

**Metropolitan Branch Trail
ANC 4B Public Works and Infrastructure
Committee**



**Response to questions submitted by ANC 4B Public Works and Infrastructure
committee
September 2017**

1. What is the feasibility of a Third Street multi-use path / bike trail, and what are the pros and cons relative to the Blair Road proposal?

Issue	North Dakota/3 rd	Blair Rd
The predominate use of each proposed route.	<p>Would add bike use to North Dakota. Would not provide changes for pedestrians. North Dakota Ave would be either marked with “sharrows” or would require removal of parking to accommodate bicycle facility. Would require further study.</p> <p>Striped bicycle lanes on 3rd St could be improved to a two way cycle track, which would provide separation from motor vehicle traffic.</p>	Fully separated trail should expect to see a wider mix of users and age groups. The proposed trail on Blair Rd would be a shared use trail that would be open to bicyclists and pedestrians, fully separated from traffic.
Proximity to and ease of accessing civic facilities from each proposed route.	A route on 3 rd St would be directly adjacent to the Takoma Rec Center and Coolidge High School. Bicycle lanes on 3 rd St would still be available if there is a trail on Blair Rd.	The trail on Blair Rd would be 1-3 blocks from the Takoma Rec Center and Coolidge High School.
Points of conflict with cars / motorized vehicles of each proposed route.	10 intersection crossings	3 intersection crossings
Possibility of "dooring" along each.	Moderate. Would depend on configuration on North Dakota. To minimize possibility of dooring, it would require removal of parking from 4 blocks of North Dakota Ave.	Zero. There is no parking adjacent to the trail. The trail will be fully separated from motor vehicle traffic.

Issue	North Dakota/3rd	Blair Rd
Is bike crossing five-star intersections handled differently from pedestrian crossings or motorized vehicle crossings?	Would require 3-4 crossings for pedestrians and bikes.	Would require 2 crossings for pedestrians and bikes.
Distance (from 7-11 to Aspen/Sandy Spring)	0.9 mile	0.7 mile
Grade change	Hills on North Dakota and on Van Buren	Relatively flat.
Crossing under Railroad Tracks	Would require crossing Blair Rd and under the railroad tracks at Van Buren Street. East of the railroad tracks the route would require modification of parking and relocation of utilities on Sandy Spring Rd between Van Buren and Aspen.	Could cross the railroad tracks at Aspen or at Van Buren Street. A crossing at Aspen would minimally impact traffic operations at Blair/Aspen. A crossing at Van Buren Street would require modification of parking and relocation of utilities on Sandy Spring Rd between Van Buren and Aspen.
Traffic Calming	Would require further study.	Would reduce speeding and weaving on Blair Rd.
New Facility	The 3 rd /North Dakota route would enhance existing facilities for bicyclists. The project would not provide improvements for pedestrians.	The Blair Rd route would create a new facility for bicyclists and pedestrians

- 2. What is the estimated volume of traffic through the Aspen Street/Blair Road intersection? -- both during rush hour and outside of rush hour? – (once the following facilities are built and in operation: DCI school, the large apartment building at the corner of Aspen and Sixteenth, the recreational facilities in and around Walter Reed's former power plant, the art facilities along Cameron Drive, the three large apartment and condo buildings (V/U) with first floor retail in the building at the corner of Aspen and Georgia, events held on the Great Lawn.)**

The estimated Annual Daily Traffic of Blair Rd at Sheridan St NE is 15,000 vehicles. The impacts of the proposed trail on rush hour traffic were analyzed using a traffic model. The results of the model indicate that the proposed trail and one northbound lane approach of Blair Rd at Aspen St meet an acceptable level of service. While there will be minimal delay for motor vehicles, there will be benefits to pedestrians and bicyclists from the addition of the trail.

(Response to question on traffic at Aspen/Blair continued)...

Table VII.2 – LOS and Delay for Blair Rd at Aspen St – NB Approach Option 2 (Shared Left/Thru/Right Lane)

Blair Road at Aspen Street - Peak Hour Synchro LOS and Delay (sec/veh)										
	Existing		2020 No-Build		2020 Build with Northbound Opt 2		2040 No-Build		2040 Build with Northbound Opt 2	
	AM	PM	AM	PM	AM	PM	AM	PM	AM	PM
Northbound Blair Road	A (8.1)	A (3.2)	A (8.4)	A (3.5)	C (34.1)	B (13.4)	A (8.8)	A (3.8)	D (47.8)	C (21.1)
Southbound Blair Road	C (22.6)	B (11.4)	C (23.3)	B (11.7)	C (23.4)	B (12.0)	C (24.2)	B (12.2)	C (24.4)	B (12.5)
Eastbound Aspen Street	B (14.3)	C (27.9)	B (14.2)	C (28.2)	B(14.2)	C (28.2)	B (14.0)	C (28.6)	B (14.0)	C (28.6)
Westbound Aspen Street	C (28.5)	D (51.2)	C (29.9)	E (57.3)	C (29.9)	E (57.3)	C (31.7)	E (66.4)	C (31.7)	E (66.4)
Overall	B (16.9)	B (14.6)	B (17.6)	B (15.8)	C (29.3)	C (21.1)	B (18.4)	B (17.6)	D (36.2)	C (26.6)

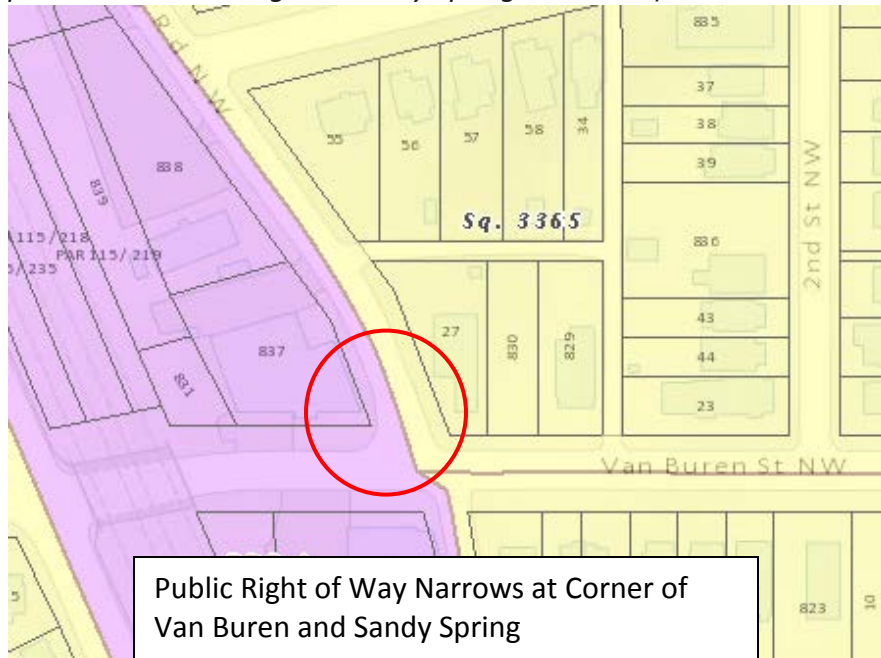
The traffic analysis utilized projected future traffic volumes in 2040, which include trips due to adjacent new development (such as Walter Reed) and other increases in vehicle volumes due to overall regional growth. We expect the majority of trips traveling to the new development at Walter Reed to access the site via Georgia Ave. Additionally, trips to the site coming from the east or via Blair Rd are expected to utilize Butternut St to travel east-west. Butternut is a collector street that goes directly into the new development at Walter Reed. It is a wider street designed to carry a higher volume of traffic. Aspen is a local street and does not provide direct access into the site. The traffic model estimates that a small amount (<5%) of traffic will divert to Missouri/5th St NW and Kansas/Eastern Ave NE. However, the current design of the trail will not preclude the addition of a left turn lane at Aspen St if necessary to mitigate future increases in vehicular delay

3. What makes the stretch of Sandy Spring Road between Van Buren and Aspen Streets prohibitively difficult for the MBT Trail?

Sandy Spring is 30' wide. There is not space to build a trail on the west side of Sandy Spring without removing parking on both sides of the street. Even if the sidewalk area became part of the trail, parking would likely have to be removed from both sides of the street. Additionally, it would require significant utility relocation.

The trail segment on Sandy Spring north of Aspen will be built outside of the roadway. It will be built in what is currently the grassy area between the road and the railroad wall. Building the trail between Aspen and Van Buren would require narrowing the street, particularly where it gets closer to Van Buren, and removing parking from both sides of the street.

(Response to question on trail design on Sandy Spring continued)...



4. When Blair Road is repaved, will it be coordinated with plans for the MBT Trail, or will it have to be restriped -- or even re-graded -- later when the Trail is built?

The work on Blair Rd occurring right now is routine sidewalk repair and roadway resurfacing. The trail project will widen the sidewalk and remove one of the travel lanes on Blair North of Sheridan. The surface of the two remaining lanes on Blair Rd will not be affected by the new trail.

5. Why does the trail go on First St and McDonald Place NE?

The route for the Metropolitan Branch Trail in this area was selected through the Environmental Assessment (EA) process. The EA process identified four potential routes in this area, and studied the environmental impacts of each route. Through that process, the preferred alternative was selected. A new alignment will require a new Environmental Assessment. DDOT and NPS are willing to initiate such a study, which would take at least a year or more to complete.

6. Can DDOT review Aspen/Willow/Sandy Spring and Blair/Aspen/3rd St for traffic and safety changes?

DDOT Traffic Operations Administration will collect analyze data at these intersections over the next 60 days to develop concepts and alternatives to be shared with the ANC. Implementation can be phased in shorter term, and/or coordinated with development of the trail.

7. Where can I get more information on this project?

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Materials are available at <http://metbranchtrail.com/resources/>