



Streetcar Safety

"Bikes Use Caution" Signs Now in Place

The District Department of Transportation (DDOT) recently installed 21 new signs along the H/Benning corridor that urge bicyclists to use caution when crossing streetcar tracks.

While DDOT is thrilled at the pace with which the District's bicycling community has grown in recent years, the interaction of bicycles and streetcar tracks can sometimes lead to problems. Bikes getting stuck in streetcar track flange gaps is a common occurrence in U.S. streetcar cities, due in part to the popularity of road bikes with thin tires. The likelihood of a problem is especially pronounced when cyclists cross the tracks at an angle less than 60 degrees.

DDOT installed the new signs to promote awareness of the tracks and to increase overall bicycle safety on H/Benning. DDOT's recommendations for riders begins with route selection. Cyclists are urged to use G and I Streets instead of H Street whenever possible. G and I run one-way and are parallel to H Street on the north and south. When cyclists do need to cross H Street, they should do so at a right angle, which decreases the probability of their tires getting stuck in the tracks.

DC Streetcar, MetroRail, MetroBus, DC Circulator, and bicycles (including Capital Bikeshare), are all components of a sustainable transportation network in the District. Coordination between these elements is a District priority and will be an ongoing effort. As part of the DC Streetcar Safety Outreach campaign that will launch this fall, District residents can expect to hear much more about streetcar safety. Various user groups will be targeted as part of the DC Streetcar Safety Outreach campaign, including bicyclists, pedestrians, schoolchildren, drivers, and more. Stay tuned... and stay safe!



Left: One of DDOT's new safety signs on H and Benning Streets

Below: A Capital Bikeshare user demonstrates safe right-angle crossing on streetcar tracks



3 Steps to Bicycle Safety on H/Benning

1. Avoid using H Street NE as a primary cycling route if possible, and use the parallel one-way G and I Streets instead.
2. When crossing the tracks at intersections, cross at a right angle to avoid falling, or walk your bike across the tracks.
3. Heed the new signs and use caution!

Making Tracks on H/Benning

The DC Streetcar team has been busy this summer, as these recent announcements indicate: the selection of the streetcar operator, the selection of the Design-Build team, and the announcement of an RFI for a public-private partnership.

DDOT Selects Streetcar Operator

DDOT recently announced that it selected an operations and maintenance team for the DC Streetcar Program. The RATP Dev McDonald Transit (RDMT) team brings the right mix of transit and rail expertise to the District, assuring a successful launch of the first line in 2013.

“With this announcement, we now have the final piece in place needed to see the initial streetcar line operational next year,” said Mayor Vincent Gray. “We’re anxious to see cars running in the District again for the first time in over fifty years.”

The initial contract provides service for the 2.2 mile segment on H Street and Benning Road NE. RDMT will be responsible for day-to-day functions associated with the operation of the line, including streetcar operation, maintenance of vehicles, inspection and maintenance of the electrical system and tracks, customer service, and management, hiring, and training of staff.

Included in the contract is a First Source clause, calling for a minimum of fifty-one percent of any needed new hires to be District residents.

DDOT Selects Design-Build Team

DDOT also recently announced the selection of a Design-Build team to complete the design and construction of the H/Benning line. Dean-Facchina LLC received the contract award.

“This is an important step forward to ensure the streetcar line will be in operation late next year,” said Mayor Gray. “With this contract in place, residents will see immediate progress on the final construction needed to get the cars running on H and Benning.”

Dean-Facchina will be responsible for the design and construction of the western and eastern termini of the streetcar line, the overhead catenary power system, and the Car Barn Training Center at 26th Street and Benning Road.

DC Streetcar Operator contract

- Handles day-to-day streetcar operations
- First Source Hiring: At least 51% of new hires will be qualified District residents

DC Streetcar Design-Build contract

- Will design and construct the western and eastern ends of the H/Benning line, the power system, and the CBTC at 26th/Benning

DDOT RFI for PPP

- A request for information from the private sector to gather its ideas on how DDOT could finance a 22-mile DC Streetcar system

DDOT Issues RFI for Public-Private Partnership

DDOT is exploring the potential of privatizing the District’s non-regional bus service and a 22-mile priority streetcar system as a means to accelerate delivery.

As part of this process, DDOT is asking for the private sector’s perspective and feedback in a Request for Information (RFI) issued this week. The RFI is an inquiry only, not a procurement, but the

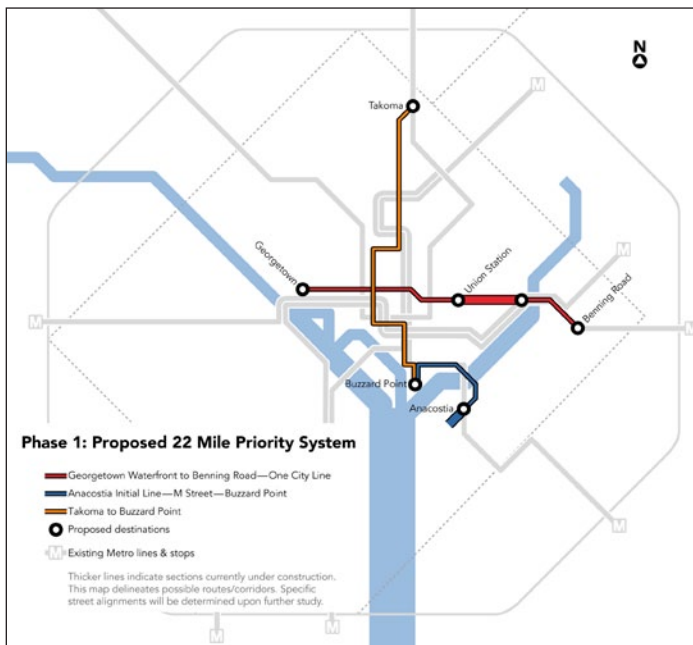
responses will help the District advance its planning and development efforts for the project, which may result in the launch of a formal procurement.

The scope of the proposed project includes a combination of the following activities to support transit service within the District:

- Design, construction, financing, and ongoing operations and maintenance of a 22-mile minimum priority streetcar network;
- Operations and maintenance of the DC Circulator bus system;
- Operations and maintenance of “non-regional” bus service within the District, currently operated by the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA);

- Purchase of vehicles as necessary to operate the above services.

The District anticipates that a public-private partnership (PPP) could accelerate the delivery of the DC Streetcar system. Other potential benefits include allowing appropriate risk sharing; maximizing competition and leveraging available public funds; providing greater cost and schedule certainty for the District over the long-term; and allowing for a more favorable payment profile for the District.



The 22-mile Priority Streetcar System, as described in DDOT's RFI

On our Website

Curious about how the streetcars will look running in mixed traffic? You view simulations of the streetcars operating on H Street at dcstreetcar.com.

While you're there, you can catch up on public meeting materials if you missed the last meeting.

Don't forget to sign up for our mailing list to stay apprised of all things DC Streetcar!

Overheard by @DCStreetcar Noise and Vibration Testing



So what is vibration impact testing, anyway? It's just one part of the standard testing that streetcar corridors undergo before streetcar service.

During the last week in June, the DC Streetcar team sent out testers with thumpers, seismic accelerometers, and data recorders to measure vibration levels and record decibel levels that approximate modern streetcar vehicles. Although the District's streetcars are lighter and no louder than buses, this testing helps with baseline data collection for H/Benning and ensures that local buildings and infrastructure are ready for service.

DC Streetcar team members have been a common sight on H/Benning this summer. In July, traffic counters were stationed at intersections to help determine streetcar signalization. As testing continues, we'll be sure to keep you updated.

Have a question or comment about DC Streetcar? Tweet us! You just might see yourself in the next newsletter.

Follow us @DCStreetcar!



Elsewhere in the District...

H/Benning isn't the only line where streetcar activities are taking place.

- The Historic Anacostia Environmental Assessment (EA) and Section 106 evaluation is nearing completion. A public hearing for the EA will be scheduled this fall.
- Construction for the Commissioning Track and Car Barn Yard in Anacostia is underway.
- The District's streetcars will begin to be commissioned in December, ensuring that they're track-ready for their H/Benning arrival in 2013.

Looking Ahead

- Mark your calendars for the H Street Festival, one of DC Streetcar's favorite events of the year! This year's festival is Saturday, September 15. Last year we gave away DC Streetcar cinch sacks. Wonder what's in store this year? Stop by the DC Streetcar booth to find out!

H Street Festival

"6 Blocks of Urban Fun"

Saturday, September 15

12-7 p.m.

H Street NE between 8th and 14th

<http://hstreet.org/events/festival>

- The DC Streetcar team regularly attends ANC, community group, and civic association meetings. If you'd like us to attend your meeting to give a presentation or to answer questions, just let us know!

Get Connected

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Streetcar Mythbusters

Myth: The proposed Car Barn Training Center at 26th and Benning is an industrial site.

Fact: The Car Barn Training Center (CBTC) is actually classified as a mass transit facility. It will also feature elements of storage, light maintenance, and educational training on site. The proposed CBTC will feature green design, will be safe, and will provide technical training to local students per a curriculum currently being designed by DCPS. DDOT is currently working with the community to help shape the look and feel of this facility so that it blends into the local context.

Myth: The streetcars are not ADA-compliant.

Fact: The District takes handicapped accessibility seriously, and so do its streetcars. The streetcars as well as the station stops will be fully ADA-compliant. The streetcar's interior layout is designed to accommodate wheelchairs using wide passenger doors that are level with station platforms. The station platforms have been designed to match the level of the streetcar for seamless wheelchair (and stroller and bicycle) entry, without the use of ramps or bridge plates. Additionally, the use of on-board GPS technology ensures audio communication at each stop, an important service for many disabled passengers.

Myth: Streetcars are noisy.

Fact: Streetcars are no louder than a typical bus. Powered by electric motors, streetcars use a pole and pantograph to collect power from an electrified wire that is suspended approximately 20 feet over the lane in which the streetcar runs. Noise from streetcars is produced by the wheel-to-track movement when turning tight corners, as opposed to the regular engine output noise that buses produce.