

CITY OF SANTA ROSA  
CITY COUNCIL

TO: MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL  
FROM: MASSOUD SABERIAN, SUPERVISING ENGINEER  
MICHAEL VANMIDDE, ASSISTANT ENGINEER  
TRANSPORTATION AND PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT  
SUBJECT: SPEED LIMITS ON COFFEY LANE, MENDOCINO AVENUE,  
ELLIOTT AVENUE, AND LOS ALAMOS ROAD

AGENDA ACTION: RESOLUTION

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RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended by the Transportation and Public Works Department that the Council, by resolution, establish a speed limit of 30 miles per hour on Coffey Lane from Bluebell Drive to Piner Road, establish a speed limit of 35 miles per hour on Coffey Lane from Guerneville Road to Bluebell Drive, establish a speed limit of 40 miles per hour on Mendocino Avenue from Bicentennial Way to Highway 101 North On-ramp, establish a speed limit of 25 miles per hour on Elliott Avenue from Armory Drive to Mendocino Avenue, and establish a speed limit of 35 miles per hour on Los Alamos Road from Sonoma Highway to North City Limits.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This item is lowering the speed limit on Los Alamos Road. It is also updating the segment boundaries on Coffey Lane and Mendocino Avenue. This item is establishing a radar enforceable speed limit on Elliott Avenue where one previously did not exist.

BACKGROUND

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

#### PRIOR CITY COUNCIL REVIEW

On July 9, 1996, the City Council, by Resolution No. 22748 established a speed limit of 30 mph on Coffey Lane from W. Steele Lane to Piner Road.

On July 21, 1981, the City Council, by Resolution No. 15241 established a speed limit of 35 mph on Coffey Lane from Guerneville Road to W. Steele Lane.

On July 9, 1996, the City Council, by Resolution No. 22748 established a speed limit of 40 mph on Mendocino Avenue from Bicentennial Way to Fountaingrove Parkway.

On February 4, 1992, the City Council, by Resolution No. 20670 established a speed limit of 40 mph on Los Alamos Road from Sonoma Highway to Fawn Road.

## ANALYSIS

Coffey Lane was surveyed throughout the segment from Piner Road to Guerneville Road. The speed surveys in the segment between West Steele Lane and Piner Road were higher than previous years and would have required increasing the speed limit to 35 mph for the entire segment. However further study indicated that the segment between West Steele Lane and Bluebell Drive had the higher concentration of speeding vehicles and the rest of the segment was appropriate to retain the 30 mph speed limit. In an effort to more accurately reflect the driving characteristics along Coffey Road, the segments were changed so that the higher 35 mph speed limit was justified between Guerneville Road and Bluebell Drive and the 30 mph speed limit was retained where appropriate between Bluebell Drive and Piner Road.

Coffey Lane and Elliott Avenue are classified as major collector streets on the latest Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Functional Classification System map. Mendocino Avenue is classified as a principal arterial street on the latest FHWA Functional Classification System map. Los Alamos Road is classified as a local street on the latest FHWA Functional Classification System map. As such, when speed limits are established on these streets with an engineering and traffic survey, radar speed enforcement can be used.

The following gives a summary of the engineering and traffic survey results:

### Coffey Lane between Bluebell Drive and Piner Road

Existing Speed Limit:	30 mph
85th-percentile speed:	32 mph
50th-percentile speed:	28 mph
Number of lanes:	2 travel lanes
Daily traffic volume:	7,835 vehicles per day
Area Type:	Residential, Industrial, Commercial
Special Circumstances:	Coffey Lane is located in a business district as defined in Section 235 of the California Vehicle Code.
Proposed Speed Limit:	30 mph
Comments:	Coffey Lane is a two-lane major collector street. The survey changes the southern limit from West Steele Lane to Bluebell Drive. The results of the radar speed survey indicate that a speed limit of 30 mph is reasonable and safe.

### Coffey Lane between Guerneville Road and Bluebell Drive

Existing Speed Limit:	35 mph
85th-percentile speed:	37 mph
50th-percentile speed:	33 mph
Number of lanes:	2 travel lanes
Daily traffic volume:	7,536 vehicles per day

Area Type:	Residential, Industrial, Commercial
Special Circumstances:	Coffey Lane is located in a business district as defined in Section 235 of the California Vehicle Code.
Proposed Speed Limit:	35 mph
Comments:	Coffey Lane is a two-lane major collector street. The survey changes the northern limit from West Steele Lane to Bluebell Drive. This results in the speed limit between West Steele Lane and Bluebell Drive increasing from 30 mph to 35 mph. The results of the radar speed survey indicate that a speed limit of 35 mph is reasonable and safe.

Mendocino Avenue between Bicentennial Way and Highway 101 North On-ramp

Existing Speed Limit:	40 mph
85th-percentile speed:	40 mph
50th-percentile speed:	35 mph
Number of lanes:	4 travel lanes
Daily traffic volume:	25,548 vehicles per day
Area Type:	Commercial, Industrial
Special Circumstances:	There are no special circumstances.
Proposed Speed Limit:	40 mph
Comments:	Mendocino Avenue is a four-lane principal arterial street. The survey extends the northern limit from Fountaingrove Parkway to Highway 101 North On-ramp. The results of the radar speed survey indicate that a speed limit of 40 mph is reasonable and safe.

Elliott Avenue between Armory Drive and Mendocino Avenue

Existing Speed Limit:	25 mph
85th-percentile speed:	31 mph
50th-percentile speed:	27 mph
Number of lanes:	2 travel lanes
Daily traffic volume:	5,534 vehicles per day
Area Type:	Commercial, Residential, School
Special Circumstances:	Elliott Avenue bisects the Santa Rosa Junior College campus with classrooms, offices, and parking lots on both sides of the street.
Proposed Speed Limit:	25 mph
Comments:	Elliott Avenue is a two-lane major collector street. There is heavy pedestrian and bicyclist activity on the street. The speed limit was rounded down from the nearest 85 <sup>th</sup> -percentile speed in accordance with California Vehicle Code Section 627.

## Los Alamos Road between Sonoma Highway and City Limits North

Existing Speed Limit:	40 mph
85th-percentile speed:	42 mph
50th-percentile speed:	37 mph
Number of lanes:	2 travel lanes
Daily traffic volume:	2,011 vehicles per day
Area Type:	Rural Residential
Special Circumstances:	Los Alamos Road has horizontal and vertical curves that can limit sight distance.
Proposed Speed Limit:	35 mph
Comments:	Los Alamos Road is two-lane local scenic road. The street is one of two entry roads into Hood Mountain Regional Park. There are many bicyclists and pedestrians that use the street. The speed limit was rounded down from the nearest 85 <sup>th</sup> -percentile speed in accordance with California Vehicle Code Section 627.

### FISCAL IMPACT

Approving these changes to the speed limits does not have a fiscal impact.

### ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

This action is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) because it is not a project which has a potential for resulting in either a direct physical change in the environment, or a reasonably foreseeable indirect physical change in the environment, pursuant to CEQA Guideline section 15378.

### BOARD/COMMISSION/COMMITTEE REVIEW AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Not applicable.

### NOTIFICATION

Not applicable.

### ATTACHMENTS

- Attachment 1 – Vicinity Maps
- Resolution

### CONTACT

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