



## Public Comment to Atlanta City Council

### Transportation Committee

March 11, 2020

My name is Odetta MacLeish-White, I am the managing director for the TransFormation Alliance, a 30 plus member organization that seeks to strengthen communities through transit and equitable transit-oriented development. Our diverse membership is unified by a vision for Atlanta where:

- a person's racial identity no longer predicts their success and opportunity in life; and
- communities are strengthened by transit, not displaced by it.

In 2019, the cities of Oslo and Helsinki celebrated zero child pedestrian deaths. The effort and changes those cities made to create such an outcome is the definition of Beloved Community. That could be Atlanta, we could be celebrating our love for our children by showing them we love them enough to change. And what were the key changes? I quote Helsinki's Traffic Engineer:

"Traffic safety has improved due to betterments to the street environment, increasing traffic control, the development of vehicle safety measures and technology, and the development of rescue services. Reducing speed limits has also been a key factor."

You have heard and will hear the statistics about the disparate loss of life and infliction of injury experienced by Black and Brown, and low-income, communities in Atlanta. This is not an awareness problem anymore.

Today, we have the opportunity to take one of the simplest and most effective steps to protect our neighbors – set city speed limits at 25 MPH so Atlantans and visitors using our streets to bike, walk, run, or scoot for commuting, exercise, or recreation will be safer. With the Mayor's call for One Atlanta, we have a shared framework for making this change, and other changes that will make life more equitable in this city. Other programs should include:

- investments in automated speed cameras
- ticket diversion programs should be expanded to include tickets generated by speed cameras.
- consider training and support for strategies that reduce needless traffic stops, which open the door for racial profiling, are ineffective at changing driver behavior, and can be dangerous for both the driver being stopped and the officer stopping them.

Thank you for your time. We are in support of the City's proposed Vision Zero Road Safety ordinance.

*Strengthening communities through transit*

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