



Spring 2011 *Street Smart* Media Report

On Tuesday, March 29, 2011, the *Street Smart* campaign kicked off its spring initiative with a focus on cycling and pedestrian safety. To highlight the 2011 campaign, area leaders gathered to call attention to the need for drivers, cyclists and pedestrians to look out for each other. In addition, a cyclist who had been struck twice in the District provided her personal perspectives.

We appreciate the opportunity to continue working with the *Street Smart* team on this valuable public safety program. Please contact Emily Howard or John Undeland with any questions at 202-289-2001.



Coverage highlights included:

- Reaching **more than 1.3 million people** across the region, specifically:
 - 12 print and online articles reaching **1,078,283 readers**
 - 10 television stories reaching at least **243,238 viewers**
 - Radio coverage on WTOP reaching at least **45,000 listeners**
 - Twitter impressions reaching at least **3,581 followers**
 - Coverage on three of the five local broadcast outlets: WJLA (ABC-7), WUSA (CBS-9) and NewsChannel 8
 - WTOP coverage of the campaign on March 21 and March 29
- Total estimated publicity value of **\$40,740**
 - Print and online coverage: **\$24,500**
 - Broadcast coverage: **\$14,490**
 - Radio coverage: **\$1,750**
- One print story and two online stories in the *Washington Post*
- Pickup in social media outlets, including links from Greater Greater Washington and The Wash Cycle blogs. Greater Greater Washington and The Wash Cycle are in the top 10 of most widely trafficked blogs focusing on Washington, DC
- Coverage by CBS Baltimore, the *Washington Times*, as well as both print and online stories in the George Washington University's *GW Hatchet*



Broadcast Coverage

Report Summary:

Total Hits: 10

Total Broadcast Audience Impressions: 243,238

Total Broadcast Message Value: \$14,490

[VIDEO: New D.C. program seeks to increase pedestrian, bicycle safety](#)

TBD Online

March 31, 2011

By Gail Huff



Radio Coverage

Report Summary:

Total Hits: 2

Total Broadcast Audience Impressions: 45,000

Total Broadcast Message Value: \$1,750

Street Smart 1

WTOP-FM

March 29, 2011

Neal Augenstein

Street Smart 2

WTOP-FM

March 29, 2011

Neal Augenstein



STREET 1 (runs :37)

All too often we tell you about a pedestrian or bicyclist getting killed in a crash -- well, someone who's been through the experience is hoping to spare others the pain.

Neha Bhatt has lived through not one but two collisions with cars.

The number of bicycles in the region is up 80 percent in three years. You can expect to see billboards, and Police from across doing strict enforcement during the annual StreetSmart campaign

STREET 2 (runs :33)

The number of pedestrians and cyclists killed in our area is up nine percent over last year. Someone who's survived is sharing her story.

Neha Bhatt has lived to tell about it -- twice. She's been hit by cars while on a bike.

At this kickoff of the annual StreetSmart campaign, police are promising strict enforcement for drivers, pedestrians, and bicyclists who don't follow the rules of the road.

Print and Online Coverage

Report Summary:

Total Hits: 12

Total Broadcast Audience Impressions: 1,078,283

Total Broadcast Message Value: \$24,500

[District sees rise in pedestrian safety issues](#)

GW Hatchet

April 4, 2011

By Amy D'Onofrio

[D.C. Campaign Aims To Protect Pedestrians, Cyclists](#)

CBS Baltimore Online

March 31, 2011

By the Associated Press

[Breakfast links: Follow the rules](#)

Greater Greater Washington Blog

March 31, 2011

By Erik Weber

[Street Smart Campaign kicks off with warning about increased crashes](#)

Wash Cycle

March 31, 2011

Staff

[D.C. starts campaign to protect pedestrians, cyclists as number of crashes rises](#)

Washington Post

March 30, 2011

By Allison Klein

[Tell us: What are the area's most dangerous stretches of road for pedestrians?](#)

Washington Post (blog)

March 30, 2011

Justin Jouvenal

[The Needle: Reinforcing The Fact Edition](#)

Washington City Paper

March 30, 2011

Mike Madden

[Pedestrian safety ads feature damage to cars, not people](#)

Greater Greater Washington Blog

March 25, 2011

By Adam Lewis



[Campaign couples education, enforcement to create safer roads](#)

WTOP.com

March 21, 2011

By Hank Silverberg

[To reduce enforcement errors, MPD wants traffic division](#)

Greater Greater Washington Blog

March 17, 2011

By Jamie Scott

[District sees rise in pedestrian safety issues](#)

GW Hatchet

April 4, 2011

By Amy D'Onofrio



Media Credit: Becky Crowder | Hatchet Reporter

After two students were struck by cars while crossing H Street in separate incidents last week, University administrators have asked the D.C. government to repaint crosswalks across campus.

Two students crossing H Street were struck by cars in separate incidents last week, highlighting a growing pedestrian safety issue across the region.

The number of cases where a motorist struck a pedestrian - someone either walking or cycling - increased by about 24 percent between 2009 and 2010, according to data provided by George Branyan, the pedestrian program coordinator for the District Department of Transportation's Policy, Planning and Sustainability Administration.

The District, along with jurisdictions in Maryland and Virginia, launched a new spring campaign last week as part of the Street Smart program, which has used advertisements to educate motorists and pedestrians about traffic safety since 2002.

The Street Smart campaign is paired with the enforcement of traffic safety laws by the Metropolitan Police Department, Branyan said.

"You've got to have enforcement with education messages," Branyan said Friday, noting the combination of these two things can help change behavior.

This was the second year the District saw an increase in vehicle-pedestrian crashes, he said.

Last week two crashes occurred in the 2100 block of H Street, a street that sees a lot of foot traffic due to the location of Gelman Library, the Academic Center and the Marvin Center.

Just before 8 a.m. Tuesday morning a car struck a female student outside Schenley Hall, located in the middle of the block.

The student was transported to GW Hospital with serious but not life-threatening injuries.

Wednesday, a car struck a male student near Gelman Library just before 11 a.m.

"A student walked out between parked cars around H and 22nd streets and was struck by an automobile," University spokeswoman Michelle Sherrard said. Witnesses said the student was hit by a side-view mirror of the car, and Sherrard said he declined medical treatment.

D.C. Fire and EMS spokesman Pete Piringer said D.C. Fire and EMS responds to about four or five pedestrian crashes a day in the District.

Specifically on campus, University Police Chief Kevin Hay said his department doesn't keep statistics on motor vehicle accidents since it's not within UPD's mission to do investigations of incidents on city streets.

Hay said jaywalking is illegal, however, and can result in a citation. But UPD isn't empowered to issue citations for traffic violations on city streets.

"Because our campus is intersected by busy urban thoroughfares, pedestrian safety is very important to the entire GW community," Hay said.

Even following traffic signals may not be a foolproof way to stay safe around D.C., Branyan said.

Data show that of the 552 crashes last year where the pedestrian's action was known, about 35 percent occurred when someone walked in a crosswalk with the signal. Typically motorists are turning a corner when both the car and pedestrian have the right of way, resulting in the crash, Branyan said.

Though Branyan said 29 percent of the incidents involved a pedestrian outside of a crosswalk, more deaths occurred when the person was outside of the crosswalk.

"Cars are going relatively slowly near a crosswalk. If you get hit at 40 miles per hour, there's a 90 percent chance of you dying," he said.

To improve current crosswalks, Hay said Assistant Vice President for Safety and Security Darrell Darnell recently submitted a UPD list of 41 locations to the D.C. government requesting that crosswalks around campus be repainted and repaired.

The maintenance request isn't done every year, but Hay cited last year's large winter storms and the effects of plowing snow from the streets as reasons for the repairs. Repairs will range from a complete repainting to minor touch-ups.

"We have assurances that this work will begin soon," Hay said, but he noted the city may wait for warmer weather before work begins.

As the University addresses crosswalks, DDOT is also working on changing pedestrian light signals at intersections to improve safety for pedestrians.

Known formally as a "leading pedestrian interval," the crosswalk lights are timed so the pedestrian has the green light to start walking about three seconds before the light directing cars changes.

Branyan said this gives those walking a "head start," and DDOT has already made the change at about 60 intersections across the city. The goal is to change signals at 100 locations by mid-2012.

"These will be targeted to intersections with a higher incidence of turning vehicle [and] pedestrian conflicts," he said.

While no intersections on GW's campus have changed signals, Branyan said locations near campus include the intersections of 19th and M streets, 21st and M streets, 19th and L streets, and 21st and L streets.

[VIDEO: New D.C. program seeks to increase pedestrian, bicycle safety](#)

TBD Online

March 31, 2011

By Gail Huff

A spike in accidents is causing some to question whether the District is a safe place for bicyclists and pedestrians.

This week the city launched a new effort called Street Smart, to encourage travelers to obey the laws -- and share the road.

In the Washington region last year, 83 pedestrians and bicyclists were struck and killed by vehicles.

In D.C. alone, 1,299 pedestrians were struck and needed emergency medical attention last. That's more than three per day on average.

Another 436 bicyclists were hit and injured -- 25 percent more crashes than the year before.

Crashes occur most often when vehicles are turning and the pedestrian has a walk signal at the same time. Officials started experimenting with staggering traffic lights - giving pedestrians a three second head start.

So far, 60 intersections have been recalibrated to give pedestrians that lead time. If they find it's working, by cutting down on crashes, they will change more of them over.

There are 1600 intersections in the District.

[D.C. Campaign Aims To Protect Pedestrians, Cyclists](#)

CBS Baltimore Online

March 31, 2011

By the Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — About three times every day in the District, someone walking on a city street gets hit by a vehicle and an ambulance races to the scene. This year, four of those people have died.

Last year, the number of walkers and cyclists hit in Washington increased by almost 25 percent compared with the previous year.

“Even at a slow speed, when you get hit by a car, it is violent and jarring,” said Neha Bhatt, a cyclist who needed months to recover after she was hit by a sport-utility vehicle last year on Benning Road northeast.

Some of the region’s law enforcement and political figures gathered Tuesday outside a police station on New York Avenue northwest to warn people that walkers and bikers are getting hit — and often. In fact, six pedestrians were struck that very day across the city.

As part of the kickoff of the spring Street Smart campaign, which includes new ads featuring giant feet smashing cars, officials also warned that pedestrians, bikers and drivers who don’t obey traffic laws will be targeted and ticketed by police.

Across the Washington region, which includes northern Virginia and suburban Maryland, 83 pedestrians and cyclists were killed on the road last year. That was up 9 percent from 2009.

Bhatt, 37, was almost one of them. It was actually the second time she has been hit on her commute from her home in Southeast Washington to her job downtown. Last summer’s crash happened when the SUV didn’t see her as it pulled out of a gas station.

“I was thrown from the sidewalk into oncoming traffic on Benning Road,” said Bhatt, who ended up getting 17 X-rays and a CT scan that day. “It was frighteningly obvious how lucky I was.”

But Bhatt still bikes to work.

“I am unwilling to give it up,” she said.

Last year, there were 436 bike vs. vehicle crashes in the District that were serious enough for police to respond to the accident, according to city data.

Part of the reason for the increase in people being hit might be that there has been a 68 percent jump in cyclists in the city over the past three years, officials said.

The District has the highest number of pedestrians in the region, and the most hit by cars. Last year, ambulances responded to 1,299 calls for pedestrians struck, according to data from the D.C. fire department.

Also last year, 16 people — two-thirds of those who died in traffic accidents — were on a bike or on foot.

“I can’t get used to these numbers,” said D.C. Assistant Police Chief Alfred Durham. “I can’t accept them.”

Last year, about 216 pedestrians were hit per 100,000 population in the District, according to data from the Fire and Emergency Medical Services Department. In Baltimore, about 169 per 100,000 were hit, fire officials say. In Philadelphia, the rate was about 120, according to police.

In Montgomery County, the rate was about 45. In Prince George's, it was about 90, according to data the counties provided.

People are more likely to be hit in downtown areas because so many walkers and bikers are packed into a small space. But they have more chance of dying when they are hit outside the city because cars are often moving faster.

In Washington, the crashes occur most often when vehicles are turning at an intersection while pedestrians have a "walk" signal.

"Pedestrians confidently stride in the crosswalk with the right of way and the cars don't see them," said Karina Ricks, an associate director at the D.C. Department of Transportation. "There's not much reaction time for either party."

Because the streets are so busy, and intersections often are backed up with cars, there isn't time to allow walkers to have the right of way while cars are stopped, officials said.

But they are starting to time lights so pedestrians have a few seconds to cross while the cars are stopped, allowing them to make their way into the crosswalk and become more visible to turning cars.

Of the city's 1,600 intersections, about 60 have such lights.

The majority of the intersections where pedestrian crashes occurred between 2008 and last year are in Northwest.

But the single intersection where the most pedestrians were hit — 13 — is Howard Road and Martin Luther King Jr. Avenue southeast, according to a report from the D.C. Department of Transportation. One of the people struck at that intersection was killed.

The next most dangerous crossing was New York Avenue and North Capitol Street, where 12 walkers were injured, followed by the intersections at H and North Capitol streets northwest, and Seventh and H streets northwest, where 11 people were injured.

Next was 14th and U streets northwest, where 10 people were hurt, followed by 12th Street and Massachusetts Avenue northwest, which had nine injuries.

On Tuesday, police released the name of a man in a wheelchair who was killed in a hit-and-run in the 5000 block of Benning Road southeast two weeks ago as he crossed in a crosswalk. Police are still looking for the car that struck Gary Green, 55, of southeast Washington on March 12.

Bhatt said she thinks of her two crashes every morning when she gets on her bike.

"As a survivor, I call for everyone who moves to please look out for each other," she said.

[Breakfast links: Follow the rules](#)

Greater Greater Washington Blog

March 31, 2011

By Erik Weber

MetroAccess drivers ignore rules, pay rider fares: Since the fare was raised, some MetroAccess drivers have been ignoring a new rule which requires riders to pay before boarding. Many are even paying customers' fares out of their own pocket. (Examiner)

Respect the train of command: WMATA's culture worships the "chain of command." If there's a problem, tell your boss. If they tell their boss and nothing happens, tough; talk to others and you might get slapped. (Metro From the Inside Out)

School news: The Fairfax County School Superintendent is proposing discipline policy changes after a rash of decidedly draconian punishments. ... A DC woman is claiming her son's teacher encouraged him to change his test answers. The WTU is saying any misdeeds likely happened in administrative offices, not classrooms. (WUSA)

Bentonville's Chili Bowl: Harry Thomas, Jr. wants to see Ben's Chili Bowl in every Walmart—across the nation. But since Ben's chili is made by hand each morning, how would that work, exactly? (DCist)

Bike & ped crashes up over decade: With the most recent Street Smart campaign come new data about rising bicycle and pedestrian crashes in the region. Last year there were more than 400 crashes, while in 1999 there were just over 200. (TheWashCycle)

Mobile market to take on food deserts: Arcadia Center for Sustainable Food & Agriculture is converting a school bus into a mobile farmers' market that can serve the region's food deserts. They have a happy hour and fundraiser tonight. (We Love DC)

Keolis can bid on MARC after releasing Nazi information: Keolis America will be allowed to bid on the MARC Brunswick and Camden Lines, after its parent, SNCF, agreed to speed the online digitization of company archives addressing the company's role in transporting people to Nazi death camps. (Baltimore Sun)

Pedestrian guide to the USA: An new infographic gives tips to pedestrians in various cities, including DC, in the form of traffic warning signs. Some are informative, some funny, and some just reinforce harmful stereotypes. (We Love DC)

And...: Metro released its sizable track work schedule for April yesterday, with only one weekend-long closing (TBD) ... The National Women's History Museum may get dibs on a parcel of land just south of the Mall at 12th Street SW (Housing Complex) ... Marion Barry has been driving a car with expired license plates for months, and likely never registered the car or paid the taxes on it. (Post)

Have a tip for the links? [Submit it here](#).

[Street Smart Campaign kicks off with warning about increased crashes](#)

Wash Cycle

March 31, 2011

Staff

Law enforcement and public officials gathered yesterday to kick off the Street Smart Campaign. In addition to warning pedestrians, cyclists and drivers that those who don't obey traffic laws will be targeted and ticketed by police (for the next couple of weeks at least) they also released some data on crashes which are up for cyclists and pedestrians.

[I've had this data for awhile and I'm actively working on a post about it, but it's going slow]. Allison Klein's story in the Post often combines cyclists and pedestrians making it hard to tell how things are going for just cyclists, and even though she writes that:

Last year, there were 436 bike vs. vehicle crashes in the District that were serious enough for police to respond to the accident, according to city data.

Part of the reason for the increase in people being hit might be that there has been a 68 percent jump in cyclists in the city over the past three years, officials said.

Which is all true, but she fails to report on how many crashes there were before 2010. Here are those numbers for several of the last few years.

So yes, it's been on the climb (injuries look basically the same).

Anyway more to come on this data later - I promise.

In a complimentary story, the Daily Gripe asks readers to map out the more dangerous intersections and in a similar effort, WABA has launched a bike crash tool.

Last month we attended the DC Council oversight hearing on pedestrian and bicycle enforcement, and needless to say, we learned a lot. But what stood out for us was that there was so much more that we needed to know—about how and where bike crashes happened in the region and more detailed information about the circumstances both during and after the crash.

Coincidentally, there was a very serious crash yesterday morning at 2nd and Constitution, NW that left one adult male cyclist in "life-threatening" condition. Let's hope he pulls through.

[D.C. starts campaign to protect pedestrians, cyclists as number of crashes rises](#)

Washington Post

March 30, 2011

By Allison Klein

About three times every day in the District, someone walking on a city street gets hit by a vehicle and an ambulance races to the scene. So far this year, four of those people have died.

Last year, the number of walkers and cyclists hit in Washington increased by almost 25 percent compared with the previous year.

“Even at a slow speed, when you get hit by a car, it is violent and jarring,” said Neha Bhatt, a cyclist who needed months to recover after she was hit by a sport-utility vehicle last year on Benning Road NE.

Some of the region’s law enforcement and political figures gathered Tuesday outside a police station on New York Avenue NW to warn people that walkers and bikers are getting hit — and often. In fact, six pedestrians were struck that very day across the city.

As part of the kickoff of the spring [Street Smart](#) campaign, which includes new ads featuring giant feet smashing cars, they also warned that pedestrians, bikers and drivers who don’t obey traffic laws will be targeted and ticketed by police.

Across the Washington region, which includes Northern Virginia and suburban Maryland, 83 pedestrians and cyclists were [killed on the road](#) last year. That was up 9 percent from 2009.

Bhatt was almost one of them. It was actually the second time she was hit on her commute from her home in Southeast Washington to her job downtown. Last summer’s crash happened when the SUV didn’t see her as it pulled out of a gas station.

“I was thrown from the sidewalk into oncoming traffic on Benning Road,” said Bhatt, who ended up getting 17 X-rays and a CT scan that day. “It was frighteningly obvious how lucky I was.”

But Bhatt, 37, still bikes to work. “I am unwilling to give it up,” she said.

Part of the reason for the increase in people being hit might be that there has been a 68 percent jump in cyclists traversing the city over the past three years, officials said.

The District has the highest number of pedestrians in the region, and the most hit by cars. Last year, ambulances responded to 1,299 calls for pedestrians struck, according to data from the D.C. fire department.

Also last year, 16 people — two-thirds of those who died in traffic accidents — were on bike or foot.

“I can’t get used to these numbers,” said Assistant D.C. Police Chief Alfred Durham. “I can’t accept them.”

Last year, about 216 pedestrians were hit per 100,000 population in the District, according to data from the fire department. In Baltimore, about 175 per 100,000 were hit, fire officials say. In Philadelphia, the rate was about 119, according to police.

In Montgomery County, the rate was about 45. In Prince George's, it was about 91, according to data provided by the counties.

People are more likely to be hit in downtown areas because so many walkers and bikers are packed into a small space. But they have a greater chance of dying when they are hit outside the city because cars are often moving faster.

In Washington, the crashes occur most often when vehicles are turning at an intersection while pedestrians have a "walk" signal.

"Pedestrians confidently stride in the crosswalk with the right-of-way and the cars don't see them," said Karina Ricks, an associate director at the D.C. Department of Transportation. "There's not much reaction time for either party."

Because the streets are so busy, and intersections often are backed up with cars, there isn't time to allow walkers to have the right-of-way while cars are stopped, officials said.

But they are starting to time lights so pedestrians have a few seconds to cross while the cars are stopped, allowing them to make their way into the crosswalk and become more visible to turning cars.

Of the city's 1,600 intersections, about 60 have such lights.

The majority of the intersections with pedestrian crashes between 2008 and last year are in the Northwest quadrant of the city.

But the single intersection where the most pedestrians were hit, 13, is Howard Road and Martin Luther King Jr. Avenue SE, according to a report from the D.C. Department of Transportation. One of the people struck at that intersection was killed.

Next most is New York Avenue and North Capitol Street, where 12 walkers were injured. Then the intersections at H and North Capitol streets, and Seventh and H streets NW, where 11 people were injured.

Next was 14th and U streets NW, where 10 people were hurt, followed by 12th Street and Massachusetts Avenue NW, which had nine injuries.

On Tuesday, police released the name of a man in a wheelchair who was killed in a hit-and-run the 5000 block of Benning Road two weeks ago as he crossed in a crosswalk. Police are still looking for the car that struck [Gary Green](#), 55, of Southeast on March 12.

Bhatt said she still thinks of her two crashes every morning when she gets on her bike.

"As a survivor, I call for everyone who moves to please look out for each other," she said.

[Tell us: What are the area's most dangerous stretches of road for pedestrians?](#)

Washington Post (blog)

March 30, 2011

Justin Jouvenal

The number of pedestrians and cyclists hit in D.C. shot up by 25 percent last year compared with the previous year. Overall, on the region's roads, 83 walkers and bikers were killed in 2010 — a nine percent increase. One thing is clear: It's dangerous out there.

[The Post's Allison Klein breaks down the numbers in a story today](#). If you ride or walk regularly, you probably have intersections that you dread and stretches of road where you find near-misses are common. We would like to hear from you. Use The Daily Gripe map to file a report on one of those areas. We'll take a look and see if we can help.

[The Needle: Reinforcing The Fact Edition](#)

Washington City Paper

March 30, 2011

Mike Madden

Experts Weigh In: The House is setting up a fight with the White House over school vouchers for low-income D.C. students, which the Obama administration is opposing on the theory that Congress really shouldn't be deciding who goes to which schools in the District. And like all issues, the future of D.C. education policy can be easily reduced to snappy sound bites from political operatives who have no stake in and know nothing about the situation! Just ask Georgia state Sen. **Judson Hill**, a Republican who bills himself as "the conservative leader who delivers," and muses to [Politico](#): "Parents should have the say in their children's education before teachers or a union. Restricting parents control and supporting unions first only reinforces the fact that the president is not on the side of children." Pithy! Thanks for contributing your generic talking points to our local issues, Sen. Hill; it only, uh, "reinforces the fact" that D.C. should be run by Washingtonians. **-1**

Only Voters Pay Fines: When they're not writing legislation affecting a city they like to pretend they never even set foot in, members of Congress apparently like to spend their time parking illegally and running red lights. An investigation by *Roll Call* finds at least \$15,000 in unpaid tickets pending against cars owned or driven by lawmakers (though some, like would-be New York Mayor **Anthony Weiner**, paid their tab when the paper called them). City law allows members of Congress to park without paying meters wherever they like as long as they're on official business—which seems like a decent provision to revisit in our time of budgetary crises. **-2**

There's Something About a Tweet That's Magic: Traveling between D.C. and points north by rail often means delays of uncertain causes and lengths. But now, thanks to the power of social networking, it will mean delays of uncertain causes and lengths with 140 character rationalizations—Amtrak has launched what it's calling a "pilot program" to tweet out status updates for major problems, using the catchy Twitter handle @AmtrakNEC (for Northeast Corridor). If all goes well, maybe next they'll start sending LinkedIn requests to Acela passengers. **+1**

Cars to Pedestrians, Cyclists—Drop Dead: Getting around the District without the protective cushioning of at least a ton of steel, plastic, glass, and a combustion engine is increasingly dangerous. Last year, the number of people hit by cars increased 25 percent over the year before; by now, three times a day, someone meets the business end of a vehicle. (Follow @StruckDC for a grisly tally.) **Officials just kicked off a new campaign aimed at pedestrian and bike safety**, which will include ticketing... pedestrians and cyclists. The good news: Once they're on the ground, they're very easy to hit with a ticket. **-2**

Yesterday's Needle rating: 63 Today's score: -4 Today's Needle rating: 59

[Pedestrian safety ads feature damage to cars, not people](#)

Greater Greater Washington Blog

March 25, 2011

By Adam Lewis

With dozens of people struck by cars every month in the District, pedestrian and bicycle safety is a serious concern. The Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (MWCOG) has introduced a new street safety campaign for 2011 with the intent of addressing inter-modal accidents.



Image from StreetSmart.

However, the new ads from the Street Smart public safety program that are now appearing on area billboards and bus shelters send the wrong message. In the ads, a damaged car is shown after what appears to be an accident with a pedestrian or bicyclist, both of which are proportionally much larger.



Images from StreetSmart.

The ads feature several warnings, such as "Get Real...Wait for the Walk" to "Watch for Bicyclists When Turning." But the defining feature in each image is that the car, not the pedestrian or cyclist, is the only injured party during a crash.



Image from StreetSmart.

Previous ad campaigns from the MWCOC have been particularly noteworthy. One launched in 2008 depicts a car violently hitting a person on foot. The ads were clearly meant to shock both drivers and pedestrians into being more aware of their surroundings in order to avoid collisions; they were so effective that I still remember them now, several years later.

The new ads, on the other hand, remind me of times as a kid when I accidentally fell while walking. My dad would ask, jokingly, if the sidewalk was hurt in the fall, which took my mind off a skinned knee or bruised arm. While I was just fine after a minor stumble, pedestrians and bicyclists hit by vehicles are not often so lucky.

Everyone should follow traffic safety laws, but the idea that it's only the car that gets damaged in a pedestrian accident defies logic. MWCOC's Street Smart program is an important one, and this iteration of ads could be substantially less effective than what the council has produced in the past.

Correction: The ads as listed on the StreetSmart website have yellow borders reading "A Giant Pedestrian (or Bicycle) Safety Problem." Several people pointed out that this should be considered part of the creative. I've updated the images to include that, and also show both versions of the pedestrian and bicycle ads with different taglines.

[Campaign couples education, enforcement to create safer roads](#)

WTOP.com

March 21, 2011

By Hank Silverberg

WASHINGTON - Walkers, bikers and drivers in the region are about to get some more safety reminders.

The Street Smart ad campaign, which takes place twice a year, is set to begin again Monday. The program aims to educate motorists and pedestrians about street safety by calling on pedestrians to cross at crosswalks, urging bikers to obey signs and signals and reminding drivers that walkers have the right-of-way.

The reminders include street signs and radio ads aimed at creating safer streets and reducing pedestrian fatalities. About 2,700 pedestrians and bicyclists are injured each year in the D.C. region, according to Street Smart [officials](#), while 89 are killed.

"Our fatalities in the region have not declined significantly since the mid-1990s, and so we're at a plateau and we're trying to break that plateau and get our fatalities to be lower," says George Branyan, pedestrian coordinator for the D.C. Department of Transportation.

Branyan says the campaign -- which includes jurisdictions in Maryland and Virginia -- will combine media advertisements with aggressive police enforcement aimed at changing people's behavior.

In the spring of 2009, officials say 38,961 citations and 4,803 warnings were issued to drivers, pedestrians and cyclists in Arlington, Alexandria, Fairfax County, Montgomery County and the District.

"We're going to see if the combination of visible, aggressive enforcement -- combined with the educational message -- can change behavior," Branyan says.

WTOP's Hank Silverberg contributed to this report. Follow [Hank](#) and [WTOP](#) on Twitter.

[To reduce enforcement errors, MPD wants traffic division](#)

Greater Greater Washington Blog

March 17, 2011

By Jamie Scott

The Metropolitan Police Department wants a dedicated traffic unit to fix enforcement problems, including stories about officers serving tickets to injured pedestrians or cyclists at the hospital. MPD believes inconsistent enforcement of traffic laws has created tension between officers and pedestrians or cyclists.



Photo by Wayan Vota on Flickr.

Officer Andrew Gamm from MPD's 5th District, Lt. Nicholas Breul from the Special Operations District, and Lt. Mark Hodge from the 6th District spoke with DC's Pedestrian Advisory Council Monday night to talk about these issues.

One brought up a report about an officer ticketing an injured pedestrian in an ambulance, but said he was unable to verify if it was true. Similar incidents came up at a recent hearing and have been reported on blogs like Struck in DC and TBD On Foot.

A sustained effort of education and enforcement can reduce this tension and improve pedestrian safety. However, the current budget crisis and low police staffing levels make this a difficult prospect.

The commanders said MPD used to have a dedicated traffic unit but previous police chiefs decentralized that effort. Currently, each district has officers working on traffic enforcement but they are not a single city-wide unit.

This means enforcement is inconsistent across the city. MPD currently targets "hot spots" for a set period and then moves its resources to other areas. However, problems often return after enforcement efforts end. Uneven enforcement also means some police districts enforce violations like jaywalking, while others do not.

Some on the Pedestrian Advisory Council complained that MPD officers often do not follow up with pedestrians and bicyclists involved in accidents and that the officers can be rude when they do. The commanders admitted that MPD can do more to improve communication with sergeants and patrol officers, including reinforcing proper procedures for crash investigations.

Having a dedicated traffic unit would allow MPD to give specialized training to traffic officers. These officers could also build stronger relationships with the communities they patrol because they would have sustained interactions around traffic enforcement.

Some of the commanders admitted that interactions with pedestrians can be more confrontational than with motorists. This, they said, often happens because pedestrians are more likely to challenge the officer than drivers.

They also said the nature of police work can make routine traffic enforcement tenuous. For example, switching from chasing a gunman to writing a jaywalking ticket can be a rough transition. A dedicated traffic unit could help reduce these shifts.

The human nature argument is certainly a fair one. I can imagine if an officer just chased a gunman, his adrenaline may be high, and he may be more likely to be short or rude to an angry pedestrian. But this argument also seems to excuse rude behavior because police work can be dangerous. One officer even went so far as to say he wouldn't tell someone else how to do his or her job. This sort of attitude isn't helpful.

Pedestrian Advisory Council members asked for better public education efforts, including an expansion of the regional StreetSmart program. The program is an enforcement and awareness campaign by area police departments to improve safety for motorists, cyclists, and pedestrians. George Branyan, DDOT Pedestrian Coordinator, said DDOT has a limited budget for the program. Similar education programs that use shock value are less effective without enforcement to supplement them.

The MPD representatives said the department needs greater political support for increased enforcement, and the advisory council pledged to work with the DC Council to provide more support.