

**CITY COUNCIL  
COMMUNICATION:**

**ITEM \_\_\_\_\_**

**OFFICE OF THE CITY MANAGER  
CITY OF DES MOINES, IOWA**

**98-252**

**SYNOPSIS —**

**AGENDA:**  
JUNE 15, 1998

The following traffic regulation changes have been reviewed by staff and are recommended for approval:

**SUBJECT:**  
TRAFFIC  
REGULATION  
CHANGES

- 1. Request for speed reduction– Southwest Sixty-third Street between Browns Woods Drive and Army Post Road.
- 2. Request for no stopping, no standing designation near Lovejoy Elementary School.
- 3. Request for two-sided parking restriction– Southeast Seventeenth Street between Pleasantview Drive north to end of the north curve.
- 4. Request for two-sided parking restriction– Southwest Ninth Street from County Line Road north 300 Feet.

**TYPE:**  
RESOLUTION  
ORDINANCE  
**RECEIVE/FILE**

**SUBMITTED BY:**  
HAROLD SMITH  
CITY ENGINEER

**FISCAL IMPACT –**

N/A

**RECOMMENDATION –**

**Refer to Legal Department for preparation of ordinance revisions.**

**BACKGROUND –**

- 1. The Traffic and Transportation Division received a request to lower the existing speed limit on Southwest Sixty-third Street between Browns Woods Drive and Army Post Road. Concern was expressed that since the street is no longer a State route, the 50 mph speed limit is too fast for the character of the area.

Staff has reviewed the request and concurs that since the new segment of Iowa 28 opened several years ago, this section of Southwest Sixty-third Street has changed to a residential collector street. Staff proposes that this speed limit be reduced to 40 mph.

The City of West Des Moines, which has jurisdiction over the west half of this street, concurs in the lowering of this speed limit, and is concurrently in the process of modifying their code to reflect this change.

The following ordinance revision is necessary to authorize this change:

**SEC. 27-761. SOUTHWEST SIXTY-THIRD STREET.**

Southwest Sixty-third Street, from a point 1,000 feet south of Railroad Avenue to ~~the south city limits~~ Iowa Highway 28, 50 miles per hour.

Southwest Sixty-third Street, from Browns Woods Drive to Army Post Road, 40 miles per hour.

2. Traffic and Transportation Division staff has worked with the principal of Lovejoy Elementary School with regards to providing an adequate location for children to cross Porter Avenue at Southeast Eighth Street.

During dismissal times, many children exit the south side of the school and proceed along the Safe School Route across Porter Avenue to travel south along the east side of Southeast Eighth Street. A number of cars have been observed to be parked within this area, mostly parents waiting for children. The sidewalk along the east side of Southeast Eighth Street did not have a curb-drop on the north side of Porter Avenue. Children were observed to be crossing Porter Avenue at an angle with no defined crossing location. Children were observed having to step out into the street to see around parked cars to see if it was clear to begin walking.

In an effort to improve the visibility of and for the children, and to establish a defined crossing location, staff has worked with the Public Works Department to install a new handicap ramp to receive pedestrians crossing Porter Avenue walking along the east side of Southeast Eighth Street. Additionally, staff has worked with the school principal to identify areas to restrict

parking to improve the visibility of pedestrians crossing at this intersection. Staff recommended that certain parking prohibitions be made to improve pedestrian crossing visibility.

At their June 9, 1998 meeting, the Traffic Safety Committee unanimously concurred with staff's recommendation.

The following revisions to the Municipal Code will place the parking prohibitions into effect:

**SEC. 27-2551. EAST PORTER AVENUE– SOUTH UNION STREET TO DEAD END EAST OF SOUTHEAST EIGHTH STREET.**

East Porter Avenue, on the north side, from the west curb line of Southeast Eighth Street to a point 230 feet west thereof, bus loading and unloading 7:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M., school days.

East Porter Avenue, on the north side, from the west curb line of Southeast Eighth Street to a point 55 feet east thereof, no stopping, no standing, 7:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M., school days.

**SEC. 27-1660. SOUTHEAST EIGHTH STREET– EAST VINE STREET TO HART AVENUE.**

Southeast Eighth Street, on the east side, from East Porter Avenue to a point 60 feet south thereof, no stopping, no standing, 7:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M., school days.

3. At their May 4, 1998 meeting, by Roll Call No. 98-1428, the City Council received a request from Rachel Mitchell, 3012 SE 17th Street, to speak regarding speed bumps and “ Children at Play” signs at Southeast Seventeenth Street and Pleasantview Drive. The Council referred this request to the City Manager and the Traffic Safety Committee for review and recommendation.

Southeast Seventeenth Street is a residential collector street that was built in the early 1980s in conjunction with the reconstruction of SE 14th Street (US Highway 69) by the Iowa Department of Transportation. Southeast Seventeenth Street provides a connection between the east-west streets north of Park Avenue to Pioneer Park, to prevent long dead-end streets east of Southeast Fourteenth Street. In addition, the reconstruction of Southeast Fourteenth Street included raised medians for maximum safety design, and not all of the streets

could be provided with a median opening. Southeast Seventeenth Street provides an alternate means for neighborhood traffic to get to Bell Avenue or Park Avenue and access Southeast Fourteenth Street at the respective traffic signals.

A traffic count taken in May 1998 on Southeast Seventeenth Street at Pleasantview Drive showed a current volume of approximately 1,000 vehicles per day, which is not excessive for a residential collector street. A 24-hour speed study taken with the traffic count showed an average speed for all vehicles of 24 mph, with an 85th percentile speed of 30 mph, again not unusual nor excessive for a residential collector street. A review of the accident history for the four-plus year period since January 1, 1994, showed only one accident in this area, which was the pedestrian accident on April 24, 1998. According to the police accident report, a three-year-old boy ran into the street from behind a parked car, and was knocked down and run over by a northbound vehicle that could not stop in time. The boy suffered serious injuries. Also according to the police accident report, there was no indication that the vehicle was speeding.

Since Southeast Seventeenth Street serves as a collector street for this area, it is appropriate to install 25 mph speed limit signs to remind motorists of the legal speed limit through this residential area. The existing reverse curves through this area serve to hold the speeds down, as shown by the speed data with an average speed of 24 mph, and would make additional measures such as a traffic circle or speed humps both unnecessary and unsafe. Placing such an object in the roadway near these curves would increase the risk that a motorist would lose control of their vehicle.

The primary factor involved in the recent pedestrian accident was the limited visibility caused by the parked vehicle on the street. Recently, several duplexes have been constructed on the west side of Southeast Seventeenth Street in this area, which provide limited off-street parking and increase the demand for on-street parking. However, parked vehicles limit the visibility for pedestrians crossing the street, for motorists backing from their driveways, and for motorists entering Southeast Seventeenth Street from Pleasantview Drive. In order to provide better visibility and safety, parking should be restricted on the west side of the street from Pleasantview Drive north to the end of the second (north) curve. Parking would still be

allowed on the west side of the street north of the second curve, which would provide alternate parking for the area located within the curves. Because of the number of driveways associated with the duplexes, the number of vehicles, which can park in the area, proposed for restricted parking is limited. While the proposed parking restriction will be an inconvenience for the adjacent residents, it will significantly improve the visibility and safety of this area.

At their June 9, 1998 meeting, the Traffic Safety Committee approved a staff recommendation to install 25 mph speed limit signs on each end of Southeast Seventeenth Street, and restrict parking on the west side of Southeast Seventeenth Street from Pleasantview Drive north to the end of the north curve. The following ordinance change is needed to implement the parking restriction.

**SEC. 1750.01. SOUTHEAST SEVENTEENTH STREET– PIONEER ROAD TO EAST PARK AVENUE.**

Southeast Seventeenth Street, on the west side, from East Pleasantview Drive to a point 300 feet north thereof, no parking any time.

4. The Traffic and Transportation Division has received several concerns regarding traffic congestion at the intersection of Southwest Ninth Street and County Line Road, specifically that southbound traffic backs up during the afternoon peak period. This intersection is currently controlled as a four-way stop, with one approach lane for each direction.

Staff has reviewed the location and concurs that at peak times southbound traffic does back up in advance of the four-way stop. Part of the problem is the large number of southbound left-turning vehicles, which creates additional delay as they alternate through the four-way stop.

To alleviate this congestion, it is recommended that the southbound approach be striped to include a through and left-turn lane. Since this approach is 34 feet wide, this change can be made without widening the roadway, with the exception of a radius widening in the northeast quadrant to help buses turn the corner.

In order to accomplish the re-striping for a left-turn lane, parking must be removed on the west side of Southwest Ninth

from County Line Road north for a distance of 300 feet. Parking is currently prohibited on the east side of the street. The parking lot for Blank Golf Course is directly across the street from the affected properties that would have no parking.

At their June 9, 1998 meeting, the Traffic Safety Committee approved a staff recommendation to prohibit parking on the west side of Southwest Ninth Street for a distance of 300 feet north of County Line Road, in order to re-stripe the street to include a left-turn lane at County Line Road.

The following ordinance change is necessary to implement the parking restriction.

**SEC. 27-1675. SOUTHWEST NINTH STREET- PARK AVENUE TO COUNTY LINE ROAD.**

Southwest Ninth Street, on the west side, from County Line Road to a point 300 feet north thereof, no parking any time.