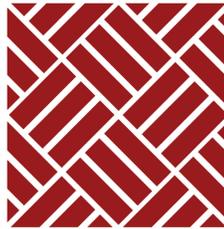


# SAVANNAH

DOWNTOWN  
NEIGHBORHOOD  
ASSOCIATION



March 29th, 2017

Mayor Eddie DeLoach  
City Manager Rob Hernandez  
Aldermen of the City of Savannah

Re: Traffic calming on Whitaker/Drayton

The Downtown Neighborhood Association supports immediate action to increase public safety for pedestrians, bicyclists, and drivers alike. Savannah is renowned for being one of the most walkable cities, yet our historic district neighborhood has many areas that pose a public safety threat for pedestrians due to dangerous speeds of vehicular traffic. **Safety must come before speed.** Slowing down traffic on the two-mile stretch from Victory Drive to Bay Street would cause an insignificant delay to drivers. Reducing the speed from the typical 35-45mph (3.45 minutes without stops at 35 mph) to 25 mph (4.76 minutes) over two miles would result in a 1.31 minute difference, while greatly increasing the ability for pedestrians to safely cross streets and for bicyclists to share roads.

Forsyth Park is the “back yard” for many downtown residents, and an attraction for millions of visitors who come to our city each year. Many churches, some with preschool and daycare programs as well as at least 19 full time resident families with children are adjacent to or are within a block of Drayton and Whitaker Streets north of Park Street. Children walk to Broad Street and Garrison Elementary schools. Having a speedway on both sides of the park is both unpleasant and dangerous, and the threat to quality of life and public safety is of tremendous concern.

Collision data shows an alarming increase in the number of reported crashes over the last five years. What the data doesn't show is unreported collisions and the near misses that residents witness on a daily basis.

In addition, bikes are an increasingly popular and often necessary form of transportation for area workforce, students, and residents. A protected lane on this popular route would increase bike safety, as well as serve as a buffer to pedestrians on the sidewalk. The likely increase in bike use as a result of a protected lane would reduce vehicle congestion and help alleviate parking strain.

A complete streets ordinance was passed by the City of Savannah in 2015, and it is the hope of the DNA that proven design ideas prioritizing pedestrians will be implemented, along with many of the recommendations resulting from the Mobility and Parking Study completed last year. DNA conducted a 3 question survey that received 220 responses with 127 additional comments. 89% of respondents would like implementation of a plan similar to the SDR proposal. You can view the results of the survey as well as the respondents' zip codes here: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/results/SM-C7PDN863/>.

Thank you for your consideration,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Melinda D. Allen". The signature is written in a cursive style and is contained within a rectangular box.

Melinda D. Allen  
President, Savannah Downtown Neighborhood Association

