

CITY OF SANTA ROSA
CITY COUNCIL

TO: MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL
FROM: MICHAEL VANMIDDE, ASSISTANT ENGINEER
TRANSPORTATION AND PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT
SUBJECT: SPEED LIMITS ON BELLEVUE AVENUE, BENNETT VALLEY
ROAD, BROOKWOOD AVENUE, AND MONTECITO AVENUE

AGENDA ACTION: RESOLUTION

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended by the Transportation and Public Works Department that the Council, by resolution, establish a speed limit of 25 miles per hour on Bellevue Avenue from Santa Rosa Avenue to East City Limits, establish a speed limit of 35 miles per hour on Bennett Valley Road from Santa Rosa Avenue to Brookwood Avenue, establish a speed limit of 30 miles per hour on Brookwood Avenue from Sonoma Avenue to Third Street, and establish a speed limit of 25 miles per hour on Montecito Avenue from Pacific Avenue to Norte Way.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This item is lowering the speed limit on Bellevue Avenue from 30 miles per hour to 25 miles per hour, Bennett Valley Road from 40 miles per hour to 35 miles per hour, Brookwood Avenue from 35 miles per hour to 30 mile per hour, and Montecito Avenue from 30 mile per hour to 25 mile per hour.

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

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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 May 11, 2010, the City Council, by Resolution No. 27629 established a speed limit of 30 mph on Bellevue Avenue from Santa Rosa Avenue to East City Limits.

On December 14, 2010, the City Council, by Resolution No. 27785 established a speed limit of 40 mph on Bennett Valley Road from Santa Rosa Avenue to Brookwood Avenue.

On June 21, 1983, the City Council, by Resolution No. 16253 established a speed limit of 35 mph on Brookwood Avenue from Sonoma Avenue to Third Street.

On August 19, 2003, the City Council, by Resolution No. 25743 established a speed limit of 30 mph on Montecito Avenue from Pacific Avenue to Norte Way.

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ANALYSIS

Bennett Valley Road and Brookwood Avenue are classified as minor arterial streets on the latest Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Functional Classification System map. Montecito Avenue is classified as a major collector street on the latest Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Functional Classification System map. Bellevue Avenue is classified as a local street on the latest FHWA Functional Classification System map, however it is not a residence or business district as defined in the California Vehicle Code. 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:

Bellevue Avenue between Santa Rosa Avenue and East City Limits

Existing Speed Limit:	30 mph
85th-percentile speed:	29 mph
50th-percentile speed:	26 mph
Number of lanes:	2 travel lanes
Daily traffic volume:	3,191 vehicles per day
Area Type:	Residential
Special Circumstances:	Bellevue Avenue has a school speed limit along the entire length of the segment.
Proposed Speed Limit:	25 mph
Comments:	Bellevue Avenue is a two-way local street with apartments on both sides. The collision rate is significantly higher than the statewide average for similar streets. 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.

Bennett Valley Road between Santa Rosa Avenue and Brookwood Avenue

Existing Speed Limit:	40 mph
85th-percentile speed:	39 mph
50th-percentile speed:	36 mph
Number of lanes:	2 travel lanes
Daily traffic volume:	9,043 vehicles per day
Area Type:	Residential, Commercial
Special Circumstances:	Fronting land uses include the Sonoma County Fairgrounds and Bennett Valley Senior Center.
Proposed Speed Limit:	35 mph

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Comments: Bennett Valley Road is a two-lane one-way minor arterial street. The collision rate is higher than the statewide average for similar streets. There is high pedestrian and bicycle traffic in 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.

Brookwood Avenue between Sonoma Avenue and Third Street

Existing Speed Limit: 35 mph
85th-percentile speed: 34 mph
50th-percentile speed: 30 mph
Number of lanes: 4 travel lanes
Daily traffic volume: 10,817 vehicles per day
Area Type: Commercial
Special Circumstances: There are no special circumstances.
Proposed Speed Limit: 30 mph
Comments: Brookwood Avenue is a four-lane minor arterial street. The collision rate is higher than the statewide average for similar streets. 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.

Montecito Avenue between Pacific Avenue and Norte Way

Existing Speed Limit: 30 mph
85th-percentile speed: 31 mph
50th-percentile speed: 27 mph
Number of lanes: 2 travel lanes
Daily traffic volume: 2,268 vehicles per day
Area Type: Residential
Special Circumstances: Montecito Avenue is located in a residence district as defined in Section 515 of the California Vehicle Code.
Proposed Speed Limit: 25 mph
Comments: Montecito Avenue is a two-lane local street. The collision rate higher than the statewide average for similar streets. 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.

FISCAL IMPACT

Changing the speed limits on these streets 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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