

Frequently Asked Questions Related to Sunnycrest Dr.

1. Why can't speed humps be installed?

- In order for speed humps to be installed the road must be defined as a residential road as defined in section 515 of the California Vehicle Code. Sunnycrest Drive does not meet the following requirements to be considered a residential road:
 - The posted speed limit is 25 miles per hour;
 - Speed humps cannot be installed on streets where the Road Commissioner (or an appointed designee) determines that they cannot be safely installed due to severe horizontal or vertical curves, inadequate sight distance to enable drivers to see the humps, or excessive downhill street grades.

Speed humps will never be an acceptable option to the Road Commissioner because it is located on a steep hill and the posted speed limit is 40 mph.

- Considering how easy it is to gain speed on this hill speed humps are likely to damage cars of residents.

2. Why can't the speed limit be reduced?

- The MAC does not have the authority to set the speed limits or change the speed limit. The speed limit is set by the Road Commissioner based upon a Traffic Study completed in accordance with the provisions of the CA Vehicle Code. The MAC can recommend a speed limit reduction but if the Traffic Study does not support a speed limit reduction, the speed limit cannot be lowered.
- A Traffic Study conducted a few years ago did not justify a reduced speed limit. Speed limits are established based upon the following:
 - Speed limits are normally set at the first five-mile per hour increment below the 85 percentile speed, defined as that speed at or below which 85 percent of the traffic is moving. Further reduction must be documented and clearly justified by an Engineering and Traffic Survey.
 - The Traffic Survey found that the 85 percentile speed was 49 mph. This traffic survey could have increased the speed limit to 45 or even 50 mph.

- An unreasonably reduced speed limit would not enforceable because it could be considered a speed trap. The State Legislator has set forth several policies which will make enforcement of a speed limits (that are less than the 85 percentile speed) difficult or even impossible. Here are the regulations:

- Local authorities have authority to establish reduced speed limits on the basis of ***engineering and traffic surveys*** (CVC 22358).
- Speed traps are considered to be any location with an unreasonable speed limit. The State Legislature has a strong public policy against the use of speed traps, to the extent that citations issued where a speed trap is found to exist it is likely to be dismissed, particularly if radar enforcement methods are used (CVC 40803 – 40805). A provision of the Vehicle Code that California courts have generally given strong consideration reads: "It is the intent of the Legislature that physical conditions such as width, curvature, grade and surface conditions, or any other condition not readily apparent to a driver, in the absence of other factors, would not require special downward speed zoning."

- Finally there is the practical reality that studies have consistently shown that there are no significant changes in average vehicle speeds following the posting of new or revised speed limits.

3. Why can't a stop sign be installed at Aspen Ridge Court or Park Springs Court?

- The MAC does not have the authority to install stop signs. The MAC can only recommend to the Road Commissioner that a stop sign be installed. Typically a stop sign is recommended by the County Traffic Engineer and approved by the Road Commissioner. The County Supervisors can approve a stop sign even if the Traffic Engineer does not recommend a stop sign
- The traffic engineers do not recommend a stop sign at either of these locations because they do not meet the Federal Highway Administration's Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) criteria for installing stop signs. The MUTCD identifies the specific traffic, bicycle, and pedestrian volumes, accident history, and any unusual conditions that must be present at the intersection before these traffic control devices may be installed.
- The traffic engineers believe that overuse of stop signs reduces their effectiveness and, if installed where not justified, and this may cause drivers to speed up between stop sign controlled intersections rather than slow down and/or to ignore them altogether.

4. Why install speed feedback signs?

- The MAC recognized that there is a speeding problem on Sunny Crest. The MAC also felt that without the Traffic Engineer's agreement the other options were not viable solutions at this time.
- The MAC was provided with two speed feedback signs free of charge.
- The MAC believed that the speed feedback signs may help the situation by alerting drivers of the speed at which they are traveling. Tests have shown that speeders will slow down over 80% of the time when alerted by a driver feedback sign. Typical speed reductions are 10-20%, and overall compliance with the posted speed limit will go up by 30-60%.
- The MAC felt that these signs were a low cost option to reduce speeds on Sunnycrest Dr.
- The MAC recognizes that this solution is not perfect and can revisit the issue if the feedback signs are not working as hoped.