

World Pride is coming to Dupont: Here's how the ANC is preparing for and protecting this historic celebration

By Sophia Carroll

World Pride marks the 50th year anniversary of pride in D.C., and for the neighborhood of Dupont Circle that is something major to celebrate. And celebrate they will, with a great deal of help from their ANC.

Since ANC 2B's first meeting of the year on Jan. 8, commissioners, like Commissioner Vincent Platt, have been working towards making this year's pride celebration in Dupont Circle one to remember. Dupont is one of D.C.'s most historic LGBTQ+ friendly neighborhoods. The town truly established itself as a major hub of LGBTQ+ life and culture in the 1970s.

However, in recent years Dupont has become less of a staple for the LGBTQ+ community, "While still gay-friendly today, the neighborhood's central role in D.C.'s LGBT life has largely been eclipsed by other neighborhoods." according to the [Rainbow History Project](#).

In 2024, D.C.'s annual pride parade route was changed to no longer travel toward and end in Dupont. Instead it moved down 14th Street to Freedom Plaza before turning and ending on Pennsylvania Ave, according to Arya Hodjat in an [article](#) for the Washingtonian.

This change was made due to size restrictions, with Dupont streets being too small to accommodate the large size of the parade, according to a Capital Pride Alliance spokesperson, Marquia Parnell.

Regardless of the reason, Dupont's removal from the parade route does not remove its history of celebrating the LGBTQ+ community, nor the large population of LGBTQ+ residents.

Therefore, public service officials, like those serving on the town's Advisory Neighborhood Commission, are doing everything in their power to curate exciting and especially safe celebratory pride events for the residents of Dupont Circle.

In years past, Dupont has held various events throughout Pride Month that have been quite successful. Andra Mutu, a soon-to-be American University graduate and future full-time D.C. resident, has attended three years of D.C. Pride since coming to the city her freshman year.

The past two years, she recalls attending pride events in Dupont and said, "Overall it's really fun because everyone dresses up and everyone's really excited to be there." This year plans to be much of the same, with major help from ANC commissioners, like Commissioner Slatt.

Slatt and his fellow commissioners have been working with government agencies, like DDOT (The District Department of Transportation), nonprofits like Capital Pride Alliance and local businesses to secure permits and close down roads for the various planned events.

One of these events includes a weekend long block party on 17th street. From June 6-8, 17th street will be closed and filled with “local food, adult beverages, and various activities in celebration of Pride!” according to the Worldpride D.C. [website](#).

Securing the permits for these events have been one of the biggest challenges with a major point of contention being lack of communication between organizers and commissioners.

At an April 9 monthly meeting, commissioners disagreed over whether it’s their responsibility to make sure these permits are in place. Or if it’s up to organizations, like Capital Pride Alliance to do so.

“It’s on us to make sure they have the permits to use Dupont Circle,” said Commissioner Christopher Davis.

This is one issue that must be resolved quickly in order to ensure that Pride in Dupont will be a success.



High Heel Pride Mural on the streets of Dupont Circle
(Image by: Sophia Carroll)

Along with their ongoing efforts to secure permits, the Dupont ANC has been able to allocate funding for placemaking efforts around the neighborhood such as mural paintings and single-use decorations to be installed around Dupont.

Throughout the year Slatt and all the commissioners of ANC 2B have worked tirelessly to secure funds for these things to make sure that this year’s pride celebrations will be special for the neighborhood. “If it’s not in the budget, it’s not going to happen,” said Slatt.

Their efforts to make Pride fun and exciting for the neighborhood are of great importance. But another planning aspect that many D.C. residents and Pride supporters believe should be a top priority for this year’s celebration is: security and safety.

With the recent change in administration has come increased anxieties in the LGBTQ+ community for their personal safety. Especially at large events such as World Pride.

Since his inauguration in January, President Trump has signed various executive orders concerning the rights and personal safety of LGBTQ+ citizens in the U.S. Some of these orders include limiting access and funding for gender-affirming healthcare and rescinding orders from the previous administration which protected LGBTQ+ individuals access to care and well-being, according to journalists Lindsey Dawson and Jennifer Kates in an [article](#) for KFF.

Along with these federal actions, Trump has continually spread anti-LGBTQ+ rhetoric throughout his entire political career. His second election and subsequent inauguration has led to increased anti-LGBTQ+ sentiments throughout the country, and in our nation's capital.

Sexual Orientation & Gender Identity Bias-Related Crimes (Hate Crimes) in D.C. from 2013-Today

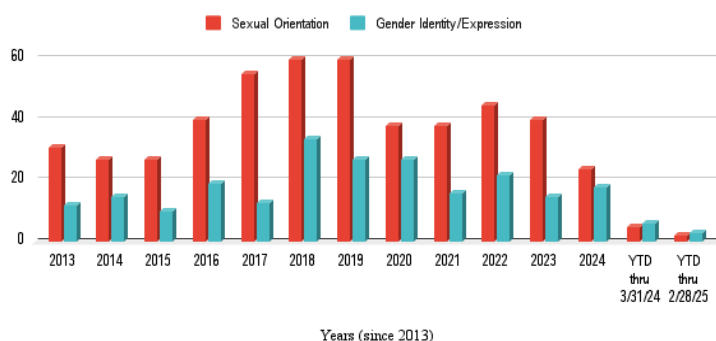


Chart by Sophia Carroll with data from [Metropolitan Police Department](#).

The Metropolitan Police Department's [data on bias-related crime](#) shows that over the course of Trump's first presidential term, hate crimes involving a victim's sexual orientation or gender identity in D.C. increased significantly. In 2015, there were 37 sexual orientation and gender identity based crimes. In 2016 that number rose to 59. In 2019 alone, 87 of these kinds of crimes were committed.

Since July 15, 2024, the day Trump was announced the Republican nominee for the 2024 presidential election, there have been 21 reported hate crimes involving a victim's sexual orientation or gender identity in D.C., according to the [Metropolitan Police Department](#).

It is clear that with the spread of "MAGA" ideology comes an uptick in anti-LGBTQ+ feelings in the nation and in D.C.

This change of general feelings towards the Queer Community is being recognized. Mutu, who works for a federal agency says, "I've noticed a lot of shifts in the workplace. Like people aren't as comfortable being out or other people knowing what they identify as."

It's undeniable and understandable that those in the LGBTQ+ community, especially living in D.C., are worried about their personal safety and well-being.

These fears have carried over to anxieties towards attending upcoming events for World Pride as it is taking place in the capital city. Graduate student and D.C. resident, Anna Cibrian said, “I think now it is a little bit scary just because of where we are [D.C.] in relation to everything.”

Mutu also expressed nervousness saying, “I’ve thought about being met with protestors at these events. You know, what might happen because we’ve seen very rapid escalation for very minor instances especially in D.C. in the past.”

Unlike Mutu, Cibrian has never attended D.C. pride, but went to the N.Y.C Pride Parade this past summer. She said the security precautions at the events in N.Y. made her feel very safe, and she hopes to see similar safety plans in D.C. this year.



Anna Cibrian (left) and friends at N.Y. Pride Parade, 2024
(Photo permission by: Anna Cibrian)

Safety and security of attendees has always been a concern for the organizations in charge of operating these events, like Capital Pride Alliance. And this year safety precautions are a top priority, “The Mayor’s office has a top-to-bottom safety protocol in place, with the level of preparation on par with high-security events like inauguration,” according to [Capital Pride Alliance](#).

Safety efforts include increased surveillance, on-site security/police, advanced life support stations and medic teams, additional private security and anti-scaling systems and barricades where applicable. The safety of attendees is a major concern, shared both by the organizers of these events and potential attendees themselves.

Despite their fears, the D.C. LGBTQ+ community in Dupont Circle is ready and excited to celebrate 50 years of pride in the capital. And with the major efforts put in by their ANC, the neighborhood will be doing so for three weeks filled with various events all over the city starting May 17, according to the Worldpride D.C. [website](#).

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