



File #: 18-0856, Version: 1

REPORT TO COUNCIL

SUBJECT

Adopt a Resolution to Establish 15 Mile Per Hour Speed Zones at 35 Locations Adjacent to 16 Public Schools in Sunnyvale, Find the Action is Categorically Exempt under CEQA and Approve Budget Modification No. 7 for \$107,600 for Installation of Signs

BACKGROUND

Staff received a City Council request to consider the possibility of implementing 15 miles per hour (mph) speed limits at 35 locations adjacent to 16 Sunnyvale public schools (Attachment 1). City of Sunnyvale Municipal Code (SMC) Chapter 10.08 allows the City Traffic Engineer to place and maintain official traffic control devices when and as required under the City's traffic ordinances and resolutions or pursuant to the California Vehicle Code. These traffic control devices shall be installed as specified in the traffic control regulations document as per the latest standards and guidelines established by the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans). Standards and guidelines for establishing speed limits on city streets including school zones are given in the California Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (CA MUTCD) and the 2014 California Manual for Setting Speed Limits published by Caltrans. Additionally, California Vehicle Code section 22358.4 allows a local agency to implement 15 MPH school speed zones in certain residential locations.

On February 28, 2012, staff prepared a Report to the Council (RTC No. 12-040, Attachment 2) for authorizing and establishing 15 mph speed zones at 37 locations near public schools in Sunnyvale. The Council did not approve changing the speed limits to 15 mph at these locations, and directed staff to further evaluate lowering the speed limit to 15 mph in school zones as part of a larger study.

In November 2012, the Comprehensive School Traffic Study was completed, which identified improvements on school routes near Sunnyvale public schools. This study did not recommend establishing 15 mph speed zones at schools, however, the study did identify locations requiring further evaluation for establishing 15 mph speed zones. At its December 4, 2012 meeting, the City Council adopted a criterion as part of a Comprehensive School Traffic Study to allow consideration of 15 mph speed zones on those qualifying locations that have documented higher traffic speeds (RTC No. 12-279, Attachment 3). The criterion is for those school area streets that have an 85th percentile speed greater than 25 mph during school commute times, establishment of a 15 mph speed zones would be recommended. The City established criterion is consistent with the Caltrans standards and guidelines for setting speed limits including school zones. Following this criterion so far, staff has implemented 15 mph speed zones at the following locations (RTC No. 14-0092, Attachment 4): Lakechime Drive, Meadowlake Drive, and Silverlake Drive. Of these three locations, Silverlake Drive was not one of the locations listed in the 2012 staff report.

EXISTING POLICY

General Plan, Chapter 3, *Land Use and Transportation Element*:

Goal C: An Effective Multimodal Transportation System - Offer the community a variety of transportation modes for local travel that are also integrated with the regional transportation system and land use pattern. Favor accommodation of alternative modes to the automobile as a means to enhance efficient transit use, bicycling, and walking and corresponding benefits to the environment, person-throughput, and qualitative improvements to the transportation system environment.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

Approving the Resolution changing speed limits on certain streets in Sunnyvale is a project that is categorically exempt from environmental review pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act Guidelines section 15301(c) because it involves the operation of an existing street involving negligible or no expansion of use.

DISCUSSION

Notwithstanding the provision of the CA MUTCD and the 2014 California Manual for Setting Speed Limits, the California Vehicle Code (CVC) section 22358.4 (b)(1) allows a local authority, by ordinance or resolution, to determine and declare prima facie speed limits as follows:

A 15 mph prima facie speed limit in a residence district, on a highway with a posted speed limit of 30 mph or slower, when approaching, at a distance of less than 500 feet from, or passing, a school building or the grounds of a school building, contiguous to a highway and posted with a school warning sign that indicates a speed limit of 15 mph, while children are going to or leaving the school, either during school hours or during the noon recess period.

The prima facie speed limit shall also apply when approaching, at a distance of less than 500 feet from, or passing, school grounds that are not separated from the highway by a fence, gate, or other physical barrier while the grounds are in use by children and the highway is posted with a school warning sign that indicates a speed limit of 15 mph.

The prima facie speed limits established under this criterion apply only to the streets that meet all the following conditions:

- a. A residential street with a maximum of two traffic lanes.
- b. A maximum posted 30 mph prima facie speed limit immediately prior to and after the school zone.
- c. The prima facie speed limits established will apply to both directions of travel.
- d. When determining the need to lower the prima facie speed limit, the local authority shall take the provisions of CVC Section 627 described in the subsequent paragraph into consideration.

The CVC Section 627 further requires that when determining the need to lower prima facie speed limit, the local authority shall take the following provisions into consideration:

- a. Prevailing speeds as determined by traffic engineering measurements.
- b. Accident records.
- c. Highway, traffic, and roadside conditions not readily apparent to the driver.
- d. Residential density.
- e. Pedestrian and bicyclist safety.

Staff has reviewed the remaining 35 locations identified in the Comprehensive School Traffic Study. Staff has considered the provisions of CVC Section 627 in general, but has not performed detailed evaluations of factors listed in the CVC Section 627 for the 35 remaining individual locations. A comprehensive evaluation of these factors will require additional data collection. However, based on the proximity to schools and roadway characteristics, staff feels that the remaining 35 locations (Attachment 4) could qualify for consideration of 15 mph school zones.

The Department of Public Safety may receive additional complaints at these locations if drivers do not modify behavior upon the posting of the new 15 mph zones.

FISCAL IMPACT

Staff estimates \$107,600 for installation of speed limit signs at all 35 locations. Another \$75,000 will be needed if council directs staff to perform a detailed analysis of these locations. Staff recommends approval of Budget Modification No. 7 to establish a new project to fund this work.

**Budget Modification No. 7
FY 2018/19**

	Current	Increase/ (Decrease)	Revised
General Fund			
<u>Expenditures</u>			
New Project - Fifteen MPH Speed Limit Near Public Schools	\$0	\$107,600	\$107,600
<u>Reserves</u>			
Budget Stabilization Reserve	\$32,762,690	(\$107,600)	\$32,655,090

Funding Source

This cost will be funded by the General Fund Budget Stabilization Fund.

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.

ALTERNATIVES

1. Adopt the attached Resolution to create 15 mph speed zones at 35 locations adjacent to 16 public schools in Sunnyvale, find the action categorically exempt pursuant to CEQA section 15301(c), and approve Budget Modification No. 7 to appropriate \$107,600 for installation costs.
2. Direct Staff to conduct a study based on the City established criteria at 35 locations adjacent to 16 public schools in Sunnyvale (Attachment 4), amend Budget Modification No. 7 to provide additional funding of \$75,000 for the study, and approve the amended Budget Modification No. 7 to appropriate \$182,600 for the study and sign installations.

3. Do not conduct a citywide study and continue to follow the existing city practices for setting speed zones including 15 mph speed zones. This alternative will not require any additional funding.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends Alternative No. 1: Adopt the attached Resolution to create 15 mph speed zones at 35 locations adjacent to 16 public schools in Sunnyvale, find the action categorically exempt under California Environmental Quality Act Guidelines section 15301(c), and approve Budget Modification No. 7 to appropriate \$107,600 for installation costs.

Prepared by: Ganesh Karkee, Traffic Engineer

Reviewed by: James Boone, Captain, Public Safety

Reviewed by: Shahid Abbas, Transportation and Traffic Manager

Reviewed by: Timothy J. Kirby, Director of Finance

Reviewed by: Chip Taylor, Director, Public Works

Reviewed by: Teri Silva, Assistant City Manager

Approved by: Kent Steffens, City Manager

ATTACHMENTS

1. 35 locations adjacent to 16 public schools in Sunnyvale for establishing 15 mph speed zones
2. RTC No. 12-040
3. RTC No. 12-279 including the Comprehensive School Traffic Study
4. RTC No. 14-0092
5. Resolution to adopt 15 MPH School Speed Zones