

Druid Hills Civic Association
P.O. Box 363
Decatur, Georgia 30031

Michael Thurmond
Chief Executive Officer
DeKalb County, Georgia
1300 Commerce Drive
Decatur, Georgia 30030

Dear Mr. Thurmond,

I am writing to you today in my capacity as the President of the Druid Hills Civic Association to ask for your help. We've had the pleasure of meeting on several occasions, including at my house and at the DHCA Annual meeting, and I was struck by your candor and commonsense approach to local politics. Your hard work tackling a number of long-neglected infrastructure issues in DeKalb County is appreciated; and on behalf of our entire neighborhood, I want to share our gratitude for the wonderful strides you've made in improving our water infrastructure.

As you probably know, Druid Hills has some of the oldest streets in DeKalb County, and many of our sidewalks are showing their years --a century or so in many cases. I've grown increasingly concerned with stories of our residents' sidewalk trips and falls that have resulted in visits to the emergency room. A senior neighbor, well into her 80s, tripped on a busted section of sidewalk across the street from my house and fell face first into the pavement. After complaints, DeKalb County spray painted a few of the worst sections along Harvard Rd, where the incident happened, but the repairs never occurred, and the paint has long since faded.

Our public safety chair has been in contact with DeKalb County for the better part of a year over this issue. As I understand it, we have been told that the county's budgetary priorities largely revolve around establishing new sidewalks, especially in areas immediately adjacent to schools, and that most county sidewalk repairs take place where they have been destroyed by construction work, such as water line replacement and the like. We have been told that requests for SPLOST funding are a possibility, but that the line is stacked up now for several years.

Over the past 3 months, the DHCA has created an initial inventory of the most dangerous sidewalks, which we have shared with our Commissioner, Jeff Rader (see attached). We hired Georgia Safe Sidewalks to do a survey of defects and trip hazards on a single, one mile stretch of Emory Rd. and they found 287 of them. We then engaged Precision Concrete to make 20 repairs to some of the worst sections on three different streets, but that was merely a drop in the bucket relative to the 40 total miles of sidewalks that wind throughout the entire neighborhood, many of which are nearly as decrepit as Emory Rd.

Concomitant to this outstanding pedestrian safety issue is the state of our road crossings. Due to Druid Hills' location sitting astride the City of Atlanta, Emory University, CHOA, and the Centers for Disease Control, and being criss-crossed by major arterials and state highways like Ponce de Leon, Briarcliff and North Decatur, our streets have experienced an incredible surge in

vehicular volume and speed over the past decade; and unfortunately, our roads, pedestrian crossing facilities, speed signage, speed enforcement and other measures for speed control have simply not kept up.

While we understand you hold the big picture of county priorities, our neighborhood residents believe it is a reasonable expectation that their tax dollars should be used to keep our sidewalks and streets safe for pedestrians. They can't help but observe the significant improvements to pedestrian safety in those areas of DeKalb that have annexed to Brookhaven, Atlanta, and Decatur where millions are being spent on impactful signage, LED lighting, pedestrian crosswalks, better street lighting, and ADA compliant ramps at intersections. Several of our residents that are attorneys have even expressed legitimate liability concerns over this issue that they feel DeKalb County needs to proactively address.

What I am asking for is a commitment to a relatively modest level of County investment over a multi-year period focused on pedestrian-related improvements within Druid Hills that are most in need of repair. I assure you that even a small amount of progress, such as an update 12 months from now from the DeKalb CEO's office touting the repair of a dozen or so of the most dangerous sidewalks in the neighborhood, with maybe a hawklight added in a high traffic zone, would make a huge difference in both safety and perception of responsiveness of the county to our needs.

I recall a couple of years ago at the DHCA annual meeting when you talked about the politics of "And." I'd like to believe we can have new sidewalks near schools in DeKalb County *and* fix sidewalks in existing areas that are presently falling apart. I'm open to any suggestions you may have to help move this issue forward, and I welcome your partnership. Finally, thank you for your time and service to our County.

Sincerely,



Kit Eisterhold
President, Druid Hills Civic Association

Cc: Jeff Rader

Encl: Prioritized list/photos of damaged sidewalks in Druid Hills

2020 Druid Hills Sidewalk Priorities

Identified Dangerous, Pedestrian Injury Prone Sidewalks Across Druid Hills (November 5, 2020)



The DHCA tracks and maintains a list of damaged, dangerous sidewalks across our neighborhood. As sidewalks are repaired or replaced or new issues are identified, this list will be updated.

2020 Druid Hills Sidewalk Priorities

Fernbank Elementary School Zone (corner of Coventry Rd and Heaton Park Drive)



1256 Stillwood Avenue (resident suffered trip/fall and TMJ)



832 Springdale Road

2020 Druid Hills Sidewalk Priorities



868 Springdale Road

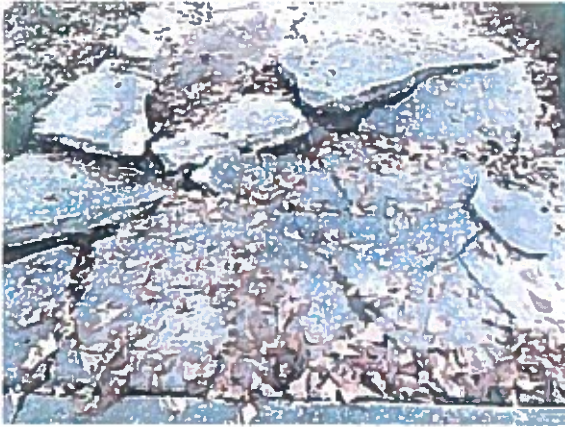


956 Springdale Road



1148 Springdale

2020 Druid Hills Sidewalk Priorities



1148 Springdale Road



1163 Springdale road



1021 Oakdale Road

2020 Druid Hills Sidewalk Priorities



1179 Oakdale



2020 Druid Hills Sidewalk Priorities

1180 Cameron Court



1194 Oxford Road



1207 Oxford



2020 Druid Hills Sidewalk Priorities

1302 Oxford



Emory Road

1343 Emory Road



1355 Emory Road



2020 Druid Hills Sidewalk Priorities

1369 Emory Road



1383 Emory Road



1413 Emory Road



2020 Druid Hills Sidewalk Priorities

1439 Emory Road



1455 Emory Road



2020 Druid Hills Sidewalk Priorities

605-621 Ridgecrest Road



2020 Druid Hills Sidewalk Priorities

1098 Clifton Road



1183 Clifton Road



1223 Clifton Road



2020 Druid Hills Sidewalk Priorities

1146 Lullwater Road

