



CITY OF CONCORD

REPORT TO THE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL

FROM: Karen Hill, P.E., Transportation Engineer, staff representative for the Traffic Operations Committee

DATE: August 22, 2025

SUBJECT: Response to City Council Referral: Rolfe Park Neighborhood Meeting Minutes

Recommendation

Accept this report.

Background

On April 14, 2025, City Council referred meeting minutes from the Rolfe Park Neighborhood Meeting held on Tuesday, March 11, 2025 to the Traffic Operations Committee (TOC) for review.

The main concern presented at the meeting was speeding on Community Drive and High Street. Community Drive is a 22-foot wide local street with approximately 1,200 average daily traffic (ADT) and a posted speed limit of 25 mph. There is sidewalk on both sides of Community Drive from Canal Street to Shaw Street and sidewalk along the east side from Shaw Street to Merrimack Valley School District (MVSD). High Street is a 20-foot wide local street with approximately 1,000 average daily traffic (ADT) and a posted speed limit of 25 mph. There is a continuous sidewalk along the west side of High Street. Both roadways have a school zone flashing beacon.

Due to its close proximity to Merrimack Valley School District (MVSD), this neighborhood has had a long history of speed and safety concerns. The City and MVSD recently invested in sidewalk construction on Allen Street and an intersection reconfiguration at the MVSD driveway. This project was a piece of the larger campus-wide improvement project to improve multimodal safety and install traffic calming measures.

Discussion

TOC discussed the referral during its May 20, 2025 meeting. The Committee reviewed the meeting minutes and related traffic concerns.

Speed data was reviewed from a TomTom report on Community Drive, between Shaw Street and Dolphin Street, averaged during the month of April 2025:

Direction	Avg (mph)	85 th (mph)
Both	27	33

85th percentile speed is the speed at or below which 85 percent of the drivers travel on a road segment.

Avg = Average speed -- mph = miles per hour

Speed data was also reviewed from a TomTom report on High Street, between Hardy Ave and Brodeur Street, averaged during the month of April 2025:

Direction	Avg (mph)	85 th (mph)
Both	27	35

After the neighborhood meeting, the Police Department has performed directed patrols in the neighborhood and concluded that generally vehicles were obeying the speed limits. The speed trailer was also deployed April 28 – May 15. As stated at the meeting, the Police Department will continue targeted speed enforcement in the neighborhood as resources allow.

The Committee discussed that there had been past conversations about restricting High Street or Community Drive to local traffic only, but it was never moved forward. Fred Reagan, Facilities Director for MVSD, shared that the MVSD did attempt to purchase additional right-of-way along Beede Drive to construct a two-lane exit when the roadway and sidewalk was reconstructed, but was unsuccessful.

The Committee referenced the City’s Stop Sign Policy and the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) stating that stop signs shall not be used for speed control:

A common misuse of STOP signs is to place them with intention of interrupting through-traffic flow. Many residents perceive that installation of STOP signs can reduce neighborhood traffic speeds or cause traffic to divert elsewhere. Nationally, studies have shown different results. Any speed reduction is generally limited to the immediate vicinity of the STOP sign where vehicles must brake, stop and accelerate. Resulting mid-block speeds can even become higher. In addition, braking to a stop and accelerating back to travel speed increases both fuel consumption and vehicle emissions.

While most drivers comply with STOP signs, some aggressive drivers will do what they can to minimize their delay. When STOP signs are arbitrarily placed with sole purpose of stopping vehicles, and not assigning right-of-way to more important intersection movements, increased flagrant violations can be expected. Elements of a dangerous situation emerge: an increased tendency of driver violations of the STOP sign coupled with a false sense of security this same STOP sign may give to other drivers, pedestrians and bicyclists at the intersection.

The Committee also agreed that curb extensions/bumpouts are not appropriate as there are no dedicated parking lanes due to the narrowness of both roadways.

The Committee felt that presenting a safety and speed campaign to the middle and high school students may be an appropriate educational effort to explore.

cc: Traffic Operations Committee