

AdamsMorgan MainStreet Group, Inc.

Combining Diverse Pieces Into a Beautiful Puzzle

TRAFFIC FLOW AND WALKABILITY STUDY

Dan Burden, Walkable Communities

Ian Lockwood, Glatting Jackson

Adams Morgan On-Site Walk-Throughs

May 2003

May 2004

Public TRANSPORTATION CHARRETTE

May 19 & May 20 2004

Burden Final Report April 2005

Adams Morgan Main Street

TRAFFIC, TRANSPORTATION & PARKING

Recommendations

June 2005

OVERVIEW AND PURPOSE:

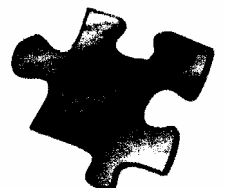
- Purpose of walk-throughs and consultant study was to address types of traffic flow and movement in a comprehensive, visioning way.
- Address some community's concerns about the original 2003/2004 DDOT proposals, in particular to address the design feasibility of eliminating the slip lane, the "right hand turn lane" off of Columbia Rd onto Adams Mill.
- Be different from the piece-meal approaches of intersection by intersection
- Hold a charrette to allow neighborhood voices to speak and discuss, and respond to possibilities in terms of Adams Morgan
- Consider alleviating the congestion according to well established and documented traffic calming and safety techniques.
- Increase fluidity of movement within a context of "Place"—where people are comfortable engaged in a myriad of activities.
- Engage business and residents together in discussion of the problems and goals to achieve.
- Address both the immediate and the longer-term with nationally recognized experts in visioning, design, and traffic engineering.

AdamsMorgan MainStreet has produced a summary report highlighting some of the traffic flow issues most important to Adams Morgan. This summary report can accompany the Burden Report or stand alone. The two components are covered so as to be informative for lay people and practitioners alike.

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Businesses, residents, and non-profits all intertwine in Adams Morgan. Already a densely populated area, the trend is toward even more density, not less. We are already one of the least car owning areas, but nonetheless suffer a parking deficit for existing residents. All too often, a “solution” is suddenly tried with out being tied to other ongoing impacts or unanticipated effects. The current climate is one of vast more competition for our neighborhood business area and further loss of business to other areas if traffic and pedestrian flow issues are not addressed.

Adams Morgan Main Street has released the final Dan Burden report on mobility (“Burden Study”), which addresses “the Adams Morgan and Washington D.C. partnership to build vital physical and agency connections creating healthy public space and walkable/bicycle/vehicular/ business and transit friendly environments.” We hope that certain of the traffic, transportation, parking, and public space components of that study will be incorporated into the ongoing DDOT “18th Street/Adams Morgan Transportation and Parking Study.”

Professional transportation & parking studies address many factors and the solutions involve a composite of recommendations, which must be assessed in tandem to preserve their effectiveness. An all too common error is to choose some components and discard others, which then results in not achieving the desired goals or even worse, producing unintended bad effects.

The Burden Study contains a number of recommendations for Adams Morgan, both near term and longer term, which taken together significantly improve the traffic, transportation, parking, pedestrian and business environment in Adams Morgan.

We recognize that any one change may create minor inconvenience for some segments of Adams Morgan, taken together, they would significantly improve our overall situation.

1. Re-opening Champlain Street is the most needed and immediate change requested.
2. Coordinate that flow further by making Kalorama Road one-way from 18th Street to 16th Street into the flow around the proposed Harris-Teeter site to enhance public safety and relieve traffic impediments;
3. Using “place-making” and pedestrian friendly physical modifications and traffic controls at key intersections for improved traffic flow and vehicular/bicycle/pedestrian interfaces and visual effect.
4. Designating “unloading lanes” in the center of Columbia Road in key locations to enhance traffic flow while accommodating business needs and preserving parking opportunities;
5. Creating taxi stands in key locations to relieve traffic burdens and enhance public safety, while preserving parking opportunities;
6. Rearranging several bus stops to improve traffic flow and enhance pedestrian safety while preserving parking opportunities;
7. Relocating one valet parking site to improve traffic flow and balance availability;
8. Creating more pedestrian-friendly spaces and shorter crosswalks by using bulb-outs, tree grates, smarter parking meters, and new plaza space.
9. Improving the pedestrian/vehicular interface along the major corridors and within the “mega-block” on 18th Street; and
10. Preserving/increasing parking opportunities to relieve traffic flow and enhance public safety.

Using “place-making” and pedestrian friendly physical modifications and traffic controls at key intersections for improved traffic flow and vehicular/bicycle/pedestrian interfaces and visual effect.

- 18th Street/Adams Mill Road at Columbia Road where the slip lane should be eliminated and a mini plaza created. Address residential and safety concerns at the Adams Mill Road/Calvert Street at Lanier Place. (See Burden drawing)
- Florida Avenue/Vernon Street at 18th Street and Florida Avenue at U Street. (see Burden ideas)

Re-opening Champlain Street and integrating the directional flow along Kalorama Road from 18th Street to 16th Street into the flow around the proposed Harris-Teeter site to enhance public safety and relieve traffic impediments.

- All of the transportation experts have recommended that Champlain Street should be reopened from Florida Avenue to Columbia Road. This will improve traffic flow and enhance public safety both by providing access to first-response vehicles and by increasing contiguous visibility along this corridor to discourage illegal activities. This is further necessitated by all the new residential developments and density in Reed Cooke making an alternate route in and out desperately needed. This idea coordinates with the next recommendation.
- Kalorama Road should be converted to one way traffic from 18th Street to 16th Street, i.e. one-way east bound. This will relieve the bottleneck at the 18th and Kalorama corner during high traffic periods and open the Kalorama Corridor to enhanced response by first-response vehicles. Correspondingly, the proposed traffic direction around Harris-Teeter should involve one way flow on 17th Street from Euclid Street to Kalorama Road.

Designating colorized “unloading lanes” in the center of Columbia Road in key locations to enhance traffic flow while accommodating business needs and preserving parking opportunities.

- The center lane on Columbia Road from Mozart Place to Champlain Street should be designated as an unloading lane for trucks making deliveries to businesses in that corridor.
- Similarly for the center lane on Columbia Road from Biltmore Street to Belmont Road.

Establishing taxi stands in key locations to relieve traffic burdens and gridlock caused by taxis cruising and circling the neighborhood business area seeking fares would also enhance public safety. During peak evening traffic hours on Thursday, Friday, and Saturday, taxis would only be permitted on 18th Street between Columbia Rd and Kalorama if they are discharging passengers and then exiting 18th Street, responding to a Call from the taxi stands, or departing with passengers picked-up at the taxi stands or as a result of a Call request.

- The blocked drive-way behind SunTrust should be opened as a Taxi Stand for the north end of Adams Morgan with the side nearest SunTrust dedicated to taxis heading onto Columbia Road and the remainder dedicated to taxis heading onto 18th street. This would provide a capacity of 7-8 taxis for the Columbia Road side and 13-14 taxis for the 18th Street side. These taxis would be dispatched onto 18th Street only in response to requests from businesses or by passenger access directly at the Taxi Stand. We request the city to “lease” this area for a nominal fee from SunTrust to make this possible.

- The section of 18th Street along the North edge of Marie Reed Learning Center should be reserved as a Taxi Stand for the south end of Adams Morgan dedicated to taxis headed north on 18th Street in response to a dispatch or tuning onto Kalorama Road following passenger access at the Taxi Stand.

Moving certain Bus Stops to improve traffic flow and enhance pedestrian safety while preserving parking opportunities. Coordinated with the improvements for the key intersections certain Bus Stops would be relocated to improve traffic flow and to relieve some of the congestion resulting from the interface of bus passengers crossing at intersections.

- The Bus Stop on southbound 18th Street at the SunTrust Plaza would be moved north of Columbia Road to co-locate with the existing Bus Stop just preceding it.
- The Bus Stop on northbound 18th Street in front of the McDonalds would be moved across Columbia Road and placed on the bulb-out in front of BB&T Bank and Adams Mill Bar & Grill.
- The Bus Stop on northbound 18th Street at Belmont would be removed.
- The Bus Stop on eastbound Columbia Road at the SunTrust Plaza would be moved east to the pocket park before Champlain Street.

Relocating one valet parking site to improve traffic flow and balance valet parking access in the demand corridor. Valet parking must be coordinated for all business use and traffic flow purposes; it is not a 'private right,' but a use of public space.

- The existing valet parking site on the southbound side of 18th Street just North of the alley in the west side of the "mega-block" will be moved south to be located on the southbound side of 18th Street north of Kalorama Road. Thus, valet parking access for the northern part of that "mega-block" will be provided by the location on the east side of 18th Street or the one in front of Perrys on Columbia Road.

Improving the pedestrian/vehicular interface along the major corridors and within the "mega-blocks" on 18th Street. This involves not only the changes recommended above but also the following:

- Marking all pedestrian cross-walks with florescent, contrasting paint and placing traffic warning signs, where required, in clearly visible locations before said cross-walks.
- Creating a visual, raised, clearly marked cross-walk, (such as special colored bricks) in the northern "mega-block" with a pedestrian response traffic signal.
- Placing a similar raised, clearly marked cross-walk in the southern "mega-block" targeted toward the entrance to Marie Reed Learning Center with a pedestrian response traffic signal.

Preserving/increasing parking opportunities to relieve traffic flow and enhance public safety.

- Many of the above recommendations were developed not only to improve traffic flow and public safety but also to preserve as much existing parking as possible. All the transportation consultants have concluded that Adams Morgan has insufficient parking to meet its requirements for residential and commercial parking.

- The heavy demand for parking proximate to the neighborhood business area is created by residential needs and business employees/owners parking, as well as, parking for patrons of the business area. This situation is further worsened by: 1) limitations of late night mass transit schedules, 2) the unavailability or lack of full usage of connecting transport between the most proximate subway locations and the commercial strip, and 3) limitations in the information related to mass transit alternatives for accessing the business area. These factors, coupled with insufficient parking, also contribute significantly to the heavy taxi traffic within the congested business area and adjacent streets during the late evening hours on Thursday, Friday and Saturday nights.
- To achieve additional parking, please consider the following: 1) Loss of existing parking in any changes-of-use considerations should be avoided, 2) Maximum permitted parking in new development or redevelopment projects should be encouraged, rather than discouraged. 3) Implement significant disincentives for multi-vehicle residential occupancy, 4) mixed-use alternatives for on-street parking should be carefully considered, and 5) development of additional significant parking facilities should be encouraged, particularly in re-development projects.

Burden Study Recommendations not Supported

- Installation of large scale public restrooms not appropriate
- Reinstating entire street grid breaking up Marie Reed property by extending Wyoming is not appropriate for our neighborhood and desires of parents, teachers, and children.
- A roundabout, whatever its merits, as first choice may lack enough public consensus or familiarity to be an immediate choice for the 18th & Columbia Rd intersection.