



CONNECTING

Current Trends and Future Outlook

More and more, Ward 8 residents are getting around and traveling in different ways, taking advantage of the city's extensive transit system and pedestrian-friendly communities. The District's 2006 Comprehensive Plan placed an emphasis on creating greater transportation choices for residents and connecting the city with stronger physical and social links.

The city's investments in sidewalks, street crossings, bicycle, and transit facilities have provided more options for reaching neighborhood and citywide destinations. These connections are illustrated by recent statistics showing that car trips and car registrations in the city have decreased over the past decade. At the same time the share of transit, walking and bicycling have increased (from 40% to 46% between 1994 and 2008).

Today, Mayor Vincent Gray's "One City" vision emphasizes the importance of improving connections so that residents can have safe, convenient, and reliable access to their homes, jobs, businesses, and services. This is particularly critical in Ward 8 for several reasons:

- **Car ownership rates are low** compared to the city average - 52% in Ward 8 vs. 64% in DC (Source: American Communities Survey 2005-2009)
- **44% of residents depend on transit to get to work,** as compared to 37% District-wide (Source: American Communities Survey 2005-2009)
- **Monthly transportation costs** in Ward 8 average \$700-\$850 and are higher as compared to citywide averages (\$550-\$650) (Source: Abogo.com. Transportation cost estimation website)

Achieving the Mayor's vision of bridging the physical and social divides to better connect the Ward is ambitious and will require transportation investments, corridor and public space improvements, and active community participation.



What We've Heard

Frequently Heard Concerns:

- Traffic congestion and cut through traffic in neighborhoods;
- Parking and loading along commercial corridors;
- Poor connections to destinations within the Ward;
- Difficulty accessing other parts of the city and region;
- Transit accessibility and reliability; and
- Challenges accessing the Ward's natural assets such as Anacostia Park in the north and Oxon Cove in the south.

Ward 8 residents have actively participated in numerous transportation and transit planning processes through the past several years, including the Great Streets Framework Plan: MLK Jr. Avenue; South Capitol Street Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and the 11th Street Bridges EIS. These plans have shaped the transportation improvements that are currently being implemented across the ward, as well as future projects.



11th Street Bridge. Source: DDOT

What's Being Done

Multi-agency efforts led by the District Department of Transportation (DDOT) along the Anacostia River are significantly improving pedestrian, bicycle, and vehicular connections. Additionally, a number of traffic “calming” measures have been introduced to the Ward to reduce cut-through traffic and to slow down speeding.

From the rebuilt 11th Street bridges, to new pedestrian and bike connections running the length of the Anacostia River on the Riverwalk Trail, better access, improved safety, and greater travel choices are being created and other strategic efforts are being implemented.



Workers install track for the new DC Streetcar system . Source: DDOT

11th Street Bridges

www.ddot.dc.org

The DDOT is currently in the process of replacing the two existing bridges with three new bridges and improving the related interchanges. The \$300-million 11th Street Bridge project is the largest ever constructed by DDOT and is the first river bridge replacement in the District in more than 40 years.

Capital Bikeshare

www.capitalbikeshare.com

In September 2010, The Capital Bikeshare program started with multiple station locations in Ward 8 including Good Hope Road/Naylor Road, the Anacostia Metro Station and Good Hope Road/MLK Jr. Avenue. The bike-sharing program is a great way to reach destinations within the Ward or around the region.

Pedestrian Safety & Streetscape Improvements

www.ddot.dc.org

The District's multi-agency Great Streets Initiative is having a positive impact in Ward 8. The program strategically uses public investments such as upgrading sidewalks, reconstructing and resurfacing roadways, upgrading traffic signals and streetlights, upgrading curbs, and numerous other amenities to attract private investment. Additionally, DDOT has improved walking conditions, quality of street-life and pedestrian safety in the neighborhood by restriping crosswalks and installing brick pavement.

Frederick Douglass Memorial Bridge (S. Capitol Street)

www.southcapitoleis.com

DDOT is in the process of completing the environmental document to replace the Frederick Douglass Memorial Bridge (also called South Capitol Street Bridge). The improvements proposed include replacement of the existing bridge with a new bridge on a new alignment with wider sidewalks; modified I-295/Suitland Parkway interchange; improvements to Howard Road, Firth Sterling Ave, and Suitland parkway; and improved pedestrian connection to Anacostia Park and across the river.

Circulator

www.dccirculator.com

Plans are underway to bring the Circulator bus to Ward 8. Various options for routing of the Circulator bus are currently being investigated.

Streetcar - Anacostia Initial Line Segment (AILS)

www.dcstreetcar.com

DDOT has started laying tracks for a streetcar line that extends approximately 3/4 of a mile from South Capitol Street SE to the Firth Sterling - Suitland Parkway intersection. The project also includes new sidewalks, landscaping, streetlights and the installation of traffic control signals. The \$25 million AILS streetcar will be a part of a citywide streetcar network designed to spur economic development and make it easier for residents to move between neighborhoods.

St. Elizabeths Campus

www.stelizabethsdevelopment.com

With the development of the St. Elizabeths West campus as the headquarters of the US Department of Homeland Security, additional traffic will come to the area. To mitigate this, roadway improvements are proposed, including widening MLK Avenue to allow center turn lanes into the campus and accommodate wider sidewalks and tree plantings. A new West Campus Access Road will be built parallel to and east of I-295 to provide access to the West Campus from a new access gate. This new West Campus Access Road will link Malcolm X Avenue to Firth Sterling Avenue. At its southern end, the West Campus Access Road will connect to an improved I-295/Malcolm X Avenue interchange while at its north end, it will tie into a proposed signalized intersection with Firth Sterling Avenue and Stevens Road. This new West Campus Access Road is not intended for public use, with the exception of commuter buses.



Mayor Gray observing road improvements. Source: DDOT

Today's Summit Discussion - Improving Connections

Ward 8 has many physical and natural barriers that make connecting neighborhoods to each other and to the rest of the city challenging - Anacostia River, I- 295 highway, Oxon Run Park, Fort Stanton Park, Suitland Parkway, and a hilly topography. These barriers can be reduced by developing improved transportation connections that bring the Ward 8 residents and communities together. For example, bridges not only provide a physical way of crossing rivers, but also provide an important link between communities, neighborhoods, and activity centers.

Some ways to improve connections in Ward 8:

- Additional north/south and east/west roads in new developments, such as Saint Elizabeths East and Poplar Point
- Pedestrian safety and streetscaping
- Expansion of transit services to connect destinations within the Ward (Circulator, streetcar, Metrobus)
- Car sharing services and Taxis
- Bicycle facilities on local streets

There is a high demand for transportation improvements across the city and there are limited resources. In Ward 8 it is important for the District to understand residents' preferences for the types of connections that will have a positive impact on their day to day lives and the lives of their neighbors.

Some ways to improve connections to the rest of the city and the region:

- Bridge improvement and reconstruction projects
- Highway and interchange improvements
- Road improvements and traffic operations
- Expansion of transit services to connect the Ward to the rest of the city and the region (Circulator, streetcar, Metrobus, Metrorail)
- Bicycle facilities across the Anacostia River

QUESTION: Should the existing 11th St. Bridge be reused?

The District is interested in gauging the community's interest in an innovative project that would preserve and repurpose the outbound span of the 11th Street Bridge to improve pedestrian access to the Anacostia Park and create a new outdoor recreation space. Repurposing this major piece of existing infrastructure could provide an exciting way to advance the "One City" goal by linking communities on either side of the Anacostia River to a network of parks and recreation resources.

In addition, the bridge itself offers great potential as an active recreation destination, performance place, environmental education hub, and an iconic structure. Retaining the bridge saves the cost of demolition, but would require some investment and reconstruction to create a usable space.

Potential Uses:

- Pedestrian and bike connection across the Anacostia River
- Adventure recreation, such as tightrope, zip line, high ropes course, and climbing wall
- Events and art installations
- Plaza – performance/open space
- Public art
- Scenic viewpoints

Potential Benefits:

- Recycles an existing resource and saves the cost of demolition and landfill disposition
- Connects neighborhoods to parks on both sides of the river
- Improves waterfront access
- Has revenue generation and partnership potential, including private concessionaires
- Provides new recreation destination, creating new amenities.



11th Street Bridge Project. Source: DDOT