

Issue 4: Alameda Unsafe Speed

Overview:

This short 4 block section of Alameda experiences a high accident rate, parents reporting near misses of vehicles almost hitting school children, requires bikes to co-mingle in traffic lanes due to lack of bike lanes, pedestrians to use the roadway due to narrow - unusable sidewalks, and traffic having to negotiate around left turning vehicles and lane reductions causing additional risk to cyclists and pedestrians.

From Belmont thru Atherton, and almost all of Menlo Park, Alameda de las Pulgas speed limit is 30 mph; **however, just before the major school crossing at Sharon Road and only through this zone for the next 3 blocks, the speed limit is jumped up to 35 mph.** This short area is a main route for two schools and a pre-school and pedestrian traffic between these two east and west neighborhoods.

There is no reason for traffic speed to increase in this critical area, as no more traffic could flow through this roadway than if it were at 25 or 30 mph. All of the feeder streets to Alameda are 25 mph streets and Alameda itself, is a single lane at 30 mph for the next 10+ miles. Just this 4 block section is increased.

The number of accidents alone is more than enough justification to reduce the speed limit. The consensus of parents, residents, pedestrians, cyclists, police/CHP officers, and the fire district, is that 35 mph is too fast and it does not make sense to have this short 1,000 foot section be a high speed. **Such a short section should not have a different speed according to MUTCD** (Sec. 2B.13.38) and the setting of the higher speed limit is in violation of CVC 627.

Proposed Solution Option:

This low cost option reduces the speed from 35 mph to 30 or 25 mph. It only requires properly placed speed limit signs, yet would greatly improve the safety of this heavily used school approach. The lower speed would allow better reaction time to cars that have stopped in the fast lane to make left turns and for bicyclists to more safely share the road. An electronic speed feedback sign would improve adherence.

Status Update:
Issue Resolved

This issue has been addressed by County passing a resolution to lower the speed limit to 25MPH. Resolution passed at the Oct 17th, 2017 Supervisors meeting and will be effective about Nov 17th.

- Problem:**
- High accident rate
 - Safety of school children
 - Street design issues
 - Unusable sidewalks
 - Narrow lanes
 - Need for bike lanes
 - Inconsistent speed limits
 - Bicyclists and pedestrians
 - Pedestrians walk in roadway

- Positives of Solution:**
- Reduces speed - Improves visibility
 - Safer ingress/egress for residents
 - Improved safety for cyclists
 - Does **not** impact vehicle throughput
 - CVC 627 requires reducing speed due to accidents, shortness of section, unusual road features, bicycle and pedestrian traffic

- Considerations:**
- Throughput is same with 30 mph
 - Visible speed feedback signs would help keep motorists aware of speed

Impact:
Improved safety for all with minimal costs. Reduced impact by having as safer speed limit.

Scope and Cost:
Minimal cost - primarily speed limit signs changed to a lower limit.

