

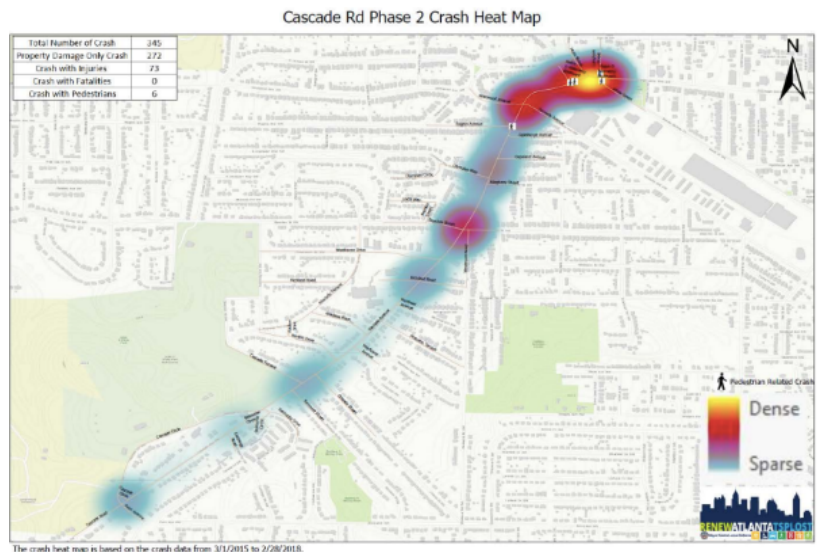
Dear Councilmembers -

As you undoubtedly know, last year the Atlanta Regional Commission set a goal of entirely eliminating traffic-related fatalities by 2030 - "Vision Zero". Indeed, determining strategies to achieve Vision Zero is listed as a 2019 goal of the City Council Transportation Committee. Sadly, in Southwest Atlanta, the Cascade Avenue corridor has already had three fatalities in the first half of 2019.

These deaths did not have to happen.

According to the city's own data, the Cascade Avenue intersections at Ralph David Abernathy and Donnelly are among the most dangerous in the city. The area has the **5th** highest number of incidents with severe injuries and fatal crashes in Atlanta. It lacks proper crosswalks and pedestrian beacons. It makes access to the community green space dangerous.

And for much of Southwest Atlanta, there is no avoiding Cascade. Cascade is the **only** major road running between Cascade Heights and West End. It's a pedestrian route for students in the Booker T. Washington Cluster, Tuskegee Airman Academy, Brown Middle School, and Kipp Academy. Cascade runs along the connection of the Atlanta Beltline, Gordon White Park, and Enota Park. As Southwest Atlanta continues to grow, Cascade's centrality means that it's problems are only going to multiply.

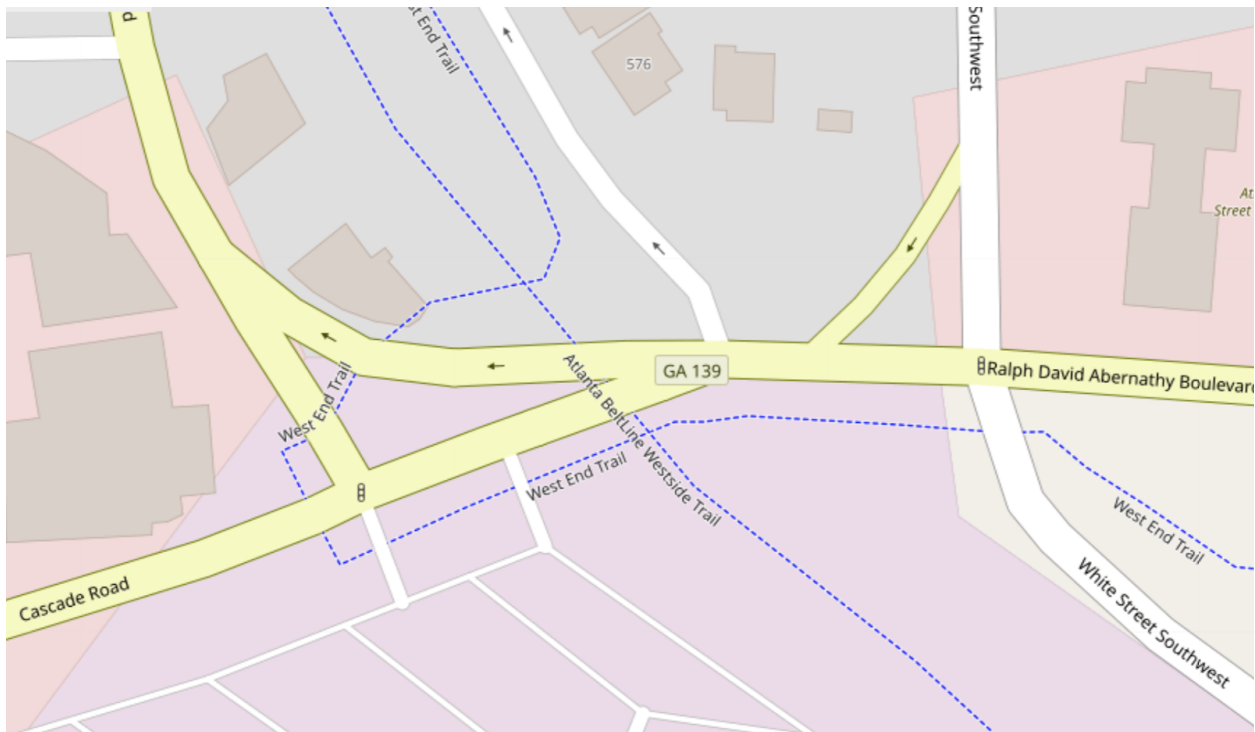


In 2015, Southwest Atlanta was promised a transformation of Cascade Avenue into a Complete Street. That promise has not been kept; and while we understand that sometimes money runs short and projects are postponed, in the case of Cascade **delay literally means death**.

Atlanta can do better. Atlanta **must** do better.

The communities of Beecher-Donnelly, Westview, West End, Cascade Avenue, and Venetian Hills, along with Neighborhood Planning Units S and T, have come together to advocate for the following improvements to the Cascade corridor be made through the funded Renew Atlanta / TSPLOST resurfacing project:

White St. to Donnelly Ave. Segment:



This is the busiest section of Cascade - and it's poorly designed. Furthermore, the rapid development and growth along the Beltline and in Westview and West End have strained this area even further. Improvements here are critical.



Dedicated turning light from Cascade to Ralph David Abernathy

This is a perennial complaint. There is a left turn signal into the Kroger Citi Center shopping center when traveling westbound along RDA; however, there's no mirroring left turn onto RDA

from Cascade eastbound. Since RDA leads to I-20 West, and Langhorn, two streets further down, leads to I-20 East, frustrated drivers dart between lanes along a very short section of road, leading to frequent accidents. **We ask for a dedicated turn light, turn lane, or other solution to simplify turning left from Cascade onto Ralph David Abernathy.**

Remove right turn slip lane onto Abernathy from Kroger shopping center

There are two entrances into the Kroger Citi Center at RDA - one at the traffic light, and a slip lane right next to it. This is a heavily populated section of sidewalk, connecting Westview to the popular White Street district and containing an active bus stop. Slip lanes are dangerous for pedestrians to cross because they encourage car drivers to continue through them. **We ask for the removal of the slip lane.**

Donnelly Ave. to Beecher St. Segment:



This is a residential length between commercial nodes, with heavy pedestrian traffic and poor lighting. There have been too many close calls to count along this stretch, and several collisions.

Protected pedestrian crossing at Oglethorpe / Copeland

The shopping area at Rogers/Oglethorpe and Cascade is not fancy, but it is very popular, containing a laundromat, auto supply store, restaurant, and discount store. Numerous pedestrians cross the street at this zone, but automobiles are frequently accelerating as the number of lanes change from four lanes to two lanes with a center turn lane. There have been numerous close calls and several injuries and fatalities in this zone. **We ask for a substantially improved pedestrian crossing in this area, whether through rapid flash beacons, a pedestrian safety island, or both.**

Beecher Ave. to Avon Ave. Segment:



This segment contains parks, churches, and schools, and has substantial pedestrian traffic.

Protected crossing at Richland

Richland Avenue has two active churches, a school, and a Boys and Girls Club within a few hundred yards of each other. It is also the last place for drivers heading north along Westmont to access Cascade, because Westmont becomes one-way heading south from Beecher to Richland. So it's a heavily trafficked intersection, both by vehicles and by pedestrians. This intersection needs to be both accessible and child-safe. **Like Oglethorpe, this intersection demands a stronger than average pedestrian treatment - we ask for rapid flash beacons, audible beacons, and countdown timers.**

Move MARTA stop at Belmonte Hills to be inside right turn lane

The northbound 71 MARTA stop at Belmonte Drive (Stop ID: 122228) used to be inside the right-turn lane for the Belmonte Hills community. This was not only useful to the residents of Belmonte Hills, it also allowed traffic to flow past the stopped bus without having to dart around into the middle turn-only lane. However, it was moved about half a block south, and now blocks traffic at the stop. **We ask for it to be returned to its original location.**

Whole-Corridor Improvements

These improvements would benefit the entirety of Cascade.

Improve Crosswalk Visibility and Accessibility

Many crosswalks have faded paint, broken activator buttons, obscured signs, and poor lighting. Some intersections are missing a leg of the crosswalk. Crosswalks must not only be restored, but should be improved. Our neighborhood has a high percentage of retirees and handicapped; **crosswalks should be ADA compliant, including curb ramps with detectable warnings, and audible beacons where appropriate.**

Synchronize traffic signals

There are half a dozen street lights between Avon and White; drivers frequently speed to catch lights. **The lights should be timed for at or below the posted speed limit.**

Add traffic calming measures

Many drivers are simply going too fast for safe coexistence with pedestrians. **We ask for traffic calming measures such as radar speed signs and reduced speed limits.**

Protect existing bike lanes with proper paint, signage and barriers.

The bicycle lanes along Cascade are haphazard, hazardous, and poorly maintained; bicycle commuters are scared to use them. As a result, many bicyclists use the sidewalks instead, endangering pedestrian traffic. **We ask that the existing bike lanes be improved with clearer signage, paint, and physical barriers where appropriate.**



Upgrade Sidewalks

The sidewalks stretching between John A. White Park and White have many poor patches that drive mobility-impaired residents into the street. **We ask for substantial repairs along the entire corridor to ensure the safety of residents young and old.**

In conclusion

Cascade Avenue needs more than a mere resurfacing. Smoother roads are nice, but Cascade Avenue needs to serve everyone: drivers and pedestrians; rich and poor; young and old; commuters and residents. **The current condition of Cascade serves nobody well**, least of all the community it runs through. **We urge the City of Atlanta to focus its efforts and find the resources to make this crucial artery safer for our residents.**