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Monday, July 6, 2020

Dear City Officials:

The Marquette Neighborhood Association Transportation & Safety Committee writes to express our support for the implementation of Vision Zero tactics in the East Washington Avenue Corridor, namely the portion which runs through our neighborhood from Blair to First Streets.

We've witnessed a dramatic expansion of residential buildings, office space, and entertainment destinations in the East Washington corridor. Accompanying that, we've been pleased to see a significant increase in pedestrian traffic, bicyclists, and sidewalk activity. Unfortunately, we've also witnessed drag racing, road rage incidents, and traffic deaths in this corridor.

MNA strongly supports:

- Transitioning to more visible 'continental-style' crosswalks to enhance pedestrian safety as they cross the Avenue to shop and dine, attend events, complete activities of daily living, and return home;
- Reducing the speed limit from 35mph to 25mph in this corridor to improve crash statistics and safety in the bicycle lane;
- The retiming of traffic signals to accompany the speed limit change.

MNA expresses a desire to see the signal timing also ensure that pedestrians can cross the entire width of the avenue at once, rather than in two light cycles as is currently the case at some intersections. We would also advocate for bollards to be installed on the median at busy crossings; First Street is of particular concern.

We are so pleased to see the City take a stance in favor of pedestrian safety, as it is of the utmost importance to us given recent incidents. We'd like the city to also take into consideration the many future buildings in the works, as we will only see increased vehicle volume entering/exiting parking structures as those same buildings draw even more pedestrians to the sidewalks. We believe that improving pedestrian safety would also increase the amount of people who feel comfortable crossing that corridor to make short trips, both for leisure and activities of daily living. We hope to reduce the number of residents who drive, for instance, between the Williamson and Johnson corridors when walking would be practical.

As our corridor continues its success story, transitioning from empty auto lots and warehouses to a vibrant urban center, let us also make non-motorized forms of transportation safer and more feasible for everyone.

On behalf of the MNA Board, thank you for your consideration.

Lance Lattimer
Transportation & Safety Co-Chair