

CITY OF SANTA ROSA  
CITY COUNCIL

TO: MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL  
FROM: MICHAEL VANMIDDE, ASSOCIATE TRAFFIC ENGINEER  
TRANSPORTATION AND PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT  
SUBJECT: SPEED LIMITS ON HOPPER AVENUE, PARSONS DRIVE, AND  
SEBASTOPOL ROAD

AGENDA ACTION: RESOLUTION

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RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended by the Transportation and Public Works Department that Council, by resolution, establish a speed limit of 35 miles per hour on Hopper Avenue from Cleveland Avenue to Coffey Lane, establish a speed limit of 25 miles per hour on Parsons Drive from Hidden Valley Drive to Montecito Avenue, and establish a speed limit of 30 miles per hour on Sebastopol Road from Dutton Avenue to Olive Street.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This item is lowering the speed limit from 40 miles per hour to 35 miles per hour on Hopper Avenue from Cleveland Avenue to Coffey Lane, lowering the speed limit from 30 miles per hour to 25 miles per hour on Parsons Drive from Hidden Valley Drive to Montecito Avenue and establishing a speed limit of 30 miles per hour on Sebastopol Road from Dutton Avenue to Olive Street.

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.

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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, super elevation, 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 May 13, 1975, the City Council, by Resolution 11420 established a speed limit of 40 mph on Hopper Ave between Coffey Lane and Cleveland Avenue.

On June 4, 1991, the City Council, by Resolution 20381 established a speed limit of 30 mph on Parsons Drive between Hidden Valley Drive and Montecito Avenue.

On May 16, 1989, the City Council, by Resolution 19435 established a speed limit of 30 mph on Sebastopol Road between the Northwest Pacific Railroad and the City Limits 100 feet east of Avalon Avenue.

#### ANALYSIS

Hopper Avenue and Sebastopol Road are classified as minor arterial streets on the latest Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Functional Classification System map. Parsons Drive is classified as a major collector street on the latest Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Functional Classification System Map. As such, when speed

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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:

Hopper Avenue between Cleveland Avenue and Coffey Lane

Existing Speed Limit:	40 mph
85th-percentile speed:	37 mph
50th-percentile speed:	34 mph
Number of lanes:	2 and 4 travel lanes
Daily traffic volume:	18,091 vehicles per day
Area Type:	Residential, Commercial
Special Circumstances:	There are no special circumstances.
Proposed Speed Limit:	35 mph
Comments:	Hopper Avenue is a multi-lane arterial street. The installation of bike lanes from Airway Drive to Coffey Lane resulted in lower recorded speeds. The speed limit was reduced from the nearest 5 mph increment of the 85th percentile speed in accordance with California Vehicle Code Section 627, and Section 2B.13 of the California Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices.

Parsons Drive between Hidden Valley Drive and Montecito 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:	1,601 vehicles per day
Area Type:	Residential
Special Circumstances:	Parsons Drive is located in a residence district as defined in Section 515 of the California Vehicle Code. There are residential driveways which require vehicles to back into the segment.
Proposed Speed Limit:	25 mph
Comments:	Parsons Drive is a residential, fully developed two-lane collector street. There are bike lanes throughout the segment. The speed limit was reduced from the nearest 5 mph increment of the 85th percentile speed in accordance with California Vehicle Code Section 627, and Section 2B.13 of the California Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices.

Sebastopol Road between Dutton Avenue and Olive Street

Existing Speed Limit:	30 mph
85th-percentile speed:	31 mph
50th-percentile speed:	28 mph
Number of lanes:	2 travel lanes
Daily traffic volume:	6,495 vehicles per day
Area Type:	Industrial, Commercial, Residential
Special Circumstances:	Sebastopol Road is located in a business district as defined in section 235 of the California Vehicle Code.
Proposed Speed Limit:	30 mph
Comments:	Sebastopol Road is a two-lane arterial street. There is a 25mph school zone speed limit from Timothy Road to the SMART railroad tracks. The speed limit was established at the 85th percentile speed in accordance with California Vehicle Code Section 627, and Section 2B.13 of the California Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices.

FISCAL IMPACT

Approval of this action does not have a fiscal impact on the General Fund.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

The Council finds that the proposed action is exempt from the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) under section 15061(b)(3) and 15378 in that there is no possibility that the implementation of this action may have significant effects on the environment, and that no further environmental review is required.

BOARD/COMMISSION/COMMITTEE REVIEW AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Not applicable.

NOTIFICATION

Not applicable.

ATTACHMENTS

- Attachment 1 – Vicinity Maps
- Resolution

CONTACT

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