## Brakes on party street



**REVAMP:** Durban's Florida Road is set for a major slowdown as the eThekwini Municipality starts constructing speed humps on Monday. This picture was taken in October, when the trees were wrapped in pink crepe for breast cancer awareness month. Incidentally, today is World Cancer Day.

## Florida Road speed humps welcomed

ARTHI GOPI

PEEDSTERS wanting to show off along Durban's social hot spot, Florida Road, will have to do some brake-testing as they encounter speed humps.

The safety move has been welcomed by business owners and residents.

Florida Road's Urban Improvement Precinct (UIP) team confirmed that after months of lobbying for traffic-calming measures, work on 10 speed humps would begin on Monday.

The UIP's Cara Reilly said motorists should brace themselves for roadworks and traffic congestion, which will start with signage installation and road preparation.

"The project is expected to take at least two weeks to complete. It will be phased, starting with Sandile Thusi (Argyle) Road to Gordon Road, then Gordon to Innes Road.

"Lane closures will occur and traffic will be affected, so please be patient and remember that the end goal will make a huge difference to safety on the road," she said.

Reilly said the introduction of speed humps had been a long-running campaign, and they were suddenly alerted by eThekwini Transport Authority on Thursday that the work would begin next week.

"This is the first step in a long process for the vision of the area. We want to make it accessible. In this area, you have pedestrians, residential buildings, nearby schools, restaurants and shops. With so many people, we had to have speed humps to slow down the traffic. Should people want to cross the road, they should be able to do so without fearing speeding cars."

The speed humps would be placed at differing intervals, starting at Sandile Thusi Road and 7th Avenue, and ending as the road bends at the top of Florida Road.

"We urge people to be patient while the roadworks take place. It could be longer than two weeks, but we hope the council will complete work in that time frame," she said.

Businesses along the road have welcomed the measure, adding that

speeding was a huge issue.

Byron Harker from Blockbusters said he had worked in the area for more than 10 years, and the speed humps were needed.

"Drivers come here and want to show off their cars. They will drive 10 times up and down the road. There have been lots of accidents. Last year a little child was knocked down. I must have seen about four serious accidents. Once, a street vendor was run over," said Harker.

At the iComputing Solutions store owner Pravin Ramlall said drivers revved vehicles so loudly that at times he could not have conversations with his customers.

"People drive like maniacs here. The screech of the tyres and the roar of the engines is so loud. Speed humps will definitely benefit business," he said.

George Mthembu, marketing manager for Side Bar, agreed.

"It's a trend here, almost every person that buys a new car has to come here and show off. The drivers rev their engines up and down the road. It's so busy at times that there's a real risk element when customers cross the road and a speeding car comes past," said Mthembu.

Gina Corrigan, manager of Botica Fashion, said she had seen plenty of sports cars speeding along the road.

"We need speed humps to stop these drivers," she said.

Resident Mark McMahon was hesitantly optimistic that the speed humps would make a difference.

"Depending on how far apart they are, you could have the drivers speeding in between them. At present, at about 3am you still hear cars revving up and down the street, it's frustrating. I hope this will make a difference," he said.

Ward councillor Marthinus Meyer said he was "grateful" speed humps were being installed.

"It is long overdue and will go some way in curbing the speeding and other traffic violations on Florida Road."

The eThekwini Municipality had not responded to queries at the time of publishing.

SLOWING THE SPEED FREAKS: PG 6