



DC Streetcars Put Through the Paces

Along South Capitol Street, SE, the DC Streetcar test track saw some action in June and July. The streetcars were put through static and dynamic tests by a team of Czech engineers, contracted by Inekon, alongside engineers from WMATA.

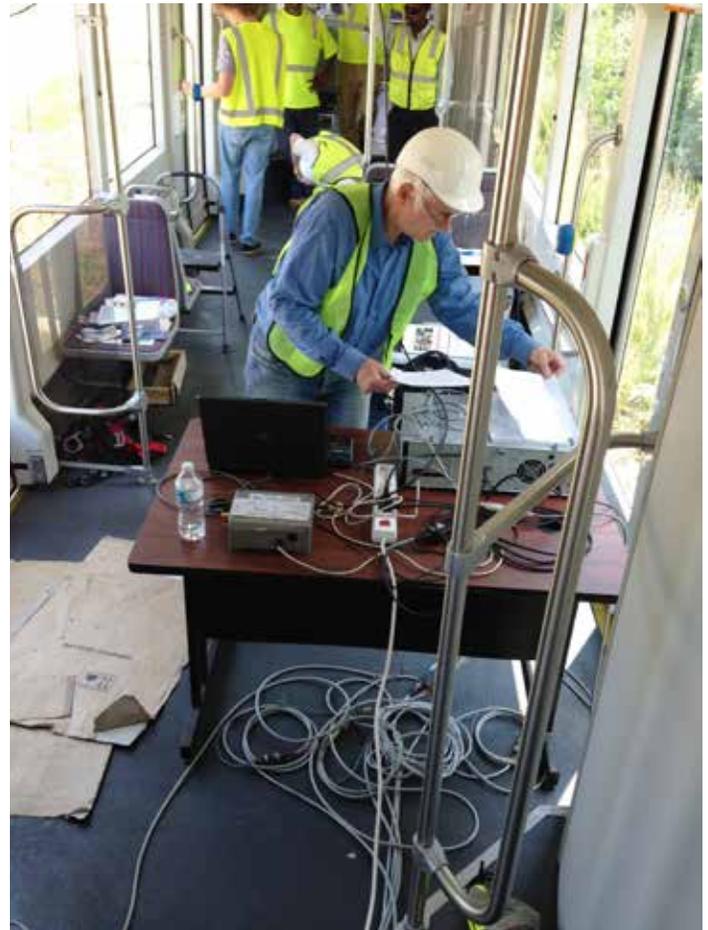
Testing the vehicles is necessary before they can go into service. Safety standards are rigorous and each vehicle must pass every test before it can be deemed safe.

On a ride-along with media, we experienced braking tests and the “dead man” test. The braking tests challenged both the standard brakes and the emergency brakes. The streetcar operator would bring the vehicle to the proper test speed, either 15 mph or 30 mph, and then stop the vehicle. The standard brakes brought us to smooth stop, gliding along the tracks. The emergency brakes work differently though - just like with your own car. When emergency brakes are pulled during travels of 15 or 30 mph, they are not nearly as smooth as standard brakes, causing a little jerking for the testing team!

The “dead man” tests a safety feature on each vehicle. If the operator loses contact with the control, for ANY reason, the emergency brakes kick in after a mere two seconds, regardless of the vehicle’s speed. We performed this test at both 15 mph and 30 mph, just as with the other braking tests.

Other tests performed by the team included making sure the Traction Power Substation was calibrated correctly and that all electrical systems are working in coordination with each other.

Further testing will need to be conducted once the streetcars move to the H/Benning corridor this fall. All of the systems along the route will need to be tested to ensure all is working as it should. More testing will also give the operators an opportunity to learn the traffic patterns along H Street and Benning Road and give traffic an opportunity to get used to the streetcar vehicles before they carry passengers.



An Inekon engineer gets the testing “lab” set up inside a DC Streetcar.

Thanks for Coming out to our Community Open House!

We held a Community Open House at our Testing & Commissioning Site on Saturday, August 10. Fun for the whole family included streetcar boardings, safety demos, face-painting, and raffles for spots on the first H/ Benning streetcar ride!





goDCgo
@goDCgo



Getting some overwhelmingly positive feedback from people attending the @DCStreetcar Open House! Lots of excitement & anticipation!

"Look, Listen, Be Safe!" During Construction

Cones, barrels, signage, trucks, and men and women in hard hats - all evidence that construction work along H Street and Benning Road to ready the corridor for DC Streetcar continues. Navigating the streets and sidewalks - especially at each end of the corridor, near the Hopscotch Bridge and Oklahoma Avenue - requires patience and awareness. Below are just a few reminders on how to be safe while passing the work zones.

Motorists

Where travel lanes are reduced to one lane in each direction on H Street and on Benning Road, reduce your speed to 20 mph or less. Orange and white drums are located to guide drivers to the designated lanes. Please yield to pedestrians crossing the street - they are also navigating construction work zones.

Pedestrians

When walking past a construction work zone, reduce your distractions. Remove your earphones and pause your conversation.

When crossing the streetcar tracks, step completely over the track gaps and be sure that your heels do not get caught in the tracks. This is especially important for people wearing high heels.

Bicyclists

While riding your bike on H Street and Benning Road NE, please do so with caution. Bicycle safety is a paramount concern of the District Department of Transportation (DDOT), who installed 21 signs along H/Benning a year ago that urge caution while riding.

Before your ride, decide which streets to take to your destination. Especially during rush hour, consider an alternate route, even if it is less direct. Alternate routes for H Street are G and I Streets. G is a one-way heading west and I is a one-way

heading east. An alternate for Benning is Gale Street, which ends at 23rd Street.

To help you avoid bicycling on H Street in the safest way possible, DDOT will be installing contraflow

bike lanes on both G and I Streets before the start of streetcar service.

When you simply can't avoid bicycling on H/Benning, crossing streetcar tracks at a 90-degree angle or walking your bike across the tracks can help you prevent your bicycle tires from getting caught in the tracks. Do not ride your bike between the tracks, as this reduces the ease of turning the wheel to a 90-degree angle.

It is not unusual to see cyclists riding on the sidewalk, which is legal in DC except in the Central Business District. While riding on the sidewalk, please be considerate of pedestrians. Slow down when approaching pedestrians and give them a verbal or other audio warning that you will pass them from behind. When the sidewalks are crowded, it is best to also walk when sharing the sidewalk.



look + listen 
be safe!

Are you receiving DC Streetcar construction updates?

If you already receive DC Streetcar construction updates, you're in the know about the latest traffic and pedestrian impacts from streetcar construction.

Missing out? Visit dcstreetcar.com/mailling-list-sign-up/ to access our sign-up form, and be sure to select "H/Benning Construction Updates." We also file our updates online at dcstreetcar.com/construction/hbenning-construction/detailed-construction-updates. While you're online, browse our website for project updates, renderings, and more.

Overheard by @DCStreetcar

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



David Donaldson
@Dbidee49



Follow

@mayorvincegray @DCStreetcar This is a project that all DC residents should get on board. Hiring all DC residents go ahead Vince "One City"!



Ali Tharrington
@mstharrington



Follow

Learning about DC's former extensive streetcar network only makes the whole thing cooler to me.



ZiggyYourNailTech
@ZsaZsaZiggy



Follow

DC's finest! Hey Aunt Mary RT @mayorvincegray: Say hi to our DC Streetcar Team! You will see them very soon! pic.twitter.com/micNkJRo1N

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CBE/DBE Outreach Event Scores Big

On August 15, 2013, the District of Columbia Department of Transportation (DDOT) hosted the Integrated Premium Transit (IPT) program's Informational Briefing for CBEs, DBEs and Small Businesses. More than 166 CBEs, DBEs, small businesses and other interested parties attended.

DDOT officials Ronaldo "Nick" Nicholson and Carl Jackson welcomed the group. Streetcar Program Manager Thomas Perry provided an overview of the proposed 37-mile system that will cover all eight wards of the District, as well as the 22-mile priority streetcar network subset of that overall system.

DDOT is advancing the 22-mile priority system as part of the IPT program. DDOT is seeking to implement the IPT program through a Design-Build-Finance-Operate-Maintain (DBFOM) delivery method. Under this method, DDOT will identify an expert team from the transit industry to advance the program. The industry team, in partnership with DDOT, will advance the final design of the project's capital elements, construct the capital elements, and provide for the ongoing operations and maintenance of all elements within the IPT program. Finally, the industry partner will provide financing capacity for the program.

In order to identify the best industry partner, DDOT is utilizing a two-stage Request for Qualifications (RFQ)/Request for Proposals (RFP) process. The RFQ is currently being finalized, with an anticipated release date in the 4th quarter of 2013.

