



Date: October 30, 2015
To: Mayor and City Council
From: Tim Tucker, City Engineer
Subject: Alhambra Way Speed Limit

Recommendation

Conduct Public Hearing to introduce an ordinance amending Title 10, Vehicle and Traffic, Chapter 10.20, Special Speed Zones, of the Martinez Municipal Code.

Background

The City hosted three (3) workshops on traffic safety for the Alhambra Valley Estates neighborhood which includes Alhambra Way, Pleasant Hill Road East and surrounding residential streets.

The first workshop focused on defining the study area, providing background on the implemented 1994 traffic safety program and outlined changes that have taken place since it has impacted traffic. The majority of the workshop enabled residents to provide comments and complaints related to traffic.

The second workshop explored potential traffic solutions. The meeting began with a recap of the first workshop and a summary of the comments received. Staff discussed items typically in a “toolbox” to deal with traffic problems and provided speed survey data. The workshop participants also explored a traffic circle and a realignment of the Alhambra Way/Pleasant Hill Road East/Muir Station Road intersection.

The last workshop focused on finalizing an implementation plan to address speeding, pedestrian safety, cut-through traffic, and intersection improvements.

Discussion

Speeding on residential streets was an area of concern for residents. The City did a speed survey of Alhambra Way between Muir Station Road and Alhambra Avenue (south of SR 4.) The results of the survey indicated the median speed of motorists was 22 miles per hour (MPH) with 85 percent of motorists traveling at a speed of 25 MPH or less. This segment of Alhambra Way is very narrow with curves that restrict sight distance. Portions of the road have no shoulders or a steep drop-off to Alhambra Creek. The street is residential in nature, but serves as a cut through route for motorists. Based on the Engineering speed study and road geometrics, staff recommends Council amend the Municipal Code to lower the speed limit on Alhambra Way from Muir Station Road to Alhambra Avenue (south of SR4) from 25 to 20 MPH. This requires a public hearing to change Title 10, Vehicle and Traffic, Chapter 10.20, Special Speed Zones, of the Municipal Code.

Implementation Plan: In addition to lowering the speed limit on Alhambra Way, additional improvements are proposed for implementation in the neighborhood, including:

Short Term (6 months):

- Speed limit legends painted on the street (completed)
- Advance “No Trucks over 3 Tons” signage
- “No Thru Traffic-Use Hwy 4” signs on Muir Station Road at Center Avenue
- Signal timing adjustments (completed)
- Residential notification regarding overgrown vegetation or obstructions along Pleasant Hill Road East
- Radar speed trailer posting (on-going)
- Routine enforcement (on-going)
- Discourage traffic, from the Muir Station Road Public Storage Facility, through the neighborhood (completed)

Long Term (2-5 years):

- Pathway improvements
- Reconfiguration of Alhambra Way and Muir Station Road intersection

There were other improvements requested by some of the residents. The residents were told the following improvements are not recommended by staff for approval:

- Closure of Alhambra Way (PD and FD objections)
- Closure of Pleasant Hill Road East (PD and FD objections)
- Speed humps (PD, FD and Engineering objections)
- Stop sign at Alhambra Way and Walnut Ave. (Unwarranted)

PD – Police Department

FD – Fire Department

Fiscal Impact

Speed Limit Change: The existing speed limit signage is estimated to cost \$400 for sign installation costs and materials.

Short Term Improvements: The additional truck weight limit and other signs are estimated to cost \$800. This cost will be absorbed in the current, maintenance gas tax budget. Staff costs for other short term improvements are minor, or a reprioritization of current work loads.

Long Term Improvements: Detailed estimates will need to be developed for both the intersection improvements and pathway installation and upgrades. Depending on the type and extent of paths, and extent of intersection improvements, the cost could range from \$250,000 to \$500,000. The path projects would likely be done in phases. Staff will attempt to obtain grant funding for the majority of the work.

Attachments

- Ordinance
- Vicinity Map

ORDINANCE NO. C.S.

AMENDING TITLE 10, VEHICLE AND TRAFFIC, CHAPTER 10.20, SPECIAL SPEED ZONES, OF THE MARTINEZ MUNICIPAL CODE

WHEREAS, the City Council of the City of Martinez has established speed limits on various public streets where the speed limit permitted by State law is not reasonable and safe; and

WHEREAS, from time to time these established speed limits are re-evaluated due to changes in traffic volumes, traffic speeds, physical changes to the road alignment and other environmental changes; and

WHEREAS, it is determined upon the basis of an Engineering and Traffic Survey the speed permitted by State law upon the following street is not reasonable and safe to facilitate the orderly movement of traffic, and it is declared the prima facie speed limit shall be as hereinafter set forth and amended as follows:

THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF MARTINEZ does ordain as follows:

SECTION I. Title 10 of the Martinez Municipal Code is amended to read as follows:

Section 10.20.10 Special Speed limits, Subsection C, Alhambra Way, shall be amended to read as follows:

C. ALHAMBRA WAY	
Alhambra Ave. to Muir Station Rd. to Alhambra Ave. (North of SR 4)	25
Muir Station Rd. to Alhambra Ave. (South of SR 4)	20

The declared prima facie or maximum speed limit shall be effective when appropriate signs giving notice thereof are erected upon the street, and shall not thereafter be revised except upon the basis of an Engineering and Traffic Survey. The provisions of this Section shall not apply in respect to any 25 miles per hour prima facie limit which is applicable when passing a school building or the grounds thereof.

SECTION II. Severability. If any section, subsection, sentence, clause, phrase or portion of this ordinance is for any reason held invalid or unconstitutional, such decision shall not affect the validity of the remaining portions of this ordinance.

The City Council hereby declares it would have passed this and each section, subsection, phrase or clause thereof irrespective of the fact any one or more sections, subsections, phrase or clauses be declared unconstitutional on their face or as applied.

SECTION III. Effective date. This ordinance shall become effective 30 days after the date of adoption and enforced when appropriate signs giving notice thereof are erected upon the street.

SECTION VI. Posting. The City Clerk shall cause this ordinance to be published and or posted within fifteen days after its adoption.

The City Council hereby declares it would have passed this and each section, subsection, phrase or clause thereof irrespective of the fact any one or more sections, subsections, phrase or clauses be declared unconstitutional on their face or as applied.

APPROVED: _____
Rob Schroder, Mayor

ATTEST: _____
Deputy City Clerk

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I HEREBY CERTIFY the foregoing ordinance was duly and regularly introduced at a Regular Meeting of the City Council of the City of Martinez, held on the 18th day of November, 2015, and duly passed and adopted at a Regular Meeting of said City Council held on the day of December, 2015, by the following vote:

AYES:

NOES:

ABSENT:

ABSTAIN:

RICHARD G. HERNANDEZ, CITY CLERK
CITY OF MARTINEZ

