

CITY OF SANTA ROSA
CITY COUNCIL

TO: MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL
SUBJECT: SPEED LIMITS ON MONTGOMERY DRIVE AND RUSSELL AVENUE
STAFF PRESENTER: MICHAEL A. VANMIDDE, ASSISTANT ENGINEER
TRANSPORTATION AND PUBLIC WORKS
AGENDA ACTION: RESOLUTION

ISSUE(S)

Shall the City Council pass a resolution establishing radar enforceable speed limits on segments of Montgomery Drive between Talbot Avenue and Farmers Lane, and Russell Avenue between Ditty Avenue and Cleveland Avenue?

BACKGROUND

1. This item is lowering the speed limits on Montgomery Drive and Russell Avenue.
2. The basic intent of speed zoning is to influence drivers to operate at or near the same speed, thus reducing conflicts created by differentials in operating speeds. The California Vehicle Code reflects the viewpoint that speed zoning should be based on traffic conditions and natural driving behavior.
3. The Basic Speed Law states, "No person shall drive a vehicle upon a highway at a speed greater than is reasonable or prudent having due regard for weather, visibility, the traffic on, and the surface and width of, the highway, and in no event at a speed which endangers the safety of persons or property" (California Vehicle Code Section 22350). The law is founded on the belief that most motorists are able to modify their driving behavior properly, as long as they are aware of the conditions around them.
4. California Vehicle Code Sections 22357 and 22358 permit local authorities to set intermediate speed limits between 25 miles per hour and 65 miles per hour on the basis of an engineering and traffic survey. These intermediate speed limits must be posted to clearly define the limits of the zone and the prima facie speed established.
5. Section 40802 of the California Vehicle Code permits the use of radar for speed enforcement where the speed limit is justified by an engineering and traffic survey.

6. An engineering and traffic survey is defined in California Vehicle Code Section 627 as “a survey of highway and traffic conditions in accordance with methods determined by the Department of Transportation for use by state and local authorities.” An engineering and traffic survey shall include consideration of prevailing speeds, as determined by traffic engineering measurements, accident records, and highway, traffic and roadside conditions not readily apparent to a driver. Local authorities may also consider residential density and pedestrian and bicyclist safety when conducting an engineering and traffic survey.
7. The California Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices provides the methodology for conducting an engineering and traffic survey. Speeds are established at the nearest 5-mile-per-hour increment of the 85th-percentile speed of free flowing traffic, which is defined as that speed at or below which 85% of the traffic is moving. Other factors to be considered include collision history, roadway design speed, safe stopping distance, superelevation, shoulder conditions, profile conditions, intersection spacing and offsets, commercial driveway characteristics and pedestrian traffic in the roadway without sidewalks. The posted speed may be reduced by 5 miles per hour from the nearest 85th-percentile speed where engineering study indicates the need for a reduction in speed to match existing conditions with the traffic safety needs of the community.

ANALYSIS

1. Montgomery Drive and Russell Avenue are classified as major collector streets on the latest Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Functional Classification System map. As such, when speed limits are established on these streets, radar speed enforcement can be used.
2. Engineering and traffic surveys were completed on each segment for the purpose of establishing a radar enforceable speed limit. The following gives a summary of those results:

Montgomery Drive between Talbot Avenue and Farmers Lane

Existing Speed Limit:	35 mph
85th-percentile speed:	34 mph
50th-percentile speed:	31 mph
Number of lanes:	2 travel lanes
Daily traffic volume:	10,445 vehicles per day
Area Type:	Residential/Commercial
Special Circumstances:	Montgomery Drive is located in a residence district as defined in Section 515 of the California Vehicle Code.
Proposed Speed Limit:	30 mph
Comments:	Montgomery Drive is a fully developed major collector street. Montgomery Drive has a school crossing,

pedestrian flasher, medical offices and church at the west end of the segment that generate high pedestrian traffic. The speed limits on the segments to the east and to the west are 30 mph. The speed limit was rounded down from the nearest 85th-percentile speed in accordance with California Vehicle Code Section 21400 (b).

Russell Avenue between Ditty Avenue and Cleveland Avenue

Existing Speed Limit:	30 mph
85th-percentile speed:	32 mph
50th-percentile speed:	28 mph
Number of lanes:	2 travel lanes
Daily traffic volume:	4,233 vehicles per day
Area Type:	Residential, Commercial
Special Circumstances:	Russell Avenue is located in a residence district as defined in Section 515 of the California Vehicle Code.
Proposed Speed Limit:	25 mph
Comments:	Russell Avenue is a fully developed major collector street. Residential driveways require vehicles to back into the roadway. There are many commercial driveways east of Range Avenue. On the basis of the engineering study and consideration of factors to maintain the traffic safety needs of the community, there is a need to reduce the speed limit by 5 mph from the nearest 5 mph increment of the 85 th percentile speed to 25 mph.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended by the Transportation and Public Works Department that the Council, by resolution, establish radar enforceable speed limits of 30 mph for Montgomery Drive between Talbot Avenue and Farmers Lane, and 25 mph for Russell Avenue between Ditty Avenue and Cleveland Avenue.

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Attachments:

- Vicinity Maps