

Advisory Neighborhood Commission
District of Columbia
<http://www.ANC1E.org>



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COMMISSIONER BRAD HOWARD

ANC 1E01 | PARK VIEW

April 18, 2025

Commander Nikki Lavenhouse
Metropolitan Police Department – 4th District
750 Park Rd NW
Washington, DC 20010

Dear Commander Lavenhouse:

Thank you for the continued efforts of the Fourth District to support public safety in Park View. I want to recognize the officers who have participated in community walks, responded to service calls, and engaged directly with residents. These efforts do not go unnoticed, and I appreciate the time and energy your team continues to invest in our neighborhood.

I'm writing today because, despite that effort, conditions on and around the 700 block of Otis Place NW remain a source of serious concern. This is not a new issue—and it's not limited to one incident. Over the past six months, residents have submitted a long and detailed record of complaints documenting persistent problems: open-air drug dealing, public intoxication, repeated fights, late-night disturbances, illegal parking and trespassing, and multiple shootings.

These reports have come through every possible channel—emails, 911 calls, ANC meetings, and community walkthroughs. In one message, a resident described frequent “large gatherings of people who are not sober and/or are engaged in illicit activity” in front of residential buildings. Another neighbor wrote that “this activity has not historically started up until late spring—and it is equally frustrating that it is routine enough year after year to be an expected seasonal occurrence.” Many residents have noted that after reporting issues, they often receive no follow-up and see no sustained change.

Then on April 5, the worst-case scenario happened: a shooting occurred mid-block, close to where children live and play. Several neighbors had called 911 before it happened. One wrote, “Exactly what we were all worried would happen, happened.” Others described seeing an MPD vehicle nearby that did not intervene before shots were fired. Whether that perception is accurate or not, the trust gap it reflects is real—and growing.

Residents are not asking for unrealistic outcomes. They are asking for basic safety and consistency: a clear strategy, better coordination, and results that last longer than a few days.

To that end, I respectfully ask for a written response to the following questions:

- Why haven't existing strategies worked? What challenges—staffing, interagency limits, legal constraints—are keeping MPD from making progress here?
- What is the long-term plan? How does MPD intend to reduce and prevent crime at this location over the spring and summer?
- Are there tools that haven't been used? Could nuisance property enforcement, stationary surveillance, or targeted overtime shifts make a difference? What's standing in the way?
- What does MPD need to succeed here? If more resources—officers, tech, funding—are needed, how can we help secure them through Council or the Mayor's office?
- Can MPD commit to consistent foot patrols? Residents say clearly that a visible presence—on foot, not just in vehicles—has the greatest deterrent impact. Is this feasible on a sustained basis?
- Is MPD actively coordinating with Cure the Streets, ONSE, or other violence interruption programs? If not, what would it take to make that happen?
- How will success be measured and shared? Can MPD commit to providing regular updates on this block—whether monthly or quarterly—with clear benchmarks like call volume, arrests, or community feedback?

This neighborhood is not sitting back. Residents have organized cleanups, hosted block meetings, filed complaints, and worked to build relationships with MPD. But at this point, many feel like they're doing their part without any lasting results. We need a more effective, better coordinated response—one that goes beyond temporary crackdowns or one-off events.

Thank you again for your leadership. I respectfully request a written reply by May 9, 2025. I will share my responses with my fellow ANC 1E commissioners and my constituents. I would also welcome the opportunity to meet with you to discuss next steps.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "B. Howard", with a stylized, cursive script.

Brad Howard, Commissioner (1E01)
Advisory Neighborhood Commission 1E
District of Columbia

Cc: Chairman Brian Footer, ANC 1E

Cc: Councilmember Brianne Nadeau, Ward 1