



**May 2022**

## **Intersection Takeovers - City Works with GCPD to Shut Down Activity**

Over the past several weeks, the City has received a lot of praise from residents regarding the successful Gwinnett County Police Department operation and the arrests that were made at a traffic intersection takeover on May 2<sup>nd</sup>. Following those arrests, I have received numerous requests that we make sure those responsible are prosecuted to the highest extent of the law. I couldn't agree more, and that is what we plan to do. However, there are limits that exist for the punishment of these types of offenses.

Currently, these types of incidents are classified as misdemeanor crimes and do not allow for the same strict punishments as a felony would allow. On a good note, about a year ago, Georgia Governor Brian Kemp signed a new law that enacts tougher penalties for those that are convicted of these types of events. The law, called "Reckless Stunt Driving", cracks down harshly on street racers in Georgia.

The law now makes reckless stunt driving a misdemeanor of a high and aggravated nature that carries stiffer penalties for those that are convicted, and penalties increase in severity with the number of convictions.

Following an incident in April of this year, a meeting was held between Precinct Commander Major Edward Restrepo, and Peachtree Corners City Manager, Brian Johnson. During these meetings, GCPD and the City worked to develop new ways and techniques to deal with these types of activities. The result of this meeting has been nothing short of excellent.

To restate the incident, on Saturday, April 30, and into Sunday, May 1<sup>st</sup>, Gwinnett County Police Department (GCPD), with assistance from Lilburn and Norcross officers, off-duty officers, and other special units responded to an intersection takeover at the intersection of Peachtree Corners Circle and Spalding Drive. The officers cordoned off the area and blocked vehicles, leading to the arrest of 68 adults and 20 juveniles, the recovery of 5 guns, and the impounding of 26 vehicles.

Currently, GCPD has charged numerous individuals under Section 16-11-43.1, which prohibits promoting or organizing drag races or laying drag exhibitions and states any person who knowingly promotes or organizes an exhibition of illegal drag racing shall be guilty of a misdemeanor of a high and aggravated nature. While charges are still pending, those convicted for the first time can face a fine of not less than \$300.00 but no more than \$750.00, and a period of imprisonment of not fewer than ten days nor more than six months.

While it would be to our liking that punishments were harsher for a first offense, if habitual offenders continue to be found guilty, they could eventually face increased fines and find themselves in prison for between one and five years.

According to a release distributed by GCPD, "This exceptional response and coordination amongst numerous agencies achieved incredible results. The Gwinnett Police Department recognizes the hazard these illegal street racing activities pose to the motoring and pedestrian public. These dangerous and reckless activities will not be tolerated. We are committed to keeping the streets of Gwinnett County safe for all residents and visitors."

We are proud of this operation, but we will not stop here. It will always be our goal to provide the highest level of protection and quality of life to our Peachtree Corners residents, and we will continue to work with GCPD and partner agencies to strengthen the laws and penalties regarding these types of activities.

The full version of O.C.G.A. 40-6-390.1 can be found online [View the Law](#)

For anyone interested in learning more, or who would like to personally think our local law enforcement, please look to attend the GCPD COPS meeting being held by the United Peachtree Corners Civic Association on Thursday, May 26<sup>th</sup> from 7 pm to 9 pm at Christ the King Lutheran Church at 5575 Peachtree Parkway in Peachtree Corners.