

CITY OF SANTA ROSA
CITY COUNCIL

TO: MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL
FROM: ROBERT SPRINKLE, DEPUTY DIRECTOR - TRAFFIC
ENGINEERING, TRANSPORTATION AND PUBLIC WORKS
SUBJECT: INSTALLATION OF SPEED CUSHION ON EIGHTH STREET
BETWEEN A STREET AND B STREET

AGENDA ACTION: MOTION

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended by the Transportation and Public Works Department that the Council, by motion, approve the installation of a speed cushion on Eighth Street between A Street and B Street.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The City of Santa Rosa has been working with the neighborhood on Eighth Street between A Street and B Street to limit the cut-through traffic. Eighth Street is a local neighborhood street and nearby Seventh Street is intended to accommodate more vehicles and is part of the Downtown Central Business District network. Speed cushions have been shown to help mitigate cut-through behavior.

BACKGROUND

The City received inquiries from the neighborhood regarding cut-through traffic and measures that could be used to limit the behavior. The residents identified that more traffic was cutting through westbound to bypass traveling the extra block to Seventh Street to head west.

PRIOR CITY COUNCIL REVIEW

Not applicable.

ANALYSIS

Traffic Engineering set counters to review the volume of traffic on Eighth Street between A Street and B Street. The data indicated that there were more vehicles traveling westbound than eastbound and that the overall volume was higher than would be anticipated for the street, indicating cut through traffic.

INSTALLATION OF SPEED CUSHION ON EIGHTH STREET BETWEEN A STREET
AND B STREET
PAGE 2 OF 3

The City initially suggested restricting westbound access to Eighth Street from B Street while maintaining the eastbound exit. This would divert any westbound traffic to Seventh Street which is intended to accommodate more vehicles. In a survey to the residents, half were in favor and half were against this restriction. The primary reason was that although it would restrict westbound cut-through traffic, it also inconvenienced the residents in accessing their properties. Many of the respondents requested speed humps as an alternative.

In working closely with the Fire Department, Transportation and Public Works suggested a speed cushion and had Fire test the application. A speed cushion is similar to a speed hump; however, it has slots specifically spaced for the width of fire apparatus tires to have a minimal effect on their passage. The slots are spaced so that most conventional passenger cars and trucks would still be required to traverse at least a portion of the cushion. With standard speed humps, the Fire Department significantly slows to traverse the speed hump to minimize damage to the fire apparatus. With the majority of their calls being related to medical emergencies, this additional time negatively impacts their response. The design of the speed cushion alleviates the time increase.

With approval from the Fire Department, the neighborhood was surveyed again regarding the installation of a speed cushion, midblock to deter cut-through traffic. The neighborhood responded favorably with 89% in support of the installation.

FISCAL IMPACT

There are no current impacts to the General Fund with this installation. Gas tax funds will be used for the purchase and installation of the speed cushions.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

The Council finds that the proposed action is categorically exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) under Section 15301, Class 1(c) of the CEQA Guidelines. Section 15301 – Class 1 exemptions apply to the operation, repair, maintenance, permitting, leasing, licensing, or minor alteration of existing public or private structures, facilities, mechanical equipment, or topographical features, involving negligible or no expansion of existing or former use. Subsection (c) specifically includes: “Existing highways and streets, sidewalks, gutters, bicycle and pedestrian trails, and similar facilities.” The installation of speed cushions involves minor alterations to existing streets and is intended to improve traffic calming and public safety. The project does not involve the expansion of the roadway or a change in land use and will not have a significant effect on the environment. The project has been evaluated and does not trigger any of the exceptions listed in CEQA Guidelines Section 15300.2, including:

- Location in environmentally sensitive areas;
- Cumulative impacts;

INSTALLATION OF SPEED CUSHION ON EIGHTH STREET BETWEEN A STREET
AND B STREET
PAGE 3 OF 3

- Significant impacts due to unusual circumstances;
- Impacts on scenic highways;
- Being located on a hazardous waste site; or,
- Substantial adverse changes to historical resources.

BOARD/COMMISSION/COMMITTEE REVIEW AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Not applicable.

NOTIFICATION

Not applicable.

ATTACHMENTS

- Attachment 1 – Example and Unit Specifications

PRESENTER

Rob Sprinkle, Deputy Director – Traffic Engineering