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<https://anc5c07.com>



**Testimony before the Committee on Transportation and the Environment  
Oversight Hearing on the DC Department of Transportation  
February 27, 2023**

Chairperson Allen and members of the Committee:

Thank you for this opportunity to testify. My name is VJ Kapur and I am the Advisory Neighborhood Commissioner representing Single-Member District 5C07, which covers northern Langdon. Before I proceed, I'll warn that this testimony will, out of what I consider necessity, contain descriptions of traffic violence.

On Friday, February 3rd, 2023, at 11:40 pm, the driver of a 2004 Infiniti G35 Coupe was stopped on the 2700 block of 20th St NE, adjacent to Langdon Elementary School. I know a lot about what happened next thanks to detailed video footage captured by a neighbor's security camera<sup>12</sup>.

- They waited at the red light as cross-traffic cleared the intersection, before proceeding slowly through the red light.
- Once through the intersection, they began accelerating. Past a 15 mph speed limit sign. Past both sides of Langdon Park, the Chuck Brown Memorial, the playground, and the Rec Center
- They didn't slow down for the four-way stop at 20th and Hamlin Sts; rough calculations put their speed through the intersection at between 87 and 109 miles per hour
- No more than 950 feet and 15 seconds from a stop, they crashed into a row of three parked cars on the opposite side of the street, with one launching 20 feet along the sidewalk and against a retaining wall.
- The driver's car landed in the middle of 20th St NE, where DC Fire and EMS had to extract the driver, 22-year-old Andy Jose Cariño of Severna Park, Maryland, from the mangled wreckage. He was pronounced dead on the scene.

I never had the opportunity to meet Mr. Cariño, nor have I talked to his family, but I have learned quite a bit about him. He leaves behind his parents and two brothers. He was an avid musician and gamer. His family had just adopted a puppy named Simba. He

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<sup>1</sup> More media and information about this crash and the ongoing Vision Zero investigation can be found here: <https://anc5c07.com/issues/20thst/>

<sup>2</sup> MPD press release on this crash can be found here: <https://mpdc.dc.gov/release/traffic-fatality-3000-block-20th-street-northeast>

was the second traffic fatality in the District of Columbia of 2023; the latest for less than five days before a driver killed pedestrian James Tarrants about a mile away.

The details surrounding Cariño's crash came as little surprise to me and my neighbors. We have been calling attention to the dangers of 20th St here for years. This area of 20th St NE is 32 feet wide with two minimally used parking lanes, one driving lane in each direction, and no lane markings between intersections. The stretch of 20th from Franklin to Hamlin, where Mr. Cariño gained speed before crashing, is 750 feet steeply sloping downhill from each side, with no traffic controls or safety mitigations of any kind, save for a single unsignalized crosswalk connecting the two halves of Langdon Park. The road was repaved in October 2021, an operation DDOT boasted about on both Twitter<sup>3</sup> and Facebook<sup>4</sup>, punctuating each post with a "praise" emoji (👏).

This repaving occurred just as resident-initiated Traffic Safety Investigation requests (now called TSI 1.0) were put into effect. My community had just experienced the tragedy of a driver killing five-year-old Allie Hart five blocks away from the site of Cariño's crash. We began raising alarms (see *Appendix A* for more related TSI SRs):

- **SR 21-00474480** opened on **October 22nd, 2021**, days before the repaving work began, notes that the mid-block crossing "Needs raised crosswalk/speed bump, no handicap accessible cutout"
- **SR 21-00487897** on **October 28th, 2021** reads "Excessive speed and disregard for existing traffic safety (speed limits + stop signs) have made 20th St NE a very, very dangerous stretch of road."

On the one-year anniversary of Allie's death, friends of Allie's family organized the #All4Allie campaign to honor Allie, raise awareness for the TSI request process, and, above all, to make our streets safe for our families and our community. Knowing I'd be Commissioner here by the time any submitted investigations completed, I personally submitted **TSI request SR 22-00441341** on **September 13th, 2022**. This was one of 111 TSI requests opened DC-wide that very day, the busiest day for such requests in all the data I've analyzed.

The request was closed and converted to a pooled "input" for TSI 2.0 on January 6th, 2023, like so many others.

DDOT has stated that the new process is necessary to conserve resources, but it's unclear to me what is actually being conserved. It isn't the safety of my community, or the asphalt and labor expended to repave 20th St a year ago, or the complicated work to design a priority scoring algorithm. And it certainly won't be Andy Cariño's life.

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<sup>3</sup><https://twitter.com/DDOTDC/status/1454837346357100547> screenshotted in Appendix B

<sup>4</sup><https://www.facebook.com/DDOTDC/posts/pfbid0vP722BGiQmiQU6SVqW9L8Xq2VrYPji6kidJmPipnBXN9bUjke7fcvMHQAQ8wcsDI> screenshotted in Appendix B

I know there are good folks at DDOT that recognize the urgency of this problem. I really hope they can come up with a better calculus for what needs to be conserved.

Days after the crash, I had a call with DDOT's Vision Zero coordinator, where she indicated she would advocate for as much traffic calming on this stretch of roadway as possible. She also relayed to me the many reasons why expectations need to be low, including:

- vehicle volume
- ambulance routing
- stormwater management
- road slope

Prospects seemed better by the time of our Vision Zero site visit on February 15th, but the amount of community effort and tragedy it's taken to get us here, and the amount that may still need to be expended to push through traffic calming on 20th St, warrants serious attention and systemic improvement.

I thank you again for your time.

**Appendix A: table of TSI SRs for 2700-3000 blocks of 20th St NE (2013-2023)**

SR	STREETADDRESS	add_date	end_date	description
21-00487897	2802 20TH STREET NE	10/28/21	11/2/21	Excessive speed and disregard for existing traffic safety (speed limit + stop signs) have made 20th St NE a very, very dangerous stretch of road.
21-00474480	2901 20TH STREET NE	10/22/21	12/6/21	Please initiate a tSA in front of the Langdon rec center at 2901 20th St NE. Needs raised crosswalk/speed bump, no handicap accessible cutout to use crosswalk and only one kids crossing the street sign. Should have one facing southbound  *** see attached photos. ***
22-00441341	2901 20TH STREET NE	9/13/22	1/6/23	I am submitting this TSI request in memory of Allie Hart.
22-00515611	2902 20TH STREET NE	10/25/22	1/6/23	At least a raised crosswalk connecting the park at a minimum, but traffic needs to be slowed considerably
21-00487884	2908 20TH STREET NE	10/28/21	11/2/21	Excessive speed and disregard for existing traffic safety (speed limit + stop signs) have made 20th St NE a very, very dangerous stretch of road.
22-00439881	2910 20TH STREET NE	9/13/22	1/6/23	
21-00487880	3005 20TH STREET NE	10/28/21	11/2/21	Excessive speed and disregard for existing traffic safety (speed limit + stop signs) have made 20th St NE a very, very dangerous stretch of road.
21-00487888	3013 20TH STREET NE	10/28/21	11/2/21	Excessive speed and disregard for existing traffic safety (speed limit + stop signs) have made 20th St NE a very, very dangerous stretch of road.

## Appendix B: Social Media post screenshots

