



Race and Equity Pocket Questions

Title: Consideration of NCDOT Ordinance and subsequent Carrboro Town Code Amendment to Codify the Speed Limit of Homestead Road to 35 MPH

Purpose: NCDOT has requested Town approval of an ordinance to repeal the 45 mile per hour speed limit for a short section of Homestead Road, near Stratford Drive. This would be the first step in the process to codify a 35 mile per hour speed limit for the entire Homestead Road corridor. Changing the speed limit for a state-maintained road involves the approval of an NCDOT ordinance. A resolution concurring with NCDOT's ordinance to repeal the 45 MPH segment, and an amendment to repeal the 45 MPH segment in the Town Code have been provided.

Department: Planning, Zoning, and Inspections

1. **What are the root causes of inequity in Carrboro and/or overall as it pertains to this subject area?**

The use of specialized terminology and processes can make transportation projects particularly challenging for residents to follow, participate in meetings and contribute to decisions. Communities of color have historically fared poorly in decisions relating to transportation improvements. Attending meetings can be difficult due to work schedules and/or transportation and childcare.

2. **Who is experiencing community burden now? Who will experience community burden if this action is passed? Will others experience community burden if this action is NOT passed?**

Homestead Road is a major street in the town's street system that carries high volumes of traffic. Residents living along Homestead Road and in the neighborhoods that exit onto Homestead Road must contend with traffic and high vehicle speeds. The only other road in Carrboro with a 45 MPH speed limit is NC 54. The number of vehicle trips and high travel speeds also affects the safety of cyclists traveling along Homestead and pedestrians seeking to cross at key locations such as Claremont.

The process of changing the speed limit is administrative. No community burden is anticipated from the approval of the new ordinances. Some minor inconvenience may occur during the installation of new signage but that would be very limited in nature.



3. **Who is experiencing community benefit now? Who will experience community benefit if this action is passed? Will others experience community benefit if this action is NOT passed?**

Homestead Road is one of only eighteen arterial streets in Carrboro. Therefore, while residents living along Homestead Road will experience the greatest benefit by reducing the speed limit along the corridor, many travelers, particularly cyclists, will benefit from a lower speed limit. In addition, residents seeking to cross Homestead Road at Lake Hogan Farms, Stratford and Claremont will benefit from the slower vehicle speeds which should improve safety.

4. **What might be the unintended consequences of this action or strategy?**

Thirty-five miles per hour is still fast compared to cycling or walking. Some travelers may become overly confident that the change will create a much safer condition and not use sufficient caution when traveling in any mode. There may also be a transitional period for drivers to realize that the speed limit has changed. The new pavement marking plan and more narrow travel lanes should provide visual cues to help drivers pay attention.

5. **What steps has your department taken to mitigate any burdens, inequities, and unintended consequences? What strategies might your department take to address these in the future? NOTE: This does not reflect a formal commitment by the Town of Carrboro.**

Planning staff continues to work closely with NCDOT to continue to improve safety on all streets—NCDOT and/or Town—in the network. The Town is preparing a new pavement marking plan for Homestead Road to reduce vehicle lane width, which is a design technique that tends to reduce driving speeds. The new pavement plan should be installed as part of NCDOT's resurfacing project later this summer.