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions in the District by 2032, and an 80% reduction by 2050. I've also proposed a goal of enabling 70% of the District's landscape to filter or capture rainwater, improving the quality of our waterways and drinking water, and reducing the impact of development on the environment. DDOT has been, and will continue to be, integral in achieving these goals, as transportation is one of the main contributors to air and water pollution.

During the past 10 years, DDOT has made significant strides toward making the District the prosperous, equitable, sustainable city I know it can be. From increasing transportation options and improving the safety of our neighborhoods to maintaining our flourishing tree canopy and implementing innovative stormwater management solutions, DDOT has helped the District become a model of cutting-edge policies and practices in government and sustainability.

For DDOT's tireless contributions to making the District one of the best and most sustainable cities in the world, I say: congratulations on 10 years of exceptional service!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Vincent C. Gray". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a prominent "V" at the beginning.

Vincent C. Gray
Mayor, District of Columbia

Foreword from the Director

"Get it done." That's something you'll hear me say frequently, but it's not just a catch phrase. It's a mantra that drives all we do here at DDOT. It's an expression of the hard work and can-do attitude of our employees, past and present, all of whom have helped shape the agency into what it is today. For the past 10 years, DDOT has provided its employees with the proper tools and training, as well as a safe environment to "get it done." This book highlights and commemorates their accomplishments in pushing this agency and the District forward.

In addition to overviews of DDOT's achievements during the past 10 years, you'll find historical perspective pieces outlining how we got here. DDOT's success didn't happen overnight: the "History and Origins" chapter traces the agency's roots back to the 1820s. "Then and Now" segments provide a fascinating look into the past of the 11th Street Bridge, the DC Streetcar, and the revitalization of Columbia Heights.

You'll read personal stories from both DDOT employees and members of the community we serve. In the "DDOT Perspective" pieces, our employees share their stories about how their work impacts the residents, visitors and workers of the District. These stories come from employees like Antonio Morobel, a crossing guard who hasn't missed a day of work in nearly 20 years of serving the students of Thompson Elementary, and Frank Seales, who twice served as interim Director and helped write DDOT's charter. The "Local Perspective" sections reveal how DDOT's work has shaped communities, from ensuring safe travel to school for our students to driving economic growth through transportation investments.

We've accomplished a lot in 10 years, but we're not done yet. We must continue to provide first-rate customer service to the residents of the District, invest in our transportation system, develop sustainable communities and practices, and implement alternative transportation options in order to make DC a model transportation system for the world.

Let's get it done.



Terry Bellamy
Director, District Department of Transportation



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HISTORY & ORIGINS



Although the story of today's DDOT began in 2002, the agency's foundations were laid in the decades and centuries prior. The ever-changing environment of transportation and the District's governance have shaped the roles and responsibilities of the agency. Pierre L'Enfant's original vision for the city, the District's first council system, the Engineer Commissioners and the modern council-mayor system all played critical roles in the development of our transportation system.

From the dirt roads and canals of the 1820s to the development of the streetcar system in the 1870s, the rise of the automobile in the 1920s, and the inauguration of Metro service in the 1970s, transportation choices and policies have influenced the residential and commercial development of the District for two centuries.

In the early 19th century, roads in the District were largely unpaved and difficult to traverse. People moved along dirt roads by horse-drawn carriages or on foot. In 1830, nearly 90% of the District's 23,000 residents lived in the "Old City" south of Boundary St. (now Florida Ave.) or in Georgetown. The remainder of what is now Washington, DC was then Washington County, DC, a rural area dotted with estates and farmland. Goods and heavy loads were transported by canals, including the Chesapeake and Ohio (C&O) Canal and the Washington City Canal, which ran along the Mall and connected to the Potomac near the White House, and to the Anacostia at the Navy Yard.

When the Washington Branch of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad opened in 1835, the canals had outlived their effectiveness: rail had proven to be a viable transportation alternative. Public transportation at the time consisted of horse-drawn omnibuses, first on dirt roads, then later on rails. Given the unevenness of the city's roads and the elevation of outlying parts of the District, this early transit system was limited in its usefulness.

The first major development in transportation in the District came in 1888 with the introduction of the electric streetcar. Streetcars running on underground electrical conduits allowed the city to expand beyond its traditional boundary at Florida Ave. into "streetcar suburbs" like Columbia Heights, Cleveland Park, Brookland and Anacostia.

Left: Parking lot outside Wilson Building, ca. 1970

Engineer Commissioners. Transportation issues have been a major focus in District government for more than a century. In 1878, responsibility for the daily affairs of the District was given to a three-member Board of Commissioners. The board consisted of two commissioners appointed by the President and one commissioner from the United States Army Corps of Engineers. The "Engineer Commissioner" was charged with the maintenance and oversight of all of the District's infrastructure projects, including street cleaning, snow removal and maintenance and paving of roads. The Engineer Commissioner remained in charge of infrastructure projects in the District until the passage of the Home Rule Act in 1973, when the Board of Commissioners was abolished and replaced with an elected mayor and city council.

"When I came, the Director was a retired general from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers who ran the place like a military organization," recalls William McGuirk, who started with the agency just before the Engineer Commissioner system was eliminated. "It wasn't half bad because there was discipline and people were held accountable." Perhaps as a result of this discipline and accountability, the Engineer Commissioners helped advance a number of issues that would guide the development of the District for decades to come. Under the Engineer Commissioners, the District saw its first street master plan (1893), comprehensive zoning plan (1920) and comprehensive street lighting plan (1923). These plans are largely credited with preserving the Baroque aesthetic character of the city.



Southwest Washington, DC with Washington City Canal visible, ca. 1863 (photo from Library of Congress)

Developing the System. Streetcars enjoyed more than six decades as the primary form of transportation in Washington until the automobile revolution of the 1920s. During its prime, DC's streetcar system boasted more than 100 miles of track within the District and connections to the Maryland and Virginia suburbs. As the internal combustion engine was developed, buses began to replace streetcars, which required regular track maintenance and electrical work (at the streetcar companies' expense). The increasing affordability of cars allowed more people to live further from the urban core and decreased the use and effectiveness of streetcar lines.

Despite marking the beginning of the end of the streetcar era, the 1920s and 1930s were very important to transportation in the District. The District's roads struggled to handle the increased traffic caused by the city's exploding population, which had more than doubled over 30 years, growing to 450,000. As the federal city, Washington was not eligible for the Federal-Aid Highway Program as states were. The city had insufficient money in its General Fund to finance the road improvements necessary to accommodate the population increase. In 1924, the Board of Commissioners successfully lobbied Congress to allow the District to institute a two-cent per gallon gasoline tax that would be used exclusively for road maintenance. In 1938, the Federal-Aid Highway Act was amended, allowing the District access to the same pool of highway funds available to other states. As a result, the District's transportation system saw dramatic improvement in a short period of time.



15th St. at G St., ca. 1915

Rapid Progress. Funding from the gas tax and Federal-Aid Highway Program allowed both the agency and the system to achieve rapid progress. In 1932, the 19 divisions within the city's "Engineer Department" were reorganized, with DDOT's predecessor, the newly formed Department of Highways, assuming the transportation functions formerly split among eight divisions. Fewer than half of the District's 544 miles of road were paved with asphalt in 1924: by 1948, the Department had paved 980 miles of roads in Washington. In 1944, the Department introduced a cost-analysis system to all of its maintenance and construction projects.

Although auto use was increasing dramatically, alternate modes of transportation were immensely popular in the District in the 1940s. In 1940, one out of every seven District residents commuted to work on foot. In 1948, 38% of commute trips were taken by bus. An underground rail transit system was considered in 1942 but not recommended.

Perhaps prophetically, a publication much like this one from the Department of Highways in 1948 stressed the importance of continued investment in transit. "A vigorous program of improvement in addition to that heretofore undertaken in transit facilities and service must be made if the transit riding habit is to be encouraged and stimulated," the report cautioned. "If this is not achieved, then it is inevitable that Washingtonians will turn to private passenger cars in numbers and, thereby, produce traffic loads far in excess of existing street capacities."

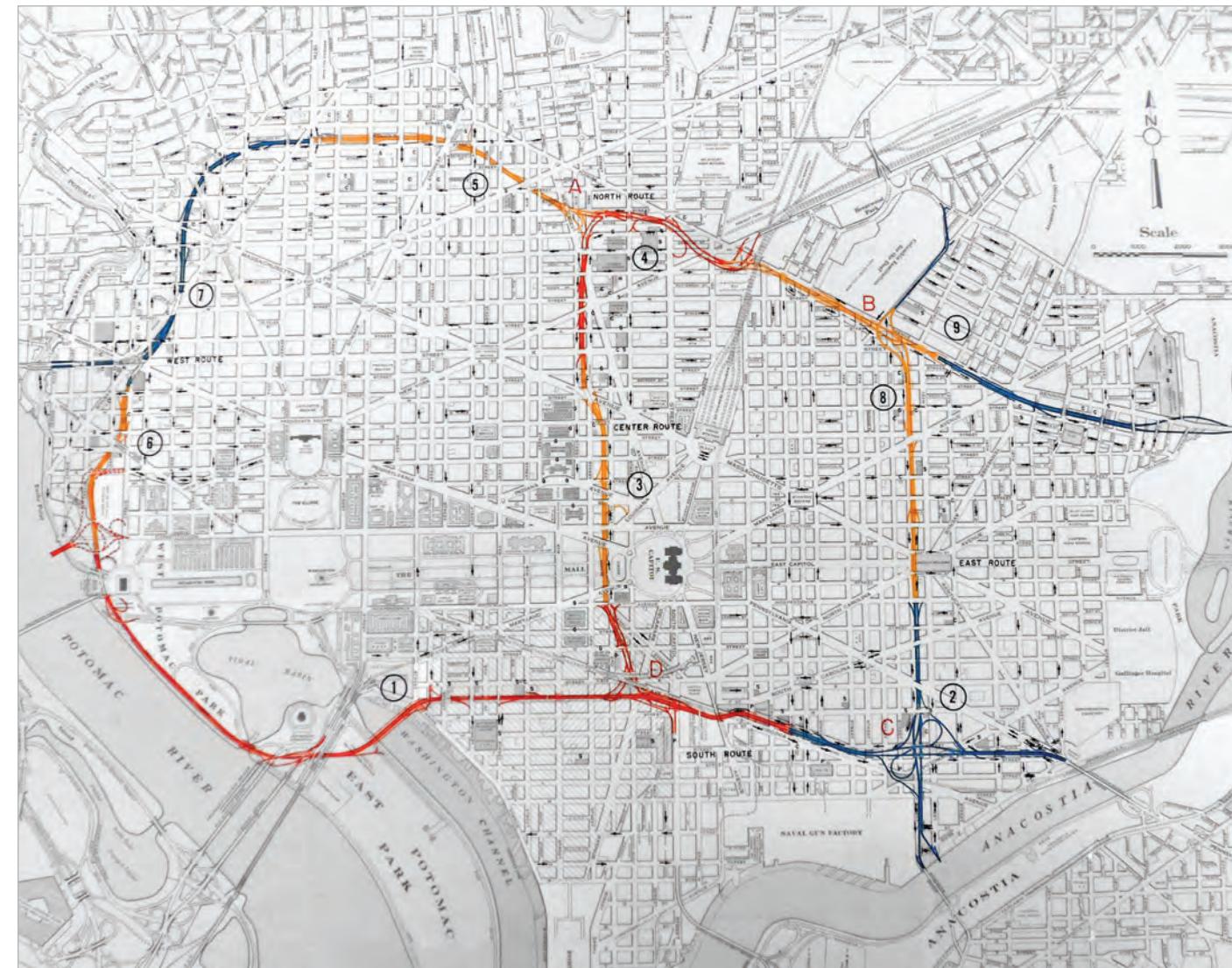


Traffic at 14th St. and Pennsylvania Ave., 1945

Population Decline and Metro. As World War II wound down and employment and residential centers developed in the Virginia and Maryland suburbs, residents started to move out of the city. The 1950s marked the first of five consecutive decades of population decline in the District. Workers living in the suburbs still needed ways to commute to the city, increasing the number of cars and buses on the District's roads. By the 1960s, it became obvious that the city's street grid could not support the increasing volume of commuter traffic.

At the time, two competing visions for increasing the capacity of the transportation system developed. One camp favored the development of numerous limited access expressways to channel traffic around the city's most congested areas. Planners developed a network of freeways through established neighborhoods across the District, including two additional beltways. Groups opposed to the freeway system advocated a subway transit system to alleviate congestion and preserve community links.

Although construction had already begun on segments of the freeway network, transit advocates were successful in blocking most of the expressway plans, and in 1965, Congress authorized \$431 million for development of an expandable 25-mile subway network. Ground was broken for the system in 1969 and Metrorail service began in 1976, offering a sustainable alternative to single-occupant vehicles and a complement to commuter buses in the District.



Engineering drawing for proposed DC Inner Loop freeway system, 1955

DDOT and the Superagency. By the time Metro service began, the Department of Highways had become the District Department of Transportation. In addition to its original responsibilities for planning, developing and maintaining the District's roadway network, the new Department of Transportation assumed responsibility for coordinating transportation activities with Metro, inspecting and registering vehicles, licensing motorists, enforcing parking regulations, and planning and implementing a bicycle network.

The first District Department of Transportation operated for only 10 years before being merged into the Department of Public Works (DPW), a new "superagency" formed in 1984 to assume the responsibilities of the Departments of Transportation, General Services and Environmental Services. Unfortunately, the responsibility for providing so many services, coupled with dwindling resources, forced DPW to prioritize its efforts, leaving parts of the District's infrastructure underdeveloped and largely forgotten.

"As the city spiraled into tougher and tougher financial times, the organization became increasingly focused on delivering on the responsibilities it had on a day-to-day basis, and that was picking up the trash," recalls Dan Tangherlini, first Director of the modern DDOT, and later DC City Administrator. "You had lost a focused, accountable attention to the transportation asset" when the superagency was formed. "We didn't have a meaningful continuing capital budget to make the kinds of replacements we needed to make." And it showed.

Potholes and Utility Cuts. By the late 1990s, the system had deteriorated to the brink of crisis. Although transportation functions had been consolidated into the Division of Transportation under DPW, the agency struggled to maintain the system. Potholes were rampant to the point of being sadly comical. "It was almost part of the fabric of the expectations of the city that if it weren't for the potholes, we weren't sure what was going to hold the streets together," half-jokes Tangherlini. Though problematic, potholes weren't the biggest nuisance on District roads.

As the digital age reached full swing, telecommunications companies began to cut trenches in streets to run data cable. Unfortunately, these street cuts were performed with little or no oversight or coordination. One company would cut the road to run cable, disrupting traffic along some of the District's busiest thoroughfares. "Two weeks later, another company would come and cut the same route," Tangherlini recalls. The seemingly endless road cuts demonstrated the need for a coordinated, accountable method for managing the public right-of-way.

In 2002, DDOT was remade into a cabinet-level agency with independent funding authority and accountability to the DC Council. "We were driven by this crisis to organize ourselves and then create some meaningful structures and policies around regulating the public right of way, recognizing it's the largest, most valuable asset the city owns, then treating it as an asset that needed to be maintained and invested in," says Tangherlini, who was instrumental in the formation of the new DDOT along with then Mayor Anthony Williams and Councilwoman Carol Schwartz.



DDOT established
May – DC Council passes the District Department of Transportation Establishment Act of 2002, creating a cabinet-level agency responsible for the management of transportation infrastructure and operations. Prior to the Act, transportation was managed under the Department of Public Works.

First director



November – Dan Tangherlini is confirmed by DC Council as DDOT's first director.

DDOT funds the addition of bike racks to all Metrobuses

New York Ave. Bridge widened and resurfaced



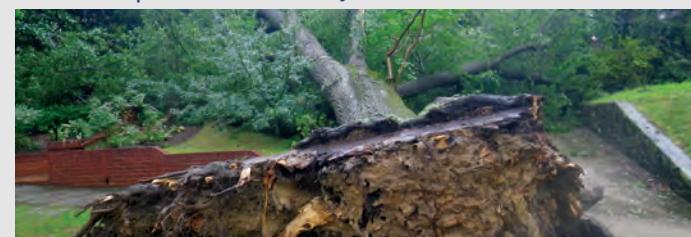
South Capitol Gateway and Corridor Improvement Study

September – Study lays the foundation for transportation projects along the Anacostia.

Urban Forest Preservation Act of 2002 passed

DDOT assumes lead in DC snow and ice removal program

DDOT responds to first major natural disaster



September – Hurricane Isabel downs thousands of trees and interrupts power service for days.

8th St./Barracks Row Streetscape



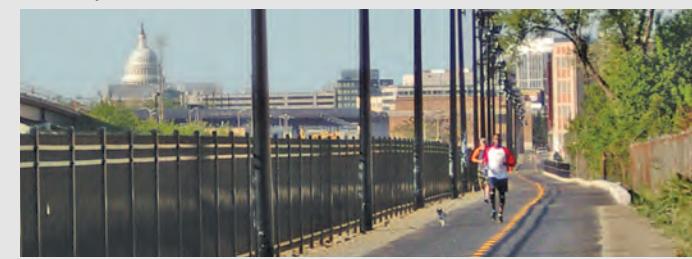
December – Streetscape and built environment improvements transform the corridor into a destination. The project is the seed for the Great Streets Initiative that revitalizes neighborhoods through transportation investment.

Streetcar Program begins



November – Plans to restore streetcar service to the District for the first time in 50 years are introduced along with a new streetcar order.

Metropolitan Branch Trail



November – Section of Metropolitan Branch Trail opens in conjunction with New York Ave. Metro station. The 8.25 mile trail stretches from Union Station to Silver Spring and, when completed, will include connections to the National Mall and the Northwest Branch and Capital Crescent trails, as well as various Metro stations and communities.

DC's Safe Routes to School program launched

Georgetown Project completed



July – The new agency completes the massive overhaul of road and utility infrastructure along M St. working closely with local electric, gas and telecom companies.

DC becomes largest U.S. city to convert all traffic signals to LED

DC Circulator launched

July – DC Circulator begins service, offering routes linking Georgetown to Union Station and the Convention Center to the Southwest Waterfront. The Circulator has since expanded to five routes and now serves stops east of the Anacostia and west of the Potomac.

Tree planting program doubles to 8,000/year



2002

2003

2004

2005

Exceeding Expectations. “Expectations were incredibly low for the new agency,” says Emeka Moneme, DDOT’s third Director, who also was involved in drafting the agency’s charter. Due to the poor condition of the transportation system prior to 2002, Congress had debated transferring control of the District’s roads to the federal government, questioning whether or not the District government could effectively manage such an important asset. “The importance of the provision of the transportation system got lost over time,” according to Michelle Pourciau, DDOT’s second Director. Given these common sentiments, it was clear that the new agency had its work cut out for it.

DDOT responded with excellence. “We wanted to make sure we were thinking beyond what people saw the agency doing traditionally,” Moneme says. Addressing the challenges of the District’s transportation system would take more than filling potholes and coordinating utility cuts. It would require a flexible, adaptable agency with the ability not only to react to changes in the environment of transportation, but also to anticipate changes. “We saw a lot of creativity and public sector entrepreneurship,” added Moneme. “It was in the DNA of the agency from the beginning.”

From its formation, DDOT was progressive and creative. “We took new and innovative funding to a whole new level,” recalls Pourciau. Within six years, the new agency had repaved more than half of the District’s roads, thanks in large part to the financial and organizational structures in place and the agency’s unique position as a city and state DOT.

A 21st Century Agency for a 21st Century City. The agency’s formation coincided with the beginning of the District’s first sustained population increase since the 1940s. Although the region had been growing consistently, most of the area’s new residents were settling in the Maryland and Virginia suburbs. “Before the formation of DDOT, we were really struggling with how to address the projected population growth in the region and how to compete for that growth,” Pourciau says. “If we couldn’t get more people to live in DC, our transportation system just couldn’t handle all of the long commutes. DC is pretty built-out. There’s just no room for new highways.”

As a result, DDOT had to find ways for the transportation system to accommodate current users, as well as attract new residents and businesses to the District. “We really tried to tie economic development to everything we did,” says Gabe Klein, the agency’s fourth Director. Through programs like Capital Bikeshare, DC Circulator, Great Streets and the Anacostia Waterfront Initiative, “DDOT was able to really show how infrastructure could shape communities,” according to Moneme.

During its brief history, the agency has made progress that 10 years ago would have seemed impossible. “We were able to elevate transportation as an issue,” states Klein. “We showed that DDOT is a world-class transportation agency that can handle mega projects. Few District agencies have done as much for the District as DDOT.”

Marvin Gaye Trail



April – Improvements on Watts Branch Trail, including trail reconstruction and widening, construction of a new bridge and lighting and landscaping are finalized. The trail is rededicated as Marvin Gaye Trail.

Taylor St. Bridge replacement completed
Southern Ave. Bridge replacement completed

goDCgo.com launched

July – goDCgo.com, DC’s transportation demand management website, is launched. The site currently features an interactive map of all modes, special event information, and resources for DC employers.



Frederick Douglass Bridge improvements



January – Construction begins on Frederick Douglass Bridge lowering. The project demolishes the raised viaduct along South Capitol St., providing better and safer bicycle and pedestrian access to new development in the Southeast Waterfront area and clearing the way for a bridge replacement within the decade.

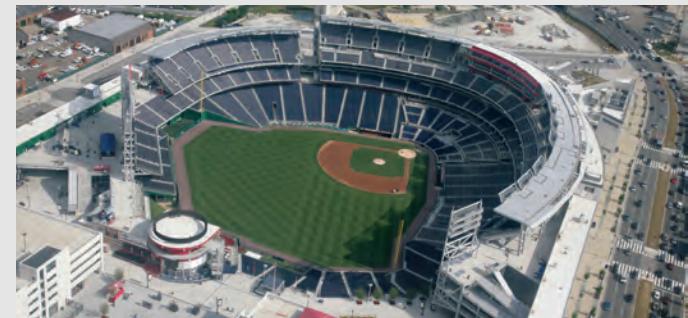
First Pedestrian Master Plan published

South Dakota Ave. Bridge replacement begins

Benning Rd. Great Streets project begins



Nationals Park opens



March – Infrastructure improvements, traffic management and parking plan are completed to support the new Nationals ballpark opening.

Bikesharing



August – DDOT opens Smartbike DC, the first bikesharing program of its kind in the nation and the predecessor to Capital Bikeshare.

H St. Great Streets project breaks ground

Anacostia Riverwalk Trail construction begins

Traffic control officer and school crossing guard programs transfer to DDOT

President Obama Inauguration

January – DDOT leads transportation planning, traffic operations and parade route preparation for largest event ever hosted in the District’s history.

First Potholepalooza



May – Since the month-long annual campaign to repair damaged roadways was launched, crews have filled more than 19,000 potholes across DC.

DC Circulator adds two new routes

DDOT broadens public outreach through Facebook and Twitter

Bikestation DC opens at Union Station



October – Bikestation offers protected parking for more than 100 bikes, a private changing room and day-use locker rentals next to the District’s busiest transit hub. The project receives the international Brunel Award for freight and rail support buildings.

2006

2007

2008

2009

Into the Future. As we progress through the 21st century, DDOT will continue to be a world-class transportation department and a model agency within the District government. Our workforce is highly skilled and adept at managing the challenges facing the transportation system and the agency. "We've come a long way in the last 10 years," says Terry Bellamy, DDOT's current Director. "Just in the two years that I've been Director, we've seen significant progress in landmark programs like pay-by-phone parking, Capital Bikeshare and the 11th Street Bridge project. But we're not done yet. In order to meet the needs of the District into the future, we need to keep working."

Mayor Gray's Vision for a Sustainable DC sets aggressive targets for greenhouse gas reductions and alternative transportation, and DDOT will play a leading role in helping the District achieve these ambitious goals. DDOT has made transportation improvements in underperforming neighborhoods across the District, but parts of the city still need infrastructure investments to thrive as sustainable, livable, connected communities. Traffic-related fatalities are down more than 50% since the agency's formation, but DDOT will continue to enhance the safety of our roads, sidewalks and crosswalks until they have reached zero.

DDOT has become known as a go-to agency within the District government and a national leader in innovative transportation programs, and will continue to lead the industry and the District for years to come.

DDOT Directors



Dan Tangherlini
2000-2006



Michelle Pourciau
2006-2007



Emeka Moneme
2007-2008



Gabe Klein
2008-2010



Terry Bellamy
2011-Present

Pennsylvania Ave. bike lanes open

Transportation Online Permitting system launched

Solar-powered parking meters introduced

Nannie Helen Burroughs Great Streets project begins

DC reaches 3% bike to work rate, the highest among East Coast cities

Columbia Heights Streetscape completed



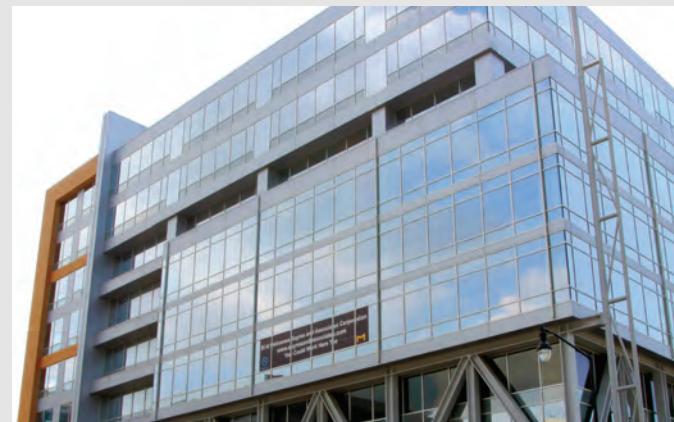
July – DDOT provided traffic and sidewalk improvements and constructed a fountain and plaza as part of the continued redevelopment of this historic neighborhood.

Countdown signals installed



December – Pedestrian countdown signals are fitted citywide, marking the largest U.S. deployment of such signals.

DDOT Headquarters moves



May – DDOT streamlines operations by co-locating headquarters at Navy Yard.

11th St. inbound replacement

December – The inbound freeway portion of the 11th St. Bridge opens to traffic. The first river bridge replacement in 40 years is the largest project ever constructed by DDOT and improves an important link between communities on both sides of the Anacostia.

Revitalization begins for O & P Streets, Adams Morgan Streetscape and Columbus Plaza

H St. NE Great Streets project and Old Market House Square renovation completed

New York Ave. NE Bridge reconstruction begins

LED alley lights pilot launched

Pay-by-phone parking introduced

Capital Bikeshare ridership reaches 2 million

May – With more than 1,200 bikes and expansion plans to other jurisdictions, the program has quickly become the largest bikesharing program in the U.S. since its launch in 2010.



Alliance for Biking and Walking rates DC No. 2 in U.S. cities

11th St. Bridge Opens



December – 11th St. Bridge replacement opens all new spans and ramps to traffic ahead of schedule

Pennsylvania Ave. Great Streets completed

March – Improvements make the corridor more visually appealing and safer for vehicular traffic and pedestrians.

Howard Theatre Streetscape completed



2010

2011

2012

SAFE PASSAGES



Safety is DDOT's top priority. Our commitment to ensuring the safety of all users across every mode of transportation drives everything we do. Engineering a safe transportation system, educating users on safe transportation practices, and enforcing traffic laws are three central tenets of DDOT's safety program.

One of DDOT's primary concerns is ensuring that the built environment of our transportation system is safe for all users. DDOT has installed bike lanes and easily visible crosswalks to make roads safer for bicyclists and pedestrians. We have invested more than \$350 million in bridge replacements and improvements during the past decade to ensure safe river crossing and enhance emergency evacuation routes. We use cutting-edge signal technology to calm traffic and reduce congestion for motorists. Our planners and engineers pay special attention to areas around schools and senior centers to ensure that sidewalks and crosswalks are visible, well-lit and maintained.

DDOT also works to ensure all users, especially the most vulnerable users, have the knowledge and skills needed to safely navigate our transportation system. We have been funding safety education in District schools since 2003. As part of their physical education curriculum, students in grades K-2 learn pedestrian safety skills and students in grades 3-8 learn bicycle safety. Teaching children to walk and bike safely not only allows them to be safer now, but also to build on these skills as they grow.

Schools are only one focus of our safety education program. DDOT partners with local jurisdictions, law enforcement agencies and national groups to promote roadway safety to the general public. We have implemented public education and enforcement campaigns aimed at reducing aggressive driving, increasing pedestrian awareness and safety, combating drunk driving, and ensuring motorists use seatbelts.

From project planning and design to operations and maintenance, safety is the overarching concern of all of DDOT's daily activities. As a result of our tireless efforts to improve the safety of the District's transportation system, we have seen a decline in traffic fatalities from 68 in 2001 to 32 in 2011, with a goal of reaching zero as soon as possible.

Left: photo by Christopher Quay



Traffic Calming and Signal Improvements. DDOT knows that alleviating congestion and improving the flow of vehicular and non-vehicular traffic are essential to maintain the safety and efficiency of our transportation system. We use cutting-edge technology to time our signals first for pedestrian traffic, then for vehicular movement. 56 miles of bike lanes, 12 miles of new and improved trails and more than 2,000 bicycle parking racks have been installed across the District during the past 10 years, increasing the safety and appeal of cycling around town. Raised crosswalks and intersections, pedestrian flashing beacons and leading pedestrian intervals improve the safety and visibility of pedestrians and slow vehicular traffic in heavy pedestrian areas. Because of DDOT's continued efforts, DC has one of the lowest traffic-related fatality rates in the country each year.

Livability Studies. In an effort to provide lasting and holistic solutions to transportation issues, DDOT has undertaken livability studies across the District. Livability studies take a big picture look at the street network in a study area and identify concrete actions to improve transportation safety and options. DDOT collects information on study areas from public meetings, field visits and data research to assess the interplay between transportation, public health, housing, cultural resources and the natural environment. A major component of the livability studies is to make specific recommendations to improve quality of life in the study area. These recommendations seek to expand neighborhood access to commercial areas, strengthen connections to the regional transportation network, and calm traffic in residential areas.

*Top: Pedestrian rapid flash beacon;
Bottom: DDOT worker installing bicycle pylon;
Right: Pedestrians using raised crosswalk on E. Capitol St. NE (photo by Brandon Soublet)*





Public Education and Outreach.

A major component of ensuring the safety of our transportation system is the education of all users. In addition to its safety education programs in District schools, DDOT also partners with local, regional and national agencies on traffic safety programs. DDOT has participated in Click It or Ticket, Smooth Operator, Distracted Driving, Street Smart, Work Zone Awareness, and Motorcycle Safety programs, and run numerous public service announcements promoting transportation best practices. In 2011, as part of Project Safe Child, DDOT provided more than 1,000 child safety seats to low-income families in the District.

When it comes to maintaining the safe and efficient operation of the District's thoroughfares, communication is a two-way street. Like most agencies, DDOT uses community meetings and traditional media outlets to communicate with the public. However, DDOT has been a leader in social media interaction since 2009. Twitter and Facebook not only allow DDOT to reach more users, but also allow us to receive and address concerns as they arise.

Crossing Guards and Traffic

Control Officers. Timed signals, raised crosswalks and bike lanes can only go so far in ensuring that our roadways operate smoothly and safely. DDOT's crossing guards and traffic control officers are our boots on the ground ensuring that traffic flows smoothly, intersections and bus stops are clear, and children and adults can cross busy corridors safely. Enforcement is essential to ensuring that all users follow traffic rules, and our traffic control officers have the power to issue tickets for parking and minor moving violations. In 2008, DDOT assumed control of the school crossing guard program, enhancing the linkages between traffic enforcement and safety education in our schools. School crossing guards offer not only safety enforcement, but also serve as positive role models for the District's students.



DDOT Perspective: Keeping Kids Safe

At the corner of 11th Street and Massachusetts Ave. in Northwest DC, one crossing guard has become an institution. Antonio Morrobel, a native of the Dominican Republic and long-time DC resident, has provided safe crossing for more than a generation of students at Thompson Elementary School.

"I love my job," said Morrobel. "I am able to be a daily part of some of these kids' lives, and hopefully a positive influence on them. After 20 years, some of the early children I knew have grown and now have kids of their own attending Thompson."

Antonio was one of 130 school crossing guards who transferred into DDOT from the Metropolitan Police Department in 2008 when responsibility for traffic control and safety at school crossings shifted to the young agency. Since that transition, DDOT has hired more than 70 new crossing guards to ensure that these important posts are manned every school day.

"Crossing guards are some of our most popular employees," said DDOT Director Terry Bellamy. "They represent a clear safety element for kids who are on their way to and from school, and in instances like Antonio's, some of our crossing guards have become ingrained members of their school's community. We're constantly hiring new crossing guards to keep up with the demand."



Safe Routes to School. DDOT's Safe Routes to School (SRTS) program works to make it safer, more convenient, and more fun for students to get to school on foot or by bicycle. Through Safe Routes to School, DDOT works with each participating school to develop a SRTS Action Plan that identifies barriers to safe biking and walking and develops specific recommendations for improving safety around the school. Although each school develops its own unique Action Plan, SRTS is often able to recommend common best practices. Schools without the broad-based community support required for an Action Plan can still reach out to DDOT's SRTS Coordinator for advice and recommendations regarding specific student transportation safety issues.

Many recommendations have no cost to implement: some participating schools have simply moved pick-up and drop-off areas to mitigate hazards around the school. For more complex recommendations, DDOT looks for ways to integrate the improvements into its routine operations and maintenance, or into existing or upcoming projects. Engineering recommendations from the E.L. Haynes Public Charter School Action Plan were incorporated into the Georgia Ave. Great Streets Project. Nearly 30 schools in the District have participated in the program to date. Although the program is focused on traditional public schools, DDOT has begun to work with private and charter schools to increase student safety.

Above: U.S. DOT Secretary Ray LaHood walks with students on International Walk to School Day;
Right: Murch Elementary School receives the 2009 Oberstar Safe Routes to School Award from Del. Eleanor Holmes-Norton and former Rep. James Oberstar

Local Perspective: Safe Routes to School

Jennifer Hefferan joined DDOT as its new Safe Routes to Schools (SRTS) Coordinator in 2009, following Congress' inclusion of the program in the 2008 SAFETEA-LU legislation. She works with SRTS teams comprised of parents, teachers/administrators, ANC Commissioners and other interested community members to help assess and address the barriers to safe biking and walking for each participating school.

"I help synthesize the team's assessment into a customized action plan built around 5 Es – Education, Enforcement, Encouragement, Engineering and Evaluation," said Hefferan. "But SRTS is truly a community-based initiative. The plans are only as good as the information that SRTS teams compile and are able to implement."

District schools participating in the program have seen visible success. Murch Elementary, one of the first schools to enter the program, was recognized with the 2009 James L. Oberstar Safe Routes to School Award based on its efforts to reverse a school policy that prohibited students from bicycling to school without special permission. The school also built community support for walking and bicycling to school.

"We realized that if we wanted to have our kids walk and bike more, we had to be more vocal," said Robin Schepper, the SRTS team lead at Murch in 2009. "In addition to overturning a long standing bike policy, we added two bike racks and, with DDOT's support, were able to get 1.5 miles of sidewalks installed. With SRTS, kids and families have a voice."

In 2011, SRTS supported the District's involvement in the first National Bike to School Day. More than 20 District schools participated, with many reporting more than 20% of students biking to school that day. Key Elementary reported the highest participation rate—22%—and received the Golden Bicycle Award.

"Participation has been amazing, especially when you consider DC has one of the highest bike-to-work rates at just 3%," commented Hefferan. "I hope we can continue to make progress," said Karen Kelliher, former SRTS team leader at Key. "Our school, our environment is not going to change. We have to change."



SUSTAINABLE LIVING



Sustainability in transportation reaches further than hybrid cars and LED traffic lights. Truly sustainable living involves reshaping our city and multi-modal transportation network to give residents and visitors choices outside of depending on cars. DDOT's commitment to sustainability goes beyond planning, development, implementation and maintenance of a multi-modal transportation system. We also work with community stakeholders, developers, transit providers and other city agencies to create complete, walkable communities that are transit-accessible and pedestrian- and bicycle-friendly.

Transit is one of the best alternatives to single-occupant vehicles: bus and rail can significantly reduce vehicle miles traveled, improving local air quality and conserving natural resources. In order for transit to be a viable alternative, it must be convenient, reliable and affordable. DDOT is at the forefront of encouraging mass transit. We have implemented bus service along underserved corridors and laid the tracks for returning streetcar service to the District for the first time in 50 years.

Sustainable communities allow District residents to work and play where they live, reducing the reliance on cars and improving local air quality. DDOT works with community groups, private interests, the DC Office of Planning and the Deputy Mayor's Office of Planning and Economic Development to support economic development while maintaining quality of life. By leveraging the resources of this diverse set of stakeholders, DDOT has been able to ensure the transportation network functions for all users.

DDOT has promoted environmental stewardship and reduced its own impact on the environment by implementing all-electronic permitting and ticketing systems, converting all traffic signals to energy-efficient LEDs, and installing solar-powered parking meters. In order to offset the impact of our transportation system on the environment, DDOT plants thousands of trees annually and implements innovative stormwater management solutions.

Mayor Gray's Vision for a Sustainable DC sets a target of at least 75% of trips in the District be made without a car by 2032, meaning DDOT must continue to improve. Continued residential and job growth creates new challenges and opportunities, and DDOT will continue to lead the way in promoting sustainable living.

Left: photo by Kevin Kovaleski, Flickr

Evolution of Transit. Since DDOT's establishment in 2002, the District has seen a shift in travel patterns. Reinvestment in walkable, complete communities and the expanded reach of transit have decreased reliance on vehicle ownership. DDOT has led this shift in personal transportation preferences by offering an expanding array of options, including such advances as crosstown bus service, citywide bike-sharing and on-street parking for car-sharing vehicles. We are in the process of restoring streetcar service to the District for the first time in half a century. As a result of these efforts, nearly 60% of commute trips and approximately 50% of all trips by District residents do not involve a car. DDOT works with users and operators of our transit system to identify needs and implement solutions that help us all move freely, efficiently and sustainably through our city.

Circulator. In July 2005, DDOT launched the DC Circulator, crosstown buses offering service every 10 minutes. The initial two routes linked Union Station to Georgetown and the Southwest Waterfront to the Convention Center. Since its inception, the Circulator has expanded to five routes, reaching east of the Anacostia and west of the Potomac, while maintaining the same \$1 fare. In 2011, more than 5.7 million rides were taken on the Circulator. With more service expansions planned and numerous new routes under development, the Circulator will continue to complement Metrobus, Metrorail and future DC Streetcar service. DDOT remains committed to expanding multi-modal transit offerings in the District, and the Circulator is a key part of our strategy.



Above (left to right): DDOT's first Director Dan Tangherlini, former Councilmembers Carol Schwartz and Linda Cropp, former Mayor Anthony Williams, Del. Eleanor Holmes-Norton, former National Capital Planning Commission Executive Director Patricia Gallagher and Ginger Laytham of Clyde's Restaurant Group mark the inauguration of Circulator service, July 2005





Biking Advancements. From funding bike racks on all Metrobuses in 2002 to developing and implementing the nation's largest bike-sharing program, DDOT has been a national leader in encouraging bicycle transportation. The District has among the highest bike-to-work rates in the nation, and now boasts more than 100 miles of bike lanes and multi-use trails. We have installed bike lanes, bike racks and bike boxes across the District to encourage cycling and improve bicycle safety. Capital Bikeshare celebrated its second anniversary in September 2012 and has already surpassed 3 million rides. In 2009, we opened Bikestation DC, the first facility of its kind on the East Coast, offering protected parking for more than 100 bikes, a private changing room, and day-use locker rentals, just outside Union Station. The project was honored with a Brunel Award, the rail industry's most prestigious international award, in the freight and rail support buildings category. DDOT is committed to encouraging bicycle travel and ensuring the safe, convenient and efficient movement of cyclists throughout the District.

goDCgo.com. One way DDOT encourages people to choose sustainable transportation alternatives is to educate and inform them of the myriad transportation options available in the District. The purpose of goDCgo is to provide residents, employees and visitors of the District with the information they need to make informed choices about traveling in the city. The site provides information on all modes of transportation, from bus and Metro to pedicabs and car sharing. It features an interactive map of bike lanes, trails, Capital Bikeshare locations, car sharing locations, and bus and Metro routes. The goDCgo team works with employers in the District to encourage employees to bike, walk, carpool or take transit to work. goDCgo is a concerted effort by DDOT to equip users of our transportation system with the tools they need to get around safely, efficiently and sustainably.



Local Perspective: Multimodalism

DDOT's advancements in multi-modal transportation have outpaced many of its peers' during the past decade. The District currently boasts the fifth highest bike-to-work rate in the U.S., as well as the nation's leading bike-sharing program, Capital Bikeshare, which reached more than 2.5 million rides in just two years of operation.

"In many ways this has been DDOT's decade," said Harriet Tregoning, Director of the DC Office of Planning. "DDOT has helped to make DC a place known for innovative transportation. It has enormously increased transportation choices and conveniences, and has made it possible to live in the District without an automobile. Developing 21st century cities isn't just about private investment. It's about what cities will do to make themselves more attractive places to live and work."

Tregoning sees many indicators of this success. Today only 65% of households in the District own even a single automobile and fewer than half of trips made by District residents involve a car. Vehicle registrations have not increased even as another 20,000 residents moved to DC.

"This has translated into DC residents enjoying the lowest transportation costs in our region and some of the lowest in the nation," according to Tregoning.

"It helps to make Washington, DC a more affordable place to live because housing and transportation costs are the two largest expenditures a typical household makes."

Left: Photo by Elvert Barnes, Flickr



Greening DDOT. During the past decade, DDOT has built sustainability into a broad range of activities. In 2005, we converted all of the traffic signals in the District to energy-efficient LED, making Washington the largest city in the nation to deploy this technology citywide. Our Green Alley projects replace impervious alley surfaces with permeable concrete, asphalt or brick pavement to help manage stormwater runoff. Last year, we piloted an LED street light campaign to improve the quality and energy efficiency of roadway, sidewalk and alley lighting in the District. Through our Transportation Online Permitting System, we have streamlined transportation permitting and eliminated paper waste created by hard-copy documents. In 2011, we moved our headquarters to a LEED-certified, Metro-accessible building near the Capital Riverfront, decreasing the resources expended in daily activities and reducing the need for employees to travel for meetings. All of these advances show that DDOT is not only committed to helping the District's residents, employees and visitors lead a greener lifestyle, but also to greening its own operations.

Urban Forestry. DDOT's Urban Forestry Administration (UFA) is tasked with the preservation and conservation of a full complement of street trees within the District of Columbia. UFA ensures that trees along the District's thoroughfares are nurtured in a safe and healthy environment – a requisite for a flourishing tree canopy. In addition to their aesthetic beauty and social benefits, our trees save residents an estimated \$361 million annually by removing air pollutants, defraying energy costs, and retaining storm water. In 2007, DDOT created Canopy Keepers, a tree adoption program where residents commit to providing weekly watering services to newly planted trees, a critical component of the initial two year growth span of a sapling. During the past decade, DDOT has planted thousands of trees to revitalize the District's tree canopy and provide more sustainable and aesthetically pleasing streetscapes.



DDOT Perspective: Management Modernization

When John Thomas, DDOT's Associate Director for Urban Forestry, joined the agency in 2001, there were more than 3,800 backlogged service requests for dead, dying or damaged trees. Today, DDOT is operating near a zero backlog for leafless, dead tree removal among its inventory of 140,000 street trees.

"Innovation has played a critical role in our evolution during the past decade," said Thomas. "When I started at DDOT, we used carbon copied handwritten contracts and nearly 900-1,000 employees were without email. Employees were scattered throughout the city, so collaboration across departments was manually intensive and time consuming."

As a young DOT, DDOT has, in many ways, skipped a generation in innovation moving beyond standard technology investments – cell phones and agency-wide email.

"Today, we are using industry-leading technologies at DDOT, such as our GIS-based asset management system, which streamlines communication, improves automation and efficiency of our street tree management efforts, and reduces maintenance costs," added Thomas. "As a result, we are better able today to provide the District's more than 600,000 residents and 17 million annual visitors with safer, more attractive and sustainable streets and neighborhoods."



Then and Now: DC Streetcar

For nearly 100 years, the primary mode of transit across our city was the streetcar. At one time boasting more than 100 miles of track in the District, the horse-drawn and electric streetcar systems provided crosstown links, as well as connections with Maryland and Virginia suburbs. Streetcars allowed the city to expand beyond its original northern boundary at Florida Ave. and spurred development along Georgia, Connecticut and Wisconsin Avenues.

Unfortunately, the high cost of maintaining the rail and electrical lines, coupled with increased auto ownership and the District's population decline spelled the end of the streetcar. In 1962, nearly 100 years after the Washington and Georgetown Railroad Company inaugurated service, Congress mandated that streetcars be replaced with buses.

The streetcar is coming back to DC as DDOT works to implement a 37-mile route network. With the increased focus on multi-modal transportation options, the streetcar has been revived as a complement to bus and Metro service. Fixed rail lines have demonstrated the ability to attract greater residential and commercial investment than bus service. In addition, parts of our Metrorail and bus systems are overly congested with even greater ridership projected in the future. Streetcars provide a modern, convenient and attractive transportation alternative for commuters, and DDOT is excited to make DC Streetcar a model for the nation.



CAPITAL ASSETS



Proper maintenance of the District's roads, bridges, sidewalks, bike lanes and alleyways is essential to providing a safe and efficient transportation system. DDOT spends more than two-thirds of its annual budget preserving more than \$44 billion worth of transportation infrastructure. From filling potholes and refreshing pavement markings to redesigning streetscapes and replacing bridges, DDOT is committed to ensuring all aspects of our transportation system are in good repair.

Regular maintenance of the District's 1,100 miles of streets, 7,770 intersections, and 202 bridges not only ensures the safety and comfort of users, but also helps to avoid costly replacement projects in the future. DDOT makes use of state-of-the-art technology and building materials to ensure that construction and renovation projects have the longest possible operational life. High-grade pavement and durable, ultra-reflective roadway marking materials make our streets safer and require less frequent maintenance. Sustainable design practices and tools allow us to plan and deliver projects that will have lower life-cycle maintenance costs.

When major replacement projects are necessary, DDOT leverages all available funding mechanisms and procurement methods to minimize the financial impact on the District. DDOT has been aggressive in acquiring federal funds for transportation projects across the District through the appropriations process and through various bonds and grants. Our unique position as both a city- and state-level agency allows us to pursue numerous revenue streams.

Our aggressiveness in finance and technology has allowed us to dramatically improve the District's transportation system in a short period of time. In its decade as an agency, DDOT has rehabilitated or replaced more than a dozen bridges, repaved more than half of the city's roads, filled countless potholes, removed thousands of dead or dying trees, and redesigned corridors from Georgetown to Hillcrest. We will continue to work into the future to protect and maintain our transportation assets.

Left: Crews lower supports into place for the Eastern Ave. bridge replacement, July 2010

DDOT Perspective: Innovative Financing and Procurement

In 2002, DDOT had a lot of catching up to do. "We had employees sweeping the streets with brooms," recalls DDOT's first director, Dan Tangherlini, of the agency's humble beginnings. Potholes were rampant, snow was barely cleared, and many streetlights were dark. Trees were uncared-for and countless streets had no signs. Money was left unspent and District bridges ranked among the worst in the nation.

"We were lucky to have city and agency leaders with the vision and foresight to empower DDOT with several unique authorities critical to getting DDOT on its feet and city transportation systems in shape," recalls DDOT Chief Counsel, Frank Seales, Jr., who supported Mayor Anthony Williams and former Director Tangherlini in drafting the new organization's charter and twice served as interim Director. "The ability of DDOT to independently procure services, apply for federal grants, and direct revenue generated by DDOT towards capital assets were critical to the agency's success, especially in those early days."

In its relatively short history, DDOT has been able to use its unique position as both a state and city DOT to leverage and secure a number of new bond initiatives and federal funding programs. DDOT worked with FHWA to implement a design-build-to-budget procurement for the 11th Street Bridge, a first for the District, to achieve more than \$80 million in savings by acquiring approximately \$340 million in infrastructure for \$260 million. DDOT also secured \$75 million in GARVEE bonds to fund the project.

"DDOT has become a profit generating agency within the District—a strong indicator of our progress," Seales noted. During the past decade, the agency has nearly eliminated its maintenance backlog, allowing DDOT-generated revenue to be reintegrated into the District general fund.



Georgetown Project. One of the agency's first and most important undertakings was the Georgetown Project, a massive overhaul of the utilities and roadways on Wisconsin Ave. and M Street, which began in 2001. By the late 1990s, Georgetown's aging utility infrastructure was deteriorating, resulting in frequent power outages in the area and even causing numerous manhole covers to explode from the roadway. In order to fix individual problems, utility companies would cut and remove sections of roadway to repair the lines underneath. Oftentimes, however, little care was given to the condition of the roadway after the repairs. The result was an area that was hazardous to pedestrians and motorists.

In order to reduce these piecemeal repairs and the disruptions they caused, DDOT worked with Pepco, Verizon, Washington Gas and the DC Water and Sewer Authority to coordinate a complete rebuild of the utility and roadway infrastructure in the area. The four year \$50 million project was completed in 2005 and dramatically improved the reliability, longevity and safety of Georgetown's transportation and utility infrastructure. DDOT coordinated roadway paving and repair and provided \$7 million in streetscape improvements, installing or improving street lights, benches and sidewalks.

Above: Workers repave M St. after the four year utility and roadway improvement project



Potholepalooza. The only music you will hear at DDOT's "Potholepalooza" is the sound of jackhammers breaking up old asphalt. As moisture seeps into the roadbed, temperature changes can cause problems. Moisture trapped in asphalt can freeze and expand, opening large crevices. Water and air can accumulate between the pavement and the underlying earth, causing an unstable base for the pavement. Since each freeze and thaw cycle exacerbates the pothole problem, fast response times are imperative to maintain ideal roadway conditions. In 2009, DDOT launched the first Potholepalooza, an annual month-long campaign to repair the city's potholes after DC's winter months. Residents and commuters can call, email, go online or Tweet to report potholes, and DDOT maintains a commitment to repair potholes within 48 hours. The repair process is relatively simple, but we need your help to find them all. In 2011, we received more than 1,300 pothole reports and filled more than 5,000 – an average of 216 per day.

Parking. Even though DDOT strives to encourage alternative transportation methods, we realize that providing convenient parking will always be part of our responsibilities. DDOT manages more than 17,000 metered parking spaces throughout the District with a combination of traditional single-space meters and solar-powered multi-space meters that accept credit cards. In 2011, we launched a pay-by-phone parking system, allowing motorists to pay for parking at any metered space in the city by phone. Since its inception, the program has registered 400,000 members and 4.4 million transactions. In order to manage demand for parking in the city's most congested areas, DDOT has launched performance-based parking pilots. Under this program, rate and/or time restrictions are adjusted in metered areas to promote transit use and to encourage motorists seeking long-term parking to do so off-street. DDOT is constantly seeking new ways to improve parking in the District, and we have conducted numerous parking think tanks, online chats and surveys to engage the public in constructive dialog.

Transportation Operations. Field operations are an essential part of DDOT's everyday activities. From installing signs and marking roadways to filling potholes and aiding motorists, our operations employees provide first-rate service on a daily basis. Our Traffic Management Center monitors roadway conditions throughout the District and coordinates emergency response and with other agencies. The Roadway Operations Patrol responds to traffic incidents and emergencies on the District's roadways 24 hours a day. In 2011, the Roadway Operations Patrol was dispatched more than 5,000 times to remove disabled vehicles, respond to minor accidents and assist in traffic control measures. Our snow operations branch manages our snow removal fleet and coordinates with other agencies to clear the District's thoroughfares in a timely fashion. Team members in our parking operations branch are tasked with managing the operation and maintenance of all District parking meters. All of these workers are DDOT's front-line employees in maintaining a safe and efficient transportation system.





Event and Emergency Response. In addition to our everyday responsibilities for ensuring the safe and efficient operation of the District's transportation system, DDOT must be prepared for a number of events and emergencies. As the nation's capital, the District is host to numerous international summits, visits by heads of state and political conferences and rallies. DDOT works with other city agencies, law enforcement and the National Park Service to ensure that the District's special events—more than 100 annually—run smoothly. What on the surface might seem like an ordinary occurrence in Washington—a festival, parade or marathon—requires hours, weeks or months of careful planning and preparation. We also work with neighboring jurisdictions to develop emergency evacuation plans in case of natural or man-made disasters. From Nationals games and presidential inaugurations to snowstorms and hurricanes, our operations staff works around the clock to ensure that crowds can move safely and efficiently through the District under all circumstances.

Left, Top: President Obama's Inaugural parade down Pennsylvania Ave.; Bottom: Inauguration crowds walking down 18th St. to the National Mall (photo by a4611production, Flickr)

DDOT Perspective: Obama Inauguration

"It was an all hands on deck event," said Natalie Jones-Best, DDOT Emergency Preparedness and Risk Manager. "The Inauguration of President Barack Obama was a momentous occasion for DDOT."

Months before more than 1.5 million people descended on the National Mall on January 20, 2009 for this historic event, DDOT employees were coordinating with the Secret Service, National Park Police, Capitol Police, Metropolitan Police Department, FEMA and countless other agencies to ensure the safety and security of attendees.

"It's my job to plan for the worst case scenario," said Jones-Best, who served as DDOT's co-chair for the event.

"Contingency plans were in place for everything from a snowstorm to a mass evacuation of the Mall."

In addition to the numerous plans for road closures, bus parking, evacuation and snow removal, DDOT employees also were responsible for various improvements to the Inaugural parade route. All of the stoplights on Pennsylvania Ave. between the Capitol and the White House had to be removed for the parade and reinstalled for the next day. The road was repaved and special parade striping was laid to help those marching stay in line.

Although 2009 marked Jones-Best's third Inauguration with the agency, it was special for many reasons.

"The sheer size made it different," she recalls, and the general demeanor of the crowd was a big help. "I'd never seen excitement like this."



Then and Now: 11th Street Bridge

At the advent of the Interstate Highway System in the 1950s, planners envisioned the DC area with three beltways. In addition to the Capital Beltway we know today through Maryland and Virginia, the District was slated for two beltways of its own. The Southeast/Southwest Freeway was constructed as part of the innermost beltway, which was to connect to the Anacostia Freeway by way of a bridge across the Anacostia River at 11th Street SE. The first span of the 11th Street Bridge opened in 1965.

During the so-called “freeway revolts” that occurred across the nation in the 1960s and 1970s, most freeway plans in the District were abandoned. Portions that were already built or under construction were left in service, but their development and integration were largely halted. As a result, connections between the Anacostia and SE/SW Freeways were incomplete and interstate traffic was forced onto local roads, causing congestion in the surrounding residential areas.

In 2009, DDOT began construction on the new 11th Street Bridge project, the District’s first river bridge replacement in 40 years and the largest project in DDOT’s history. The project allows for direct connections between the Anacostia and Southeast/Southwest Freeways, diverting traffic from local roads. It also replaces the structurally-deficient spans and provides an enhanced emergency evacuation route.

The initial estimated cost of the project was \$459 million, far more than the \$300 million DDOT was able to finance. In order to encourage contractors to develop innovative ways to deliver the project efficiently under financial constraints, DDOT used a design-build-to-budget procurement. This procurement method not only significantly reduced the cost of the project, but also allowed DDOT to accelerate the construction schedule. The project also marked DDOT’s first use of GARVEE bonds, debt instruments that are eligible for repayment using future Federal funds, further reducing the financial impact to District residents.

In November 2012, Roads&Bridges magazine named the new 11th Street Bridge its No. 1 Bridge of 2012.

PROSPEROUS PLACES



DDOT has played a major role in shaping the city during a decade of historic growth by leveraging transportation investment and implementing programs that foster the development of complete, connected, sustainable communities.

Investment in transportation can serve as a catalyst for economic growth, and DDOT works with the public, other city agencies, private developers and business improvement districts to create strategies and projects with the greatest impact on quality of life in the District. Prosperous places are well-connected, easily-accessible, safe and attractive to many users. DDOT's Complete Streets policy guides development of transportation projects by ensuring that motorists, pedestrians, cyclists and transit-users are able to access inviting commercial and residential areas. By prioritizing transportation options, DDOT has enabled residents to reduce their household transportation costs by owning fewer cars and driving less. These options allow people to spend their household budgets on other necessities that promote economic growth and development.

Some of the most striking examples of transportation investment driving economic development are the revitalizations of H St. NE and Columbia Heights. Both neighborhoods were devastated by the 1968 riots, and lay underutilized for decades afterwards. Thanks to the coordinated efforts of DDOT, citizens, the business community and numerous city and regional agencies, these areas were given new life, largely sparked by transportation improvements.

In addition to making passage through our city safe, sustainable and economically advantageous, DDOT also works to make streets fun. Whether it is widening sidewalks to accommodate green areas and sidewalk cafes or developing dedicated bike lanes and trail networks, DDOT strives to make streets and sidewalks appealing places to spend time. Projects like the Met Branch Trail, Marvin Gaye Park, the Columbia Heights fountain plaza and Anacostia Riverwalk Trail demonstrate DDOT's commitment to making our transportation network more than just a means for getting from one place to another.

Left: Penn Quarter Farmers Market
(photo by JBrazito, Flickr)

Local Perspective: Barracks Row

Barracks Row was one of the many neighborhoods devastated by the riots of 1968. Although most of the buildings remained intact, widespread looting caused some business owners along the District's oldest commercial corridor to leave the area. With few business-owners to fight for improvements along the corridor, the neighborhood's infrastructure deteriorated.

"It was not very well-lit," recalls Denise D'amour, a resident of the area since 1999 and owner of Capitol Hill Bikes. "It was very run down. It was dirty. It was not very well kept, and kind of scary. When I first moved here, I didn't go past the fire station" less than a block from the Eastern Market Metro station.

Jorge Zamorano, owner of Banana Café, remembers having to convince customers it was safe to come to the area. "It was dark and there weren't many people. People were scared to come here. I used to tell people, if you want to come, I will walk you back to your car."

In the late 1990s, community stakeholders began to lobby the city for improvements in the area. In 2002, DDOT began work on the Barracks Row streetscape, a project that would pave the way for the Great Streets Initiative. The massive façade-to-façade rebuild of the sidewalks, curbs, roadbeds and utilities sought to create a safe, visually-appealing, green environment that was useful and accessible to more users.

The results have been dramatic. "I don't think anyone expected this much of an improvement," said Martin Smith, Executive Director of Barracks Row Main Street. Since the streetscape improvements were completed, Barracks Row has attracted numerous new businesses. In 2011, 11 new businesses opened on Barracks Row, and 12 more are scheduled to open in 2012. The area has been transformed into a major destination for nightlife in the District.

"I was amazed at how much progress had been made when I returned this summer," said Col. Christian Cabaniss, Commanding Officer of Marine Barracks Washington, who was previously stationed there from 2000-2003. "I'm very pleased to be moving my family back into such a vibrant neighborhood. My wife, daughters and I have truly enjoyed experiencing all of the things that Barracks Row has to offer."



Great Streets. Following the success of the Barracks Row streetscape improvements, DDOT began to undertake similar projects across the District. The Great Streets program is a comprehensive strategy to use public investment in infrastructure, streetscape improvements, land use planning, and development assistance to encourage private investment and economic development. A collaboration between DDOT, the Office of Planning and the Deputy Mayor's Office for Planning and Economic Development, the Great Streets program looks to transform some of the District's most heavily-traveled corridors into safer, more visually-appealing, complete communities.

One of the strengths of the Great Streets program is its adaptability. Since every neighborhood is different, there is no one-size-fits-all solution for improving transportation and quality of life. On Barracks Row, the improvements were largely focused on drawing pedestrian traffic by reconfiguring sidewalks, refreshing building façades and increasing lighting. On H St. NE and Benning Rd., streetcar tracks were installed in anticipation of restoring fixed rail transit to the area for the first time in five decades. Pennsylvania Ave. Great Streets improvements focused on vehicular and pedestrian safety, as well as environmental sustainability. During DDOT's history, the Great Streets program has enhanced corridors and communities from Petworth to Anacostia.

Top: Georgia Ave. (photo by Andrew Bossi, Flickr); Bottom: H St. NE (photo by Elvert Barnes, Flickr)

Public Space Management. The Public Space Regulation Administration (PSRA) is responsible for managing private use of public space to ensure that competing uses of public space can be accommodated safely and appropriately in the District's transportation network. Public space is defined as all publicly-owned property between property lines and includes roads, tree spaces, sidewalks and alleys. PSRA also enforces public space laws and regulations, inspects all work performed in public space, provides technical reviews for public space permit applications and conducts design reviews for all complex and large-scale projects affecting public space.

PSRA processes all public space permit applications, including those for construction, valet parking, block parties, sidewalk cafes and farmers markets. In December 2009, DDOT launched the Transportation Online Permitting System (TOPS) to streamline the permitting process and reduce the amount of paperwork needed to obtain a public space permit. Since the system went online, it has handled nearly 60,000 permits, more than 17,000 of which were approved automatically without need for review by DDOT staff. PSRA inspects work done in public space by private entities to ensure the work conforms to DDOT standards and that the integrity of the right-of-way is maintained. It also provides emergency assistance, including responding to natural disasters and utility emergencies as needed, and can be called on 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Anacostia Waterfront Initiative. DDOT is one of 19 federal and District agencies engaged in recapturing underutilized properties along the Anacostia River with the goal of transforming Washington into one of the nation's great waterfront cities. The agency has worked to remove transportation barriers and enhance multimodal access to waterfront neighborhoods, retail and recreation areas. More than 13 miles of dedicated bike lanes have been constructed in Wards 6, 7 and 8 under the Anacostia Waterfront Initiative (AWI) since 2002. Circulator service began between Union Station and Navy Yard in 2009. Today, nearly 40,000 people each month travel this route. In 2011, DDOT began Circulator service across the Anacostia River, a route that now boasts 35,000 riders per month. As part of the improvements along the river, DDOT also planted more than 5,500 trees throughout the corridor to expand the District's overall tree canopy and enhance the aesthetic appeal of neighborhood streets.

AWI also spurred several bridge investments to improve connectivity to neighborhoods south of the river and to improve the dependability of emergency routes out of the city. Two of the District's largest investments—11th Street Bridge and Frederick Douglass Bridge replacements—were envisioned under the Middle Anacostia Crossing Study, which formed the basis for many of the completed, ongoing and future improvements in the AWI study area.



DDOT Perspective: Driving Economic Growth

DC has been experiencing a historic population boom, even as the rest of the nation was crippled by recession. With consistent growth since 2000, the District is now ranked among the fastest growing cities on the east coast. Nearly 1,000 new residents move here each month, the highest level since World War II.

Providing new, convenient, low-cost transportation options is as important to forming vibrant communities as creating mixed-use residential, office and retail spaces. For this reason, connecting neighborhoods and communities has been a key goal of DDOT since its formation.

"If one word encapsulates our transportation improvements this decade, it's multimodalism," said Maurice Keys, Strategic Planning Manager. "DDOT is continually looking for new ways to balance bike, pedestrian and driver needs to make destinations more easily accessible through a range of options."

"DDOT is investing more in biking and pedestrian planning and transit management than it was a decade ago. We're proud to see programs such as bikesharing and pay-by-phone parking being emulated in other major cities." Beyond the highly visible initiatives like Capital Bikeshare and the Circulator, DDOT has provided behind-the-scenes support for numerous other projects. DDOT has participated in every recent city development plan to ensure that new neighborhoods are accessible for motorists, pedestrians, transit and cyclists.

"Transportation is everything you don't pay attention to but use on a daily basis," says Keys. "The less visible investments in our system are often as important as the highly visible ones in residents' daily lives."



Then and Now: Columbia Heights

In the early 1800s, Columbia Heights was a sleepy rural area in Washington County, DC, far from the urban life of Georgetown and the City of Washington. Home to farmland, Columbian College (now George Washington University), and the personal estates of Senators, Supreme Court Justices and cabinet-level officials, the area's main draw for city-dwellers was John Tayloe's horse racing track. When electric streetcars began running along 11th and 14th Streets at the turn of the 20th century, life in Columbia Heights picked up: farmland and estates were subdivided and rowhouses were built. Drug stores, restaurants, clothing shops and numerous other businesses began to open along 14th Street. The Arcade, located at 14th and Park, drew crowds to its street-level vendor stalls, movie theater, bowling alley, sports arena, dance hall and skating rink. The Tivoli Theatre became one of the grandest theaters in the District, with seating for 2,500 people.

Columbia Heights enjoyed this prosperity for nearly seven decades. April 4, 1968, however, would see the area's fortunes go up in smoke—literally. The assassination of Martin Luther King, Jr. had a profound effect on the District's residents, resulting in five days of riots and looting across the city. Businesses in Columbia Heights were looted and burned, with their owners never to return. The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development acquired hundreds of properties in the area and razed many that had been damaged. The result was a neighborhood of empty lots and abandoned buildings largely ignored by developers.

Revitalization began in 1999 when Metro service reached the area. Since service began, Columbia Heights has reemerged as an important commercial center. New development has brought national chains that once refused to enter the area, creating the largest retail development in the District. In 2010, DDOT completed roadway and sidewalk improvements and constructed a plaza and fountain to aid in the continued revitalization of this historic neighborhood.

Above: Destroyed buildings on the 3100 block of 14th St., April 1968; Right: Columbia Heights today, showing fountain plaza and redeveloped 3100 block of 14th St. (photo by Bill McNeal, Flickr)



FIRM FOUNDATION



DDOT's most valuable asset is not a bridge, park or building; our strength is our workforce. At its core, DDOT is a service agency. From approving transportation permits and controlling traffic at busy intersections to filling potholes and inspecting bridges, DDOT serves the District's residents, workers and visitors on a daily basis.

In order to provide first-rate customer service, we must ensure that our employees have the tools necessary to understand and address the concerns of users. In order to maintain this level of service into the future, we must ensure that our employees have the skills not only to develop professionally, but also to push the organization forward. As part of this effort, DDOT began a competency initiative to outline the core competencies and position-specific skills required for each position within the agency. The competency initiative not only sets a benchmark for evaluating individual performance, but also allows employees to see the skills they will need to develop in order to advance within the agency.

DDOT is committed to investing in its employees so that they can grow professionally and enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of the agency. In addition to providing online training relative to specific occupations and tasks, DDOT also has a paid degree program that gives employees the opportunity to attend a college or university to obtain a degree that will benefit both the employee and the agency.

Strengthening and streamlining internal operations enables DDOT to more effectively serve the public. During the past 10 years, DDOT has made numerous strides to enhance its organizational efficiency. In 2011, DDOT moved its headquarters to the Washington Navy Yard, co-locating more than half of our employees. In just two years, DDOT cut its vehicle fleet by 50%, using fleet sharing programs to decrease waste and reduce the agency's environmental impact.

DDOT will continue to be a go-to agency within the District government into the future due in large part to its commitment to strengthening its own processes and workforce.



In-house Training. DDOT maintains an extensive training program to ensure that its employees are equipped with the tools and knowledge necessary to provide top-quality service to the residents, businesses and visitors of the District. In 2011, DDOT employees completed more than 20,000 hours of training—an average of nearly 24 hours per employee. Training courses and programs are available for nearly all DDOT employees, covering numerous roles and occupations. Courses offered include basic computer skills, GIS, CAD, statistics, construction law, operations management and organizational theory. DDOT organized 523 training events in 2011, including courses offered through the National Highway Institute, covering topics from management and project financing to transportation safety planning and bridge maintenance.

DDOT Paid Degree Program. As part of its workforce training program, DDOT offers its employees the opportunity to pursue undergraduate or graduate degrees through its paid degree program. Since 2008, more than two dozen employees annually have taken university coursework as part of this program. DDOT pays for tuition and books for students in the paid degree program. Participants have studied at Catholic University, George Washington University, American University, University of the District of Columbia, University of Maryland and many more colleges and universities, and have earned degrees ranging from business administration to homeland security. DDOT also works with employees to assess whether courses taken previously can be applied to a degree program. These are just a few of the many success stories from DDOT's paid degree program.



Bernadette Edwards
Program Support Supervisor

"One of my personal goals has always been to obtain a college degree; DDOT providing the opportunity to accomplish this goal means a great deal to me, and I will be forever thankful. DDOT's investment has provided me an opportunity to develop the skills needed for growth, as well as heighten my professional development."

"I would like to thank DDOT for encouraging advancement in education and the enormous financial contribution that DDOT has made in ensuring that I was able to complete my advanced degree. By obtaining my degree, I feel more confident and qualified working with my colleagues. Having my degree allows me to push myself further while demonstrating a stronger work ethic."



Anthony Bundy
Customer Service Specialist



Jessica Bembry
Staff Assistant

"How do you quantify the support given by team members and management? The funding was and is invaluable, however, much greater and appreciated was the support and encouragement given by all. The experience is and has been priceless."



Bruke Siraga
Civil Engineer

"Determination brings you success! In order to get promoted and improve yourself, your family and your career, you need to go to school. Knowing that, I made the commitment to finish school. I am pleased that DDOT has helped me get educated. With the support of DDOT, I have reached my goals. This is something big in my life."



Shannon Jones
Staff Assistant

"The investment DDOT has made in my education has allotted me the experience and knowledge to handle issues on a professional level. My education is a major achievement that wouldn't have been attained without the assistance of DDOT. Knowing that DDOT is 100% behind me and willing to incur the cost of my education has made me strive for greatness! I will be forever grateful."



DDOT Perspective: 55 M St. Headquarters Move

In April 2011, DDOT moved its headquarters to a LEED-certified facility at 55 M St. SE. Nearly 450 agency employees moved into a new transit-accessible office building above the Navy Yard metro station. The co-location of numerous complementary departments and functions has reduced the need to travel for meetings and collaboration, creating a more efficient organization. Employees now spend less time in transit from place to place and more time concentrating on providing first-rate customer service.

"The move is one strategic example of what we are doing as an agency to decrease our ecological footprint," said Director Terry Bellamy. "It has made us a more efficient agency and benefits our customers, the residents of the District of Columbia, because for the first time since the department was created, most of our offices are housed under one roof." In conjunction with the move, DDOT initiated an overhaul of its document management system, paving the way for the digital storage of nearly 8 million documents.

"Cutting the distance between the different administrations within DDOT saves us a tremendous amount of time and makes it much easier for our construction engineers, planners, traffic safety engineers and other team members to collaborate on projects," said Ronaldo "Nick" Nicholson, DDOT's Chief Engineer. "It makes us more efficient, which benefits everyone inside and outside the agency."



Long-time employees. All of DDOT's employees have made tireless contributions to the success and progress of the agency, but some employees have given more than 35 years of excellent service to DDOT and its predecessors. Serving in various roles throughout the agency, these valued members of DDOT's team have played a critical role in promoting organizational stability and memory, allowing the agency to build on successes and best practices developed over the decades. These employees also are a testament to the strength of DDOT's retention and workforce development initiatives, as they have all grown professionally and personally through their years of service to the District.

To honor these long-time employees and their commitment to the residents, businesses and visitors of our city, DDOT is featuring them here, in their own words. We hope that their personal stories and experiences will inspire all of our employees to strive to provide first-rate service to the District for as many decades as these employees have.



Carole Lewis
Chief of Transportation Safety Division
(49 years)

"I've worked here all my life, since I was a kid. I haven't been any place else. I've grown with the department. It's been good to me. I feel that I have made a contribution, so I really enjoy it. I love the people I work with, I enjoy the environment and I enjoy what I do. I don't have any plans to retire yet, so long as my health is good and I feel that I'm making a contribution to the District."



Bernard Jackson
Engineering Equipment Operator
(47 years)

"My father worked here with the mobile equipment department. I started out as a laborer. I worked my way up to the top by going through all the trainings. I believe when you go out to do a job you should do the best that you can do. My work is my signature."



"I like what I do and I like the people I work with, both in the government and in the private sector. I work with different contractors who I have seen go from foremen and laborers of a company to owning their own companies."

Charles Daniel
Civil Engineering Technician (41 years)

"A lot of young guys ask me, 'why don't you retire?', and I feel that until some of the bridges get better, I should stay here and do the job. I keep a list and each time that I go to a bridge, I make notes and continue to check on them. It is like when you visit a friend and take note of the things going on with that friend. That's how I think of the projects that I work on."



Robert McNeely
Civil Engineering Technician (40 years)



Gloria Bosse-Kouabo
Civil Engineering Technician (40 years)

"When I started, there were not many women in this industry. It was considered for males only. I had a hard time. But I love the field. When I am not doing other things, I read books about the industry. I am still learning. The training is what kept me here. It has made things very exciting because I always knew I was moving forward."





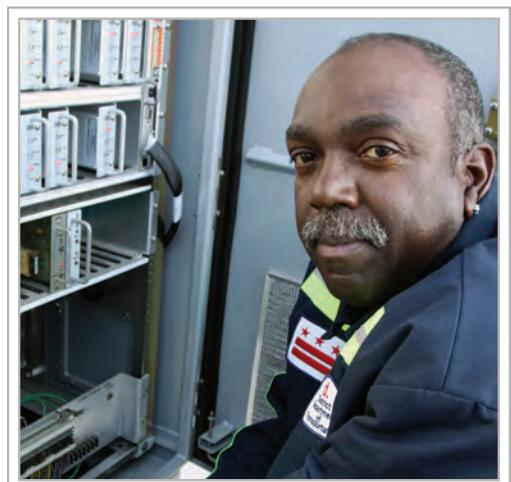
William McGuirk
Signal Engineer (39 years)

"I started in April 1973, right out of college. This has been my career. I haven't had a desire to go anywhere else. I always wanted to work in the public sector in this particular field. This is where the action is. I was here when some of the bridges were built, and now I'm watching them be rebuilt."



Delois Fields
Staff Assistant (37 years)

"DDOT has made tremendous progress in a short time. Ten years and you can just ride through the city and see so many changes. All of the Directors have done an extremely wonderful job. And I have truly, truly enjoyed working with Terry Bellamy. He's so down-to-earth. He gets the job done. That's a real plus for DDOT."



Joseph Malloy
Traffic Signal Inspector (38 years)



"As DDOT succeeds, we succeed, and vice versa. This is a model for the nation to see. We all have to put our best foot forward to make this transportation system the best in the world."

DDOT is, and will continue to be, a model transportation agency for the nation, so I want to congratulate all the employees of DDOT."

– Christopher Lawson, Division Administrator
Federal Highway Administration, DC Division

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