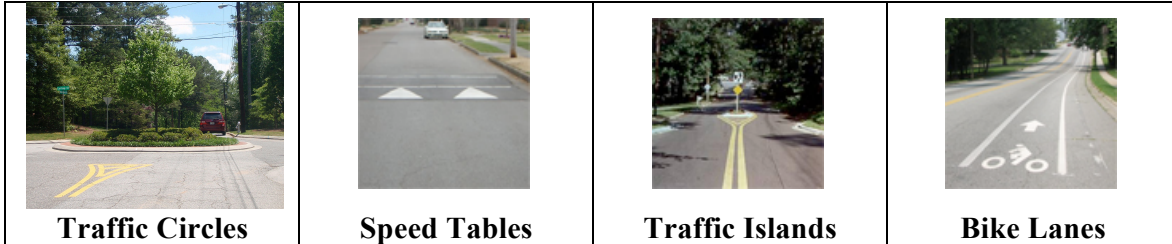


## **Traffic Calming – Frequently Asked Questions**

### **What is Traffic Calming?**

Traffic calming is a DeKalb County program designed to slow down traffic through residential neighborhoods. The program gives communities the opportunity to have a variety of traffic calming measures installed on their streets.

### **What are some of the traffic measures that can be used?**



### **Who decides what measures will go on which streets?**

We, as a neighborhood, determine what we want, and where we want it. The County will ultimately determine what is permissible under their engineering guidelines.

### **Who pays for Traffic Calming?**

DeKalb County will provide the capital necessary to install the devices. The only cost to property owners will be an additional \$25 per year on their property taxes in order to pay for the maintenance.

### **How does it get passed?**

We have to get 65% of homeowners (approximately 475 homes) in the neighborhood to sign a “yes” petition.

### **Would all the streets in Huntley Hills be included?**

No. Not exactly. If a street is not impacted by the traffic calming devices (i.e. they do not need to travel past or over a device in order to exist the neighborhood), they do not need to be included in the vote or the \$25 assessment. Depending on the placement of devices, some streets without traffic calming could be included, but do NOT have to have devices on their street.

### **Can we just put measures on Longview and Admiral, since those are our most problem streets?**

Yes, we could. However, research (and common sense) show that traffic will almost immediately divert to other streets. This puts many of our streets at risk, especially Plantation, Ellwyn, Ensign, and Captain. Our goal is to make all of our streets safe, so we need to somehow account for this factor in our design.

### **What are some of the engineering guidelines for traffic calming devices?**

Traffic tables must be 5ft from driveways, storm drains, and utilities and 75 ft from intersections. They cannot be installed on grades >8% and they must be about 350 ft apart from each other. Bike lanes require at least a 26 ft wide street. Splitter traffic islands require using about 5ft of County right-of-way on each side of the street.

### **I don't live on a high traffic street, why should I care?**

The more unsafe our neighborhood's streets become for walkers, runners, bikers, disabled, young children and the elderly, the greater risk we have of someone we care about becoming seriously injured. In addition, traffic on some of our streets is becoming so bad, it is now affecting home sales and property values, which hurts all of us. If our neighborhood is not considered safe, especially for young families, it will impact everyone's wallet, whether you live on a busy street or walk in the neighborhood or not.

### **Why not just add some more stop signs?**

Stop signs do not work. Just come sit at the corner of Plantation/Longview or Admiral/Longview or Admiral/Ellwyn for an hour or two and you will see for yourself. We have even seen MARTA buses running through the stop signs! And the more you add, the less people seem to value their importance. Plus, the County will not install stop signs too close to one another.

### **Why not just get the police to write more traffic tickets?**

With the economy getting worse, crime on the rise, and many departments facing layoffs and furloughs, the police just don't have the available man-hours to constantly patrol Huntley Hills for traffic violations. Any police presence would be temporary and would not achieve the long-term goal of slowing down traffic.

### **Why can't we just get sidewalks installed?**

Money. No one has any right now. Last year, we were hopeful that Longview (and maybe even Admiral) would be high on the priority list for 2009 but the County has recently changed their prioritization schedule (**i.e. no more residential sidewalks in DeKalb**). In addition, there is no longer any money to build sidewalks anywhere. Annexation into Chamblee gives up hope for sidewalks in the future, but that would be a long time from now, if ever. There are some grants, etc available for these types of projects, but they often take years to get and require tremendous amounts of volunteer time. If anyone wants to take that on as a project, let us know!

### **What is the difference between a speed bump and a traffic table?**

Speed bumps are about 1 foot wide and have a height of 3-4 inches. They make you nearly stop your car and can cause serious damage to cars that ride low to the ground. **We will NOT be installing ANY speed bumps!** Traffic tables are 4 inches high, 10 feet wide, and have 6 ft ramps on both sides (22ft wide total). They are designed to have only one wheel set on the table at a time and can be safely travelled over at 25 MPH.

### **Will traffic calming measures make the police less likely to patrol our streets?**

No. Police officers generally obey speed limits when not in pursuit, and all traffic calming devices are designed for the posted speed limit. Plus, it behooves them to drive slowly in the neighborhood anyway, since the whole point of being on patrol is to spot criminal activity. ***But burglars really hate streets with traffic calming devices!*** They like streets they can get in and out of quickly, and Longview, having direct access to I-285 and Peachtree Blvd, is a perfect example. The best thing we can do to decrease crime is to make our neighborhood look and feel more community/walker/biker friendly, while also decreasing the number of non-residents cutting through our streets.

### **Why don't we just wait until we are annexed into Chamblee?**

All traffic calming is done through the County and annexation would not change the process or likelihood of success. See above regarding police presence.

### **Will these measures slow down and/or reroute emergency vehicles?**

All traffic calming devices are designed to accommodate emergency vehicles. Any impact on response time would be negligible, at best. And if we reduce the number of speeding cars cutting through our neighborhood and running stop signs, we will all be safer and have fewer reasons to call 911 anyway.

### **What about MARTA?**

All the devices are designed to accommodate buses, including school buses and MARTA buses. Our effort is in no-way-shape-or-form an effort to get MARTA to reroute or to eliminate the route completely. We are just hoping to slow down the buses!

### **Didn't we already try this 10 years ago and it failed?**

Yes. Sort of. The County process and options available were completely different back then. The County told us that every single street in the neighborhood had to have speed bumps (the big kind that ruin your suspension) and there were no other options. They had about 15 speed bumps on Longview alone. It was impractical and illogical and the Board decided it was not even worth the neighborhood voting on it. So it failed and we are now trying again...with much friendlier County employees and less red tape in the way.