



Old Fourth Ward BUSINESS Association

April 11, 2018

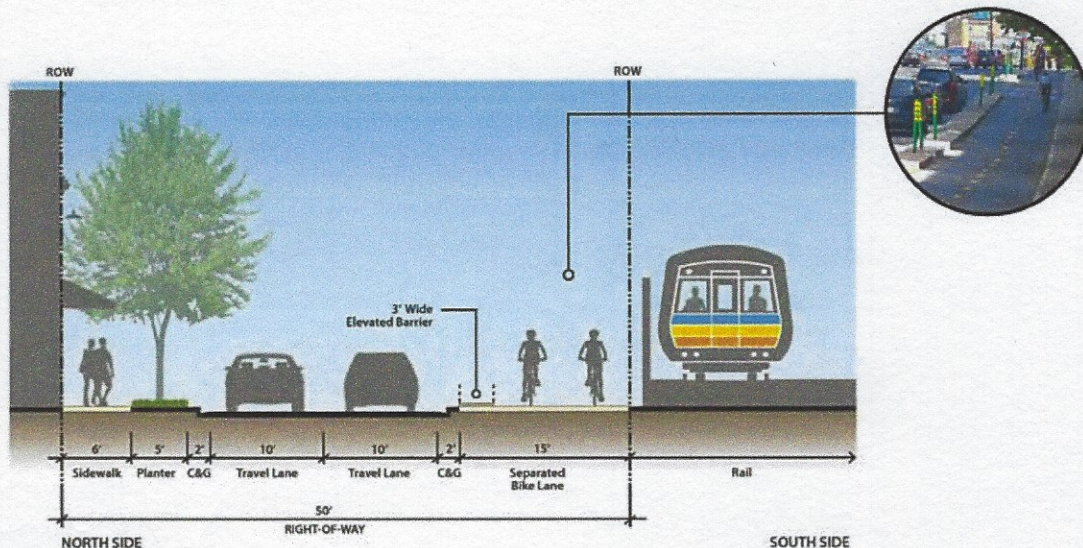
City of Atlanta
Renew Atlanta/TSPLOST
Attn: Faye DiMassimo
55 Trinity Avenue SW
Atlanta, GA

Dear Ms. DiMassimo,

I'm writing you on behalf of the 90+ members of the Old Fourth Ward Business Association to testify to the positive role safe, slow, walkable, and bikeable streets play in the business community.

The DeKalb Avenue Complete Street Project should not only be implemented between the City of Decatur (at Rockyford Rd. NE) and Inman Park-Reynoldstown MARTA Station (at Hurt St.), but must extend down Decatur St. to connect to the bike lane that terminates at Jackson St.

The City of Atlanta presented a few options for this project. We're most excited about replacing the reversible "suicide" lane with left-hand turn lanes, repaving the street, adding a multi-use path for biking and walking, and enhancing intersections with signal upgrades.



[Renew Atlanta Option 50A: 2 Travel Lanes with Separated Bike Lane]



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Some people believe that the Complete Street improvements will create congestion. The congestion caused by turning left on DeKalb Avenue negatively impacts the businesses and neighbors. Removing the reversible lane and adding the left-hand turn lanes will let traffic flow freely, while slowing down cars to speeds safe enough for more bike and foot traffic.

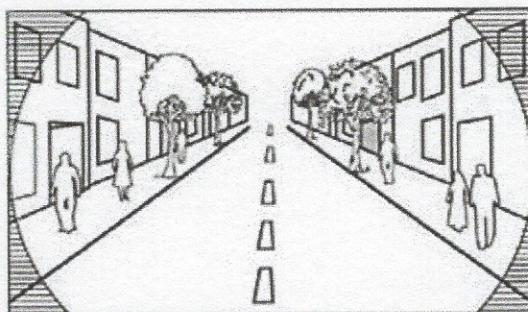
What does this mean for the business community and why should you care?

It means that DeKalb Avenue could get a lot safer and easier to bike, walk, and drive on. From my experience, this translates into more foot traffic, more bike traffic, slower car speeds -- putting more eyes on retail business and creating more opportunities for customers to engage with our businesses.

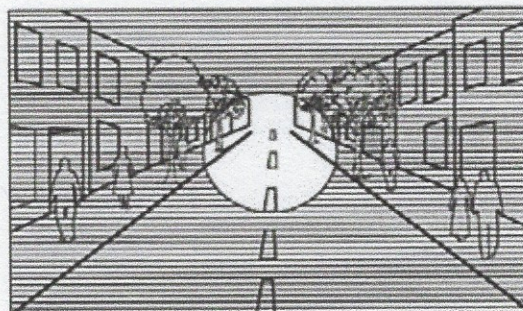
When you add a multi-use trail and safe crosswalks, as the Complete Street project proposes, you create an attractive place to bike and walk, live and work.

Take a look at this infographic on how speed alters a driver's field of vision. The slower the car speed, the safer it is for people who bike and walk, and **the more visible your storefront becomes.**

WHY SPEED MATTERS



Field of vision at 15 MPH



Field of vision at 30 to 40 MPH

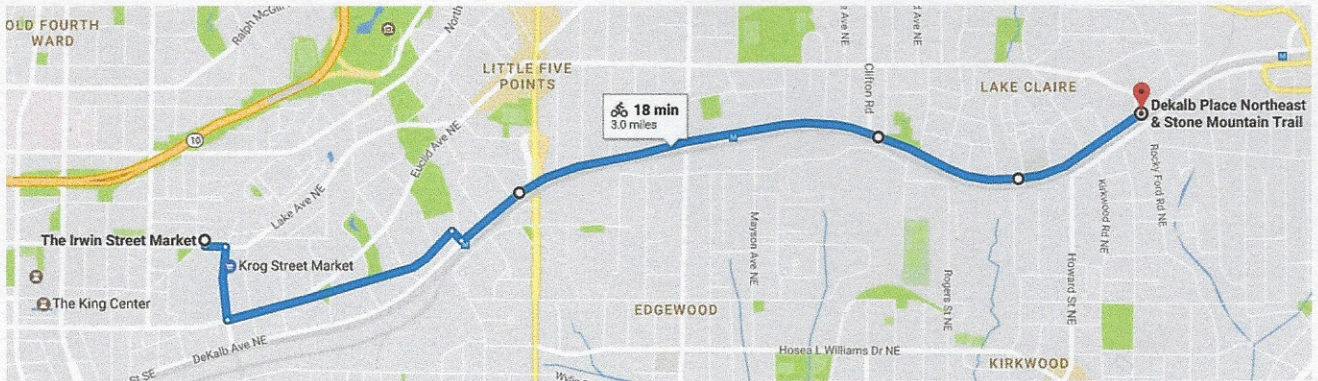
A driver's field of vision increases as speed decreases. At lower speeds, drivers can see more of their surroundings and have more time to see and react to potential hazards.

[Infographic courtesy of Vision Zero Network]

We care about this because we have customers who come from eastside Atlanta neighborhoods, as well as Decatur, Avondale Estates, and Stone Mountain. We want them to show up happy and stress-free, preferably on a bicycle or on an afternoon jog. If they stop at local businesses along the way, all the better.



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[Biking and Walking Traffic will put people on a route along your business; right now Google Maps wants to send biking and walking traffic to Little Five Points]

People want to do this, otherwise voters wouldn't have overwhelmingly approved the Renew Atlanta bond that funds projects including the DeKalb Avenue Complete Street Project.

The best part is safe, slow, walkable, and bikeable streets are not unique to the BeltLine.

They are the outcome of street design that encourages people to bike and walk. The DeKalb Avenue Complete Street Project will create these exact conditions - and the project's already completely funded.

The current conditions on DeKalb Avenue, however, discourage biking and walking, while creating an environment that has been proven to be dangerous for motorists and pedestrians alike. A recent WABE report shows that **you're twice as likely to get in a crash while driving on DeKalb than any other street in Atlanta.**

We want to change this by proclaiming our support for the DeKalb Avenue Complete Street project that includes the multi-use trail for bikes and pedestrians and connects biking and walking facilities to Jackson St.

Sincerely,

Lara Smith

President, Old Fourth Ward Business Association

cc: Mayor Keisha Lance Bottoms
Council President Felicia A. Moore
Councilmember Amir R. Farokhi (District 2)
Councilmember Natalyn Mosby Archibong (District 5)
Councilmember Michael Julian Bond (Post 1)
Councilmember Matt Westmoreland (Post 2)
Councilmember Andre Dickens (Post 3)