

Project Proposal

Collier Village traffic measures

Prepared for: Neighbors, elected officials, business owners, and landlords along the Howell Mill Road corridor.

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Executive Summary

Objective

The current strategy to accommodate current and future traffic in Collier Village depends largely upon the addition of lights, synchronization of existing and future lights, and a few minor lane changes and additions. The discussion surrounding the merits of these tactics has been lukewarm at best, and most appear to be skeptical this will have any effect on current traffic demands, much less the anticipated increases from future development.

We already endure untenable and dangerous traffic. Without ardent effort and creative ideas, we will experience further detriment to the quality of life we once enjoyed as the growth in our city snowballs.

Goals

To reposition the “Collier Village” district so that safe and liveable conditions can exist in the community.

Solution

“Collier Village North” referring to the “Superblock” bordered by Howell Mill, Collier, Beck, and Emery Streets, shall have a three lane wide “Roundabout” circling the entire Superblock. (See attached sketch).

1. The Roundabout would follow Beck St - Howell Mill Rd to Collier Rd-Howell Mill Rd to Collier Rd-Emery St to Emery St.-Beck St.
2. Traffic would flow counter clockwise.
3. Roads would be three lanes wide. Exterior, Right-hand lane for ingress egress to connecting roads. Center lane for smooth uninterrupted traffic flow throughout the Traffic Circle. Interior-Left hand lane for ingress-egress to the properties on the interior of the Traffic Circle.
4. Traffic calming devices would selected and installed. These would take the form of crosswalks astride decorative traffic humps. Traffic humps would follow design principles for beautification and accommodation of emergency vehicles.

Challenges: The current roads are squared corners with the possible exception of Collier Rd-Emery Street. The Howell Mill-Collier intersection is a major challenge and currently acts as a chokepoint. In this section, the Roundabout would likely need a squarish design. The good news is that there is already enough room for the lanes.

The I-75-Howell Mill Interchange shall receive significant improvements on Howell Mill Road as follows:

I-75 access from Collier Village North -

1. A right hand turn lane for I75 NB access must be installed along the frontage of the Mark Inn site. A center lane dedicated to straight thru traffic should be reserved.
2. A dedicated Left turn lane on the bridge for I75SB access should be extended back to back Beck St-Howell Mill Rd.
3. A long shot, but deserves mention in the brainstorming phases, is that direct onramp access should be given to Emery St as it dead ends into I-75. This would alleviate about 40% of the traffic entering I-75 from Howell Mill itself. It would flow directly from the Roundabout unimpeded.

I-75 access from Collier Village South -

1. Access to I-75 Northbound with better light synchronization is about all we can hope for. Currently the lights are not optimized.
2. From the rear of the properties occupied by both Einstein's and Wendy's should be given ingress/egress access to the lighted intersection at the Wal-Mart. In bound right hand only entrance and exit to these properties from Howell Mill should be imposed. No left turns into or out of these properties.
3. The right turn into Howell Mill District (upper level of Wal-Mart) should be rounded so cars do not hop the curb each time.
4. The Bank of America should be granted better access to the light at Wal-Mart, likely through signage directing individuals to use the largely under-utilized out-parcel section of the Kroger Parking lot. ATM patrons could access by making a right turn. The drive thru tellers are problematic. I would enjoy hearing ideas that would improve that issue.
5. The other businesses along Howell Mill, currently Taco Bell and Hardee's should install a turn circle across the front of the buildings so patrons can exit via the rear of the property. Signs could be placed on the property to direct patrons. In bound, right-hand only entrance and exit to these properties from Howell Mill should be imposed. No left turns into or out of these properties should be encouraged.

The “Collier Village South” road work needs one additional design feature. The project is currently underway. The work will cost \$1.1m, take 18 months, and consists of the following:

[The current plan can be viewed here: <http://www.atlantaga.gov/government/publicworks/howellmillroadwideningproject.aspx>]

1. Widening of the narrow lanes on Howell Mill Road to at least 11 feet
2. Addition a through lane on Howell Mill Road northbound between Chattahoochee Avenue and Bellemeade Avenue
3. Widening of the narrow lanes on Chattahoochee Avenue in its approach to Howell Mill Road to accommodate truck-turning movements
4. Addition of a left turn lane on Howell Mill Road onto Chattahoochee Avenue
5. Addition of a left turn lane on Howell Mill Road onto Bellemeade Avenue
6. Addition of a left turn lane on Bellemeade Avenue westbound onto Howell Mill Road southbound
7. Improvement of the pedestrian environment through sidewalks/streetscape and street lighting the selected sidewalk
8. Redesigning of the northwestern corner of Defoors Avenue to discourage cut-through truck traffic

Overall this plan has a lot of merit even though it is based on designs dating back over 10 years. It does lack one thing that would make an enormous difference. *It lacks the creation of smooth flow of traffic.* Adding the following changes to the above would be make a durable impact, and therefore a wiser investment of tax dollars:

1. A curve including one dedicated right hand lane should be introduced where continuous traffic flow from Howell Mill Southbound to Chattahoochee Westbound can occur.
2. The left hand turn lane, allowing access to Southbound Howell Mill from this intersection, could be added and signalized.
3. Following the opposite direction, a smoothed curve of two lanes should flow form Chattahoochee eastbound onto Howell Mill Northboard.
4. From the south and arriving at the interection on Howell Mill, one could then add a lane which allows for the continuous flow of Northbound Howell Mill Traffic.
5. All of these would then flow directly to the light at Bellemeade-Defoor-Howell Mill, allowing an increased ability to manage flow from the virtue of having the one main convetional light.
6. The other light for access across Chattahoochee to Southbound Howell Mill would only briefly impeded east flowing Chattahoochee traffic, stopping both lanes to allow the left turns to be made. This light would in turn directly sync to the light at Bellemeade-Defoor-Howell Mill. Once it turns green, you have a clear shot, at least until one arrives at the Wal-Mart intersection, which would in theory be synced to allow continuous flow.

