

# Concerned about Speeding in your Neighborhood?

Speeding on residential roads is one of the top complaints reported to the General Services Department. Studies show that most vehicles travel above the 25 mph residential speed limit and that all drivers contribute to this issue including residents, commuters, and school aged drivers. Residents may speed because they are familiar and comfortable on the roadways they travel regularly while others may use them as short cuts.



Interested in learning how to change this and slow traffic in your neighborhood? You truly can make a difference! See below for common questions, answers, and tips to help you improve traffic safety in your neighborhood.

## Will more STOP signs slow traffic on our street?

When installed under the correct conditions, STOP signs can increase intersection safety. However, stop signs installed at locations which do not meet minimum requirements can actually decrease safety and create additional problems. Federal and State standards (warrants) have been established to determine when all-way STOP signs should be installed. These standards consider traffic speed, the number of vehicles, pedestrians and bicycles, intersection sight distance, and the frequency of gaps in traffic to allow safe vehicle entry or pedestrian crossing.



Studies have shown that when all-way stops are installed at locations that do not meet requirements, they do little to slow traffic. Unwarranted stop signs are often ignored by drivers on the main street, putting pedestrians and cross-traffic at a higher risk. Speeds within a block of unwarranted stop signs are typically unchanged. Drivers have to slow down when approaching a stop sign, but often speed up quickly to make up for lost time. In addition, stopping and starting causes an increase in tire and engine noise and an increase in air pollution.

### Unwarranted STOP signs:

- Do not stop speeding
- Increase risk to bicyclists and pedestrians
- Increase air and noise pollution
- Waste Fuel

## Will a lower speed limit help reduce speeding?

Many studies have concluded that a driver's speed is influenced by the existing conditions of a roadway, not the posted speed limit. As a result, changes in posted speed limits have little to no effect on vehicle speeds.



There are several types of roadways in which the speeds are set by the California Vehicle Code (“prima facie” speed limits apply). The speed limit on local, residential roads is 25 mph. All other speed limits must be established based on engineering studies which look at roadway conditions, crash records and the existing speeds at which the majority of vehicles travel. When speed limits are set lower than the engineering study justifies, enforcement citations cannot be upheld in court.

### Reducing speed limits:

- Does not change most drivers' speed
- Cannot be upheld in court

## Will 'Children at Play' signs help slow vehicles?

Warning signs are used to bring attention to unusual hazards along the road. Too many signs can lead to “sign pollution” causing unnecessary distraction, often irritating and confusing drivers in the process.

“Children at Play” signs have little or no effect on the behavior of motorists and there have been no indications these signs reduce pedestrian-involved collisions. Since drivers tend to pay little attention to these signs, parents



and children may feel a false sense of security. For this reason, the signs have been removed from both the federal and state list of approved traffic control signs and are not eligible for installation on roadways.

Specific warning signs for school zones and crosswalk locations are available, and have been shown to be effective when properly installed.

**“Children at Play” signs:**

- Have little effect on driver behavior
- Give pedestrians, children and parents a false sense of security

**Can our neighborhood have speed humps installed?**

Speed humps are raised pavement areas in the roadway surface that extend across the travel way to slow vehicle speeds. A speed “hump” is a gradual rise in the pavement surface and is used on public streets, unlike a speed “bump” which is an abrupt change in pavement height typically used for private driveways and parking lots. Studies have shown that speed humps aid in reducing vehicle speeds and decreasing traffic volumes in their immediate vicinity.

Speed hump installations have negative effects that should be considered as part of the evaluation. Once installed, residents living near speed humps often complain of increased noise as vehicles traverse the speed humps (vehicles may hit the brakes and speed up immediately after). Traffic may divert to adjacent parallel streets in an effort to avoid the speed humps. In addition, emergency vehicle response will be slowed. Finally, there is significant cost for installation and maintenance.



Speed humps are generally only installed on roadways which meet minimum criteria established by the City. Minimum criteria includes the existing vehicle speeds, number of vehicles, proximity to adjacent STOP and YIELD signs, and location of emergency vehicle response routes.

For more information on speed hump installations, please call the General Services Department at (916) 727-4770.

**What can residents do?**

**Drive Slower**

**The maximum legal speed on a residential street is 25 mph** (unless posted otherwise). Drive 25 mph or less; give yourself more time to react to the unexpected, you may be driving faster than you should. Do not rush - leave a little earlier and give yourself plenty of time to reach your destination.

**Avoid Using Neighborhood Streets as Short Cuts**

Using residential streets as short cuts impacts neighborhood quality of life. Cut-through traffic increases noise, pollution, and decreases safety for children, pedestrians, and pets.

**Be an Active Reporter**

If there are problems along your street such as damaged or missing signs, potholes or vegetation blocking line of sight, please notify the General Services Department at (916) 727-4770 or [generalservices@citrusheights.net](mailto:generalservices@citrusheights.net)

**Observe all the Rules of the Road**

Don't be a speeder, be a leader! Be alert and don't take chances - even on short trips. Statistics show that most crashes occur close to home.

**Set the Pace**

Driving at or below the 25 mph speed limit forces those behind you to follow at your safe, respectful pace.

**Report Speeding Vehicles**

Help us help you! If you notice vehicles speed more at a particular time of day, or day of week, call the Citrus Heights Police Department's non-emergency phone number at (916) 727-5500.

*Some Information contained in this flyer is based in part on a series of traffic safety flyers published by the City of Phoenix, AZ.*

**City of Citrus Heights · General Services Division**  
6360 Fountain Square Drive, Citrus Heights CA 95621

