



Save Connecticut Ave.org
— Washington DC —

December 18, 2023

Muriel Bowser
Mayor of the District of Columbia
1350 Pennsylvania Ave, NW
Washington, DC 20004

Via email

Dear Mayor Bowser,

I am compelled to respond to WABA's letter of Dec. 7th and Councilmember Frumin's letter of Dec. 15th, asking you to implement the controversial and unpopular bike plan for Connecticut Ave known as Concept C. My organization, Save Connecticut Ave ("SCA"), represents the tens of thousands of DC residents and businesses who oppose Concept C believing that it will erode the vitality of the Conn Ave corridor and be the death knell for downtown. To date, 4,000 residents and 124 retail businesses have signed our petitions asking you to cancel the plan.

SCA asks that you resist the pressure of a special interest group that puts the luxury "wants" of the 2% over the diverse needs of the 98% who need a functional Connecticut Ave to get to work, go to school and appointments, shop, & enjoy entertainment. In addition, as the President of the Police Union stated in his Nov. 20th letter to Councilmember Frumin "we believe that the implementation of protected bike lanes in this particular location would have significant adverse effects on public safety and law enforcement activities."

WABA and Councilmember Frumin know that the bike plan is unpopular, yet they continue to try to sell bike lanes as a safety measure for vehicles and pedestrians. To justify their arguments, they have distorted accident data and removed it from the larger context. Approximately 9.5 million vehicles use Connecticut Ave every year and the accident rate, including fender benders, is .003%. Vision Zero's 2022 update shows that Ward 3, including Connecticut Ave, had the fewest accidents and fatalities in the city. In 2022 there were only 3 bicycle accidents on the Avenue. In the absence of more data, we do not know who was at fault in these incidents.

The parts of Concept C that have been implemented to date, including removing the reversible lanes and reducing the speed limit to 25mph, have been ineffective in reducing accidents. In fact, the most serious accident in a generation, which killed the driver of a Tesla, occurred after the reversible lanes were removed. Meanwhile, the one thing that the reversible lane removal has accomplished is creating more traffic congestion, giving people one more reason not to travel downtown. **We fully support improved safety for everyone. Unfortunately, Concept C only makes the road less safe.**

In Councilmember Frumin's December 15th letter, he calls on DDOT to "release a revised plan that accommodates the needs of all road users, especially seniors, people with disabilities and the businesses. I am confident that DDOT can propose a plan that meets the needs of all community members." Unfortunately, DDOT cannot come up with a plan that meets the needs of everyone. Conn Ave cannot accommodate curbside, barrier-protected bike lanes without negatively impacting the very constituencies CM Frumin wants to protect.

It's clear that the vast majority of residents and businesses are strongly opposed to Concept C. The police don't want them, the Connecticut Ave businesses don't want them, and the majority of residents don't want them. The seniors, disabled and mobility challenged don't want them. The senior centers along Conn Ave don't want them and the firefighters in the 2 firehouses on Conn Ave don't want them. The downtown real estate community and downtown businesses don't want them.

Save Connecticut Ave urges you to instruct DDOT to stop work immediately on the Connecticut Ave Multimodal Project.

Sincerely,

Lee Mayer, President
Save Connecticut Ave

Cc: Interim Director Sharon Kershbaum, DC Dept. of Transportation
Kevin Donahue, City Administrator
Chair Charles Allen, Committee on Transportation and The Environment
Matthew Frumin, Ward 3 Councilmember
Janeese Lewis-George, Ward 4 Councilmember
Christine Henderson, At-Large Councilmember
Zachary Parker, Ward 5 Councilmember