

## **'Fundamentally Less Safe' – WUSA9 on Columbia Rd Bus Priority Project**

WUSA9 reporter Alexis Wainwright spotlighted traffic concerns with the new Bus Priority Project on Columbia Rd, in a broadcast Nov. 1. Throughout her interview with local business owner Shawn Fenty, the new traffic installation showed itself to be a complete disaster as residents have predicted for nearly two years. Fenty made videos of the traffic problems and sent them to officials, neighbors and the press. As a result, Mayor Bowser and DDOT Director Kershbaum last week visited the neighborhood unannounced and confirmed the neighborhood complaint.

Here's the link and text to the broadcast: <https://www.wusa9.com/video/news/local/dc/protected-bike-lanes-cause-controversy-in-adams-morgan/65-6cd00feb-abec-45dc-afc4-be29ac7925fe>

***'It's fundamentally less safe' | People in Adams Morgan call out new hazards with DDOT's new bike lane project – WUSA9 Nov. 1, 2024***

*After a few weeks of having some of the new Columbia Road protected bike lanes and bus changes business owners are speaking out against them.*

*Author: Alexis Wainwright*

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*WASHINGTON — There are protected bike lanes in parts of one of D.C.'s busiest neighborhoods, Adams Morgan.*

[WUSA9 has been reporting on this process from the beginning](#) but now, some neighbors say — they're causing some trouble in the community.

WUSA9 talked with business owners along Columbia Road where the bike lanes are located. They say they know Columbia Road wasn't perfect before -- and there was room for improvement but now they feel like the bike lanes have made it worse.

**[RELATED: Neighborhood Association speaks out against DDOT-protected bike lanes in Adams Morgan](#)**

After a few weeks of having some of the new Columbia Road protected bike lanes and bus changes in Northwest, business owners are speaking out about not being satisfied.

“Incredibly sad and frustrated and add to that the dimension that our tax dollars are paying for them to do this to our neighborhood,” Local business owner Shawn Fenty said.

Fenty is the owner of Fleet Feet — near 18th and Columbia. He supports the idea of making Columbia Road more efficient and safer but before the bike lane project started he spoke up about potential safety and traffic problems.

Now he says he's seeing those problems become reality.

“As you can see, it’s fundamentally less safe,” Fenty said as he saw one driver stop in the middle of the road and start to backup in one of the lanes.

As WUSA9 interviewed Fenty, several cars were stopping in the middle of the road causing traffic.

“They’re about to cross the bike lane which they may or may not be aware of,” Fenty pointed out.

*Then it happened again and again within that same block on Friday.*

*“They’ve completely obstructed the whole lane and so, traffic is sort of weaving in and out if there’s a delivery vehicle on this side and on the other then they have to go into oncoming traffic on both sides of the street,” Fenty said.*

*Then another backup happened in the middle of the street as Fenty walked WUSA9 around the 1800 block.*

*“Watch this guy, he doesn’t want to go down there, there’s a lady walking so he’s going to go down the street.”*

*This project also eliminated some of the bus stops. So, riders have to wait in the middle of the protected bike lanes.*

*“Buses stop in the middle of the road and this park. Their passengers have to go across the bike lane in order to get on the bus and off the bus,” Fenty said. “It really just doesn’t make sense from a safety standpoint.”*

*Fenty noted that he is a cyclist himself but wouldn’t use these protected lanes because of the hazards he’s seen. He isn’t the only business owner who’s seen the difference since this project started.*

*“I think at first it was very confusing, a lot of people still parking where they weren’t supposed to,” Assistant Manager of Pitango Gelato, Jordan Jenkins said. “It’s been a lot more traffic, congestion.”*

*WUSA9 reached out to DDOT about these concerns and a spokesperson sent this statement:*

*“The Columbia Heights Bus Priority project was designed in response to extensive community feedback to create a safer, more efficient roadway that protects all users. The changes will*

*make the road safer and help prevent dangerous collisions that put residents at risk. The project is under construction, and there is more work to come including education on pick up and drop off zones. As we continue the project any change in street design may require an adjustment period and evaluation. DDOT remains committed to working with the community to address any concerns. We will continue pushing to achieve Vision Zero and eliminate traffic-related fatalities and injuries in the District.”*

*DDOT also noted that people riding bikes account for 40% of transportation-related injuries in the corridor and most of the pedestrians injured in the corridor are hit by cars in crosswalks.*

*Several people say this happens all day every day and are worried that a serious accident can happen.*

*“That sort of terrifies me, to be sort of confined to that area,” Fenty said.*

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