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REPORT TO COUNCIL

SUBJECT

Introduce an Ordinance to Amend Sections of *Sunnyvale Municipal Code* Title 10 for Revision in Traffic Control Authority and Rescind Resolution No. 203-95 and Related Amendments Designating Speed Limits for Certain Streets and Multi-Way Stops, and Adopt New Speed Limits Resolution

BACKGROUND

In August 1995, the Division of Transportation and Traffic along with the Enforcement and Traffic Engineering Analysis Team from University of California, Berkley reviewed the previous City Traffic Engineering and Traffic Safety functions. This review led to the revision of the *Sunnyvale Municipal Code* to delegate authority for some traffic control decisions to the City Transportation and Traffic Manager (also known as the City Traffic Engineer) with the City Council hearing appeals of decisions delegated to staff. Decisions to install multi-way stop signs and designate speed limits remained with the City Council. The primary goal for the 1995 revision was to maximize efficiency and effectiveness of traffic safety programs.

On October 31, 1995, the City Council adopted an ordinance to revise *Sunnyvale Municipal Code* Title 10, updating the traffic control authority of the City Traffic Engineer and the City Council. Simultaneously, City Council adopted Resolution No. 203-95 designating speed limits for City streets and multi-way stops at certain intersections (see Attachment 1). Following the adoption of Resolution No. 203-95, amendments to the resolution (see Resolution Nos. 159-97, 192-97, 114-98, 170-02, 159-03, 632-14, 640-14, 662-14, and 795-16 - attached as Attachment 2) were also approved by City Council between 1997 to 2016.

EXISTING POLICY

Sunnyvale Municipal Code - Title 10:

Chapter 10.04.050. Appeals of City Traffic Engineer Determinations.

Chapter 10.08.190 requires that City Council approve by resolution all installations of three or four-way (multi-way) stop sign controls and designating streets as through streets or stop intersections.

Chapter 10.32.020. Three or Four-Way (Multi-Way) Stop Intersections.

Chapter 10.32.030. Through streets requiring arterial stops or yields at intersections therewith.

General Plan - Chapter 3 Land Use and Transportation Element

Goal LT-5, Attain a transportation system that is effective, safe, pleasant and convenient.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

The adoption of a resolution and ordinance of general policy does not constitute a "project" within the

meaning of the California Environmental Quality Act (“CEQA”) pursuant to CEQA Guidelines section 15378(b)(5) in that it is a governmental organizational policy making or administrative activity that will not result in direct or indirect changes in the environment.

DISCUSSION

Staff periodically conducts Engineering and Traffic Surveys (E&TS) on City streets to determine travel speed, safety, land use and other conditions for the purpose of establishing and/or modifying speed limits. Staff also receives requests to study intersections for possible installation of multi-way stop signs. Both of these traffic controls (speed limits and multi-way stop) are analyzed according to the latest established California standards and guidelines. The *Sunnyvale Municipal Code* calls for speed limits and multi-way stops to be established by resolution in accordance with the California Vehicle Code (CVC) and the latest standards or guidelines established by Caltrans in the California Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices (CA MUTCD), respectively. The lists of roadway “Speed Limits” and “Multi-Way Stop Intersections” are contained in Attachment A of Resolution 203-95 (Attachment 1). These traffic controls are discussed further below.

Speed Limits

In accordance with the CA MUTCD and CVC, state and local authorities maintain E&TS for a number of street segments in order to establish speed limits that facilitate the orderly movement of traffic and are reasonable and safe. As part of E&TS, speed surveys are conducted to measure the speeds of vehicles under free-flow conditions. The CA MUTCD recommends setting a speed limit at the nearest 5 mph increment to the 85th percentile speed of free flowing traffic, but allows for speed limit reduction below the 85th percentile under certain conditions. Other factors that may be considered when establishing speed limits include the following: road characteristics, roadway shoulder conditions, grade, alignment and sight distance, pace speed, roadside development and environment, parking practices and pedestrian activity, and reported crash experience. E&TS are typically valid for seven years, but may be extended to 10 years if a registered Civil or Traffic Engineer evaluates the segment and determines that no significant changes in roadway or traffic conditions have occurred.

Per CVC 40802, the use of radar or any other electronic device that measures the speed of moving objects may not be used to enforce posted speed limits without a current E&TS. Street segments that are classified as “local” per the California Road System (CRS) Maps (see Attachment 3) do not require an E&TS when posted with 25 mph speed limits.

Based on the most recent E&TS’ and staff’s review of street classifications an updated resolution has been prepared that makes the following changes:

- 1) Reduce existing speed limits recommended by the latest Engineering and Traffic Survey to facilitate the orderly movement of traffic in a reasonable and safe manner. A reduction in the posted speed limit of 5 mph is recommended for street segments. Roadway segments proposed for speed reduction are shown on a map in Attachment 4.
- 2) Incorporate minor clerical revisions including the removal of street segments that do not require maintenance of E&TS and also adding street segments that are classified as a “collector” or “arterial” that were not included in the current resolution.

With adoption of a new resolution (Attachment 5), the City Council can rescind Resolution No. 203-95 and its amendments (Resolution Nos. 159-97, 192-97, 114-98, 170-02, 159-03, 632-14, 640-14, 662-

14, and 795-16). If reduced speed limits are approved, they would not be effective until the existing signs and markings are replaced.

Multi-way stops

Staff receives requests from residents to study intersections for the possible installation of multi-way stop sign controls. As a result of these requests, staff conducts a multi-way stop warrant analysis for each location. Staff evaluates this traffic control as a standard operational item per the multi-way stop warrants, guidelines and criteria established by the CA MUTCD. The analysis considers traffic and pedestrian volumes, intersection collision history, traffic control patterns, intersection geometry, schools and any unusual conditions requiring engineering judgment to determine if a multi-way stop control is warranted. Once an intersection has been determined to require a new traffic control, a mailer is sent out to the residents within 300 feet of the intersection with information regarding the change.

When a multi-way stop warrant analysis determines that traffic control changes are warranted staff presents the findings to City Council for approval. Consistent with other processes and to streamline approval of multi-way stop sign changes as determined by the various factors listed above, staff recommends to delegate authority to make multi-way stop sign changes to the City Transportation and Traffic Manager. After the noticing period of 10 days, the change will be implemented unless appealed to the City Council as outlined below.

Adopting an ordinance (see Attachment 6) revising the *Sunnyvale Municipal Code* (“SMC”) to delegate authority for the designation and installation of multi-way stop controls to the City Traffic Engineer (also known as the “City Transportation and Traffic Manager”) will improve efficiency and effectiveness. The installation of stop signs, when warranted, as per CA MUTCD will improve safety at the intersection and reduce the City’s civil liability. Pursuant to SMC section 10.04.050 any resident may request reconsideration of the traffic control device with the Traffic Engineer who renders a final decision within 30 days of the request. The resident may appeal the traffic engineer’s determination to the City Council. The proposed ordinance adds an express requirement in section 10.04.050 that the Traffic Engineer’s final decision must be appealed to the City Clerk within 15 calendar days of the decision.

Designating streets as through streets

During the review of SMC section 10.08.190 *Stop signs and through streets - Designation by Council*, staff also found that subsection (b) which requires a Council resolution to designate through streets is no longer relevant in light of the existing standards and guidelines of the CA MUTCD. Staff searched for the resolution and found no such resolution on file. Furthermore, the City of Sunnyvale has no definition of “through streets” except for our general plan that defines the classification of roadways. With the latest federal and state guidelines and design requirements for installation of stop signs, SMC section 10.08.190 (b) and section 10.32.030 *Through streets requiring arterial stops or yields at intersection therewith* becomes redundant. Therefore, there is no need or value for these sections and should be removed.

FISCAL IMPACT

Removing local street segments from Resolution No. 203-95 has a savings of approximately \$2,000 over several years. This savings comes from the staff and vendor costs that are currently associated with maintaining E&TS’.

Reducing existing speed limits is estimated to cost \$55,000. These costs are associated with replacing corresponding speed limit signs, speed limit pavement markings, and other auxiliary signs as well as the cost to update the signal clearance timing at 25 intersections. Segments contiguous to signals on Central Expressway, US 101, or SR 237 will have to be coordinated with the County and Caltrans. All costs in implementing these changes will be absorbed within Program 119 Transportation and Traffic Services.

ALTERNATIVES

1. Rescind Resolution No. 203-95 and related amendments and adopt a new resolution re-establishing speed limits in the City.
2. Do not rescind existing Resolution No. 203-95 and related amendments and do not adopt a new resolution re-establishing speed limits in the City.
3. Introduce an ordinance to amend *Sunnyvale Municipal Code* Title 10 to delegate authority to the City Transportation and Traffic Manager to make decisions to install multi-way stops (3-Way or 4-Way Stops) with the City Council hearing appeals of the Transportation and Traffic Manager's decisions.
4. Amend *Sunnyvale Municipal Code* Title 10 to remove Section 10.08.190 (b) and Section 10.32.030.
5. Do not introduce an ordinance to amend *Sunnyvale Municipal Code* Title 10 to delegate authority to the City Transportation and Traffic Manager to make decisions to install multi-way stops (3-Way or 4-Way Stops) with the City Council hearing appeals of the Transportation and Traffic Manager's decisions.
6. Do not remove *Sunnyvale Municipal Code* Title 10 Section 10.08.190 (b) and Section 10.32.030.

PUBLIC CONTACT

Public contact was made by posting the Council agenda on the City's official-notice bulletin board outside City Hall, at the Sunnyvale Senior Center, Community Center and Department of Public Safety; and by making the agenda and report available at the Sunnyvale Public Library, the Office of the City Clerk and on the City's website.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Alternatives 1, 3 and 4: 1) Rescind Resolution No. 203-95 and related amendments and adopt a new resolution re-establishing speed limits in the City; 3) Introduce an ordinance to amend *Sunnyvale Municipal Code* Title 10 to delegate authority to the City Transportation and Traffic Manager to make decisions to install multi-way stops (3-Way or 4-Way Stops) with the City Council hearing appeals of Transportation and Traffic Manager's decisions; and, 4) Amend *Sunnyvale Municipal Code* Title 10 to remove Section 10.08.190 (b) and Section 10.32.030.

In order to facilitate the orderly movement of traffic in a reasonable and safe manner, staff recommends speed limit reductions where it is justified by an E&TS along with amending minor clerical revisions to be consistent with CVC and to clarify existing segments. Furthermore, in order to expedite the installation of warranted multi-way stops, staff also recommends delegating the authority to the City Transportation and Traffic Manager to make decisions pertaining to the installation of multi-way stop controls, with the City Council hearing appeals of the Transportation and Traffic Manager's decisions.

If the City Council does not rescind existing Resolution No. 203-95 and related amendments and

does not adopt a new resolution re-establishing speed limits in the City, then all existing speed limits that require an E&TS would remain as currently set by City Council.

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ATTACHMENTS

1. Resolution No. 203-95
2. Amendments to Resolution No. 203-95
3. California Road System (CRS) Maps
4. Roadway Segment Locations for Reduced Speed Limits
5. New Speed Limit Resolution and Attachment
6. Proposed Multi-Way Stop Ordinance