Presentation to the Mayor and Councilors of the Town of Tillsonburg Ontario.

Issue: Significant increase in Traffic Volume and associated safety concerns:

The Hickory Hills Residents Association (H.H.R.A.) appreciates the opportunity to present our concerns and recommendations regarding the significant increase in traffic volume along Wilson Ave, the main road running north and south through our senior community.

There has been a significant and noticeable increase in traffic volume, noise pollution levels and speeding on Wilson Avenue, most noticeably in the last year and a half, due to the rapid growth in new residential homes west and northwest of our town.

Residents have noticed and addressed their concerns about the growing increase in the number of vehicles (both residential and commercial), using Wilson Ave as a short cut, travelling to and from work and when shopping in the downtown areas, etc. A number of these vehicles exceed the posted speed limit of 50km/hr. when travelling both north and south bound along Wilson Ave.

The volume of traffic is heaviest along Wilson Ave, to and from Baldwin and Dereham Dr. especially during the morning and evening rush hour. School buses transporting students from and to neighbouring communities are also using Wilson Ave. as their shortcut.

Hickory Hills as you know is an established retirement community consisting of 437 homes; many of our senior residents deal with hearing, vision, cognitive and mobility issues, putting them at higher risk of injury when traveling along, or attempting to cross Wilson Ave.

As the warm weather approaches, elderly residents use their mobility scooters to get around, while attempting to avoid vehicles by staying close to the curb on Wilson Ave. Adults and children from adjacent communities also walk and cycle along Wilson Ave, often cautiously crossing the busy main road when it’s convenient, rather than having to travel further to the one and only designated crosswalk, in order to cross over safely.

Note: The only other option is a stop sign on Wilson Ave at Dereham Dr. Unfortunately some drivers when rushing to their destinations fail to make a complete stop, further endangering pedestrians, cyclists and those on mobility scooters.

Given the concerns outlined above, we submit the following proposed solutions, a combination of which should help in reducing the volume of traffic, speeding and associated noise levels in Hickory Hills and adjoining residential areas. The overall health and safety of all residents is what’s at stake here. We firmly believe that addressing and sharing these concerns with our Councilors and Mayor will result in implementing corrective measures and preventing the probability of accidents, bodily injuries or worse in the future.
Recommendations:

- **Volume of traffic:** Reduce the increasing and steady volume of traffic on Wilson Ave by changing Dereham Dr. west of Wilson Ave, to a “one way” street going westbound and ending at Denrich or Charlotte. The Hickory Hills community homes end at Denrich with 3 homes on the north side and 5 homes on the south end.

- **Speed Limit:** Change the speed limit on Wilson to 40km / hour. Several other municipalities in Ontario have done this to reduce speeding and the number of accidents and related injuries. We understand that Tillsonburg has also implemented lower speed limits in some sub-divisions for safety reasons.

- **Speed Limit signs:** Install additional speed limit signs starting with one on Wilson Ave northbound at the Baldwin intersection; this is the main entrance into the Hickory Hills Adult Community. The other speed limit signs can be strategically positioned along Wilson Ave. north and southbound.

- **Stop Signs:** Install additional stop signs along Wilson Ave at the various intersections in Hickory Hills.

- **Random Speed Checks:** OPP assistance needed to conduct frequent and random speeding checks on Wilson Ave, to monitor and hopefully discourage drivers from speeding. Their presence and support definitely helps and provides our senior residents with a sense of safety and security.

- **Caution Signs:** Install “slow down” signs indicating a “senior retirement community” at main entrance points on Wilson Ave, including one at Dereham Dr. These would be similar to the ones denoting children at play, pedestrian crossings etc.

- **Speed Monitors:** The installation of temporary Speed Monitors in both directions on Wilson Ave showing the speed limit as well as driver’s actual travel speed in these zones. Encourages drivers to slow down.

- **Speed Bumps:** As a last resort and only if the above-mentioned recommendations fail to resolve the problems, consider installing the least disruptive, lower height and wider version of speed bumps. Railroad crossings use a rubberized version to deaden sound and prevent damage to the underside of vehicles.

Submitted by the committee on behalf of the Hickory Hills Residents Assoc. (H.H.R.A.)

Heather Rand, Board president, Hickory Hills Residents Association (intro/participant)

Ian McIntyre, resident Board & committee member (participant & speaker)

Alan Field, resident volunteer & committee member (participant)

Doug Field, resident committee member (not in attendance)