

Seeking Safer Cycling

Imari uses just about every mode of transportation available to him. When he has business related meetings outside of the perimeter or if he wants to take the family out for dinner and a movie, he jumps in his car. For more casual business meetings, to grab a new Redbox rental, or to get to parts of town that are too far to walk, he hops on his scooter. When he wants to take his son to the park to play or if he wants a cup of coffee from the local café, Imari walks. And when he's got to catch a flight for a business trip out of town, he takes MARTA. The only mode missing? Biking. "I would bike, but I haven't purchased one yet. It's not really a priority for me for transportation purposes. And that's mainly because I just wouldn't feel comfortable outside of my neighborhood on a bike."

Imari lives in Decatur's Oakhurst neighborhood. It's probably one of the most bike-friendly areas in all of metro Atlanta. A long stretch of the PATH runs through Decatur providing an easy, clearly marked route for cyclists. Signage and street markings that define bike friendly zones are all throughout the community. And drivers in the area are so accustomed to having cyclists around that they truly do "share the road." Biking within the Decatur city limits isn't a challenge and most cyclists, from the novice to the more experienced rider, feel comfortable doing it. Biking outside of Decatur is an entirely different story. Imari feels that safe connections between destinations for the average cyclist are what's missing in DeKalb. "Riding in the street is an issue because there's a real risk of getting hit. I'm not willing to take that risk."

