



# Council Communication

Office of the City Manager

<b>Date</b>	October 27, 2008
-------------	------------------

<b>Agenda Item No.</b>	<b>48</b>
<b>Roll Call No.</b>	<b><u>08-</u></b>
<b>Communication No.</b>	<b><u>08-647</u></b>
<b>Submitted by:</b>	<b>Jeb E. Brewer, City Engineer</b>

## **AGENDA HEADING:**

Amending Chapter 114 of the Municipal Code regarding traffic regulations in the vicinity of SE 28<sup>th</sup> Street and Scott Avenue.

## **SYNOPSIS:**

Recommend approval of the Traffic Safety Committee recommendations, including first reading of the ordinance regarding traffic regulation changes to remove the truck route designation on SE 28<sup>th</sup> Street from Market Street to Scott Avenue and to create a four-way stop at the intersection of SE 28<sup>th</sup> Street and Scott Avenue.

## **FISCAL IMPACT:**

Amount: Minor costs.

Funding Source: 2008-2009 Operating Budget, Page 131, Engineering Department Traffic & Transportation—Sign Installation and Maintenance, ENG100413.

## **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:**

At the June 23, 2008 City Council meeting, council requested that staff work with the Traffic Safety Committee to review the truck route and related safety issues on Scott Avenue in the vicinity of SE 28<sup>th</sup> Street. This followed a fatal crash that occurred on June 17 involving a five-year-old boy riding his bicycle who was run over by a turning truck at the intersection. By Roll Call No. 08-1149, this item was referred to the City Manager and Traffic Safety Committee for review and recommendation.

Several items were requested by the City Council. Two items that didn't involve ordinance changes have been implemented by staff. Several of the existing older and deteriorated truck route signs were replaced with new truck route signs. Also, speed limit signs were placed on SE 28<sup>th</sup> Street between Market Street and Scott Avenue to better advise of the existing 25 mph speed limit. The remaining items requested for study were: (1) change location of truck route; and (2) sidewalk review and recommendation.

Currently, the designated truck route through this area consists of Market Street from SE 18<sup>th</sup> Street to SE 28<sup>th</sup> Street; SE 28<sup>th</sup> Street from Market Street to Scott Avenue; and Scott Avenue from SE 25<sup>th</sup> Street to SE 30<sup>th</sup> Street. There are two main industries in this area that generate most of the truck traffic: MidAmerica Recycling at 2742 E. Market and Titan Tire at 2345 E. Market. If trucks are prohibited on SE 28<sup>th</sup> Street and Scott Avenue, these trucks would be required to travel west on Market to SE 18<sup>th</sup> Street, then either south or north through other residential areas. The "out-of-distance" travel would be

between two and five miles, depending on the truck's destination. While the removal of SE 28<sup>th</sup> and Scott from the City's truck route system would have benefits to this neighborhood, it would not have overall benefits to the City, since it would increase the overall truck-miles traveled, some of which would be through very similar residential areas (Maury Street through the Chesterfield area, and East 18<sup>th</sup> Street between Grand Avenue and Dean Avenue.) Based on this, staff recommended that the truck routes not be changed at this time.

Staff reviewed the current sidewalk conditions in the vicinity of the SE 28<sup>th</sup> and Scott intersection. A map is attached that identifies where sidewalks currently exist (in "green" and "yellow"), and where there are no sidewalks (in "red"). Based on this review, sidewalks exist on approximately one-quarter of the street frontages in this area. In general, it is desirable to have sidewalks along both sides of all residential streets. However, the cost of these sidewalks is generally borne by the adjacent property owner. In this case, staff recommends that a sidewalk network be established along one side of both Scott Avenue and SE 28<sup>th</sup> Streets. In reviewing the existing sidewalk locations, it appears that the most feasible locations would be along the north side of Scott Avenue and along the east side of SE 28<sup>th</sup> Street. It is recommended that the Engineering Department conduct a "feasibility study" of installing this sidewalk, which would include a cost estimate and assessed cost to the property owners. This information would then be forwarded to City Council for their consideration.

One concern raised by the residents was that a large number of school children were picked up at the intersection of SE 28<sup>th</sup> and Scott. Staff has worked with Des Moines School District transportation officials, and the school district has removed this as a designated pick-up point, and is instead providing two others nearby: one at the intersection of SE 27<sup>th</sup> and Raccoon, with approximately 23 children, and the other on SE 28<sup>th</sup> Street midway between Scott Avenue and Maury Street, with approximately 17 children.

Because the intersection of SE 28<sup>th</sup> Street and Scott Avenue is the intersection of two residential collectors, and also is the intersection of two truck routes, staff also reviewed the possibility of placing a four-way stop at this intersection. With the various turning traffic that occurs here, and the spacing between this intersection and nearby stop-controlled intersections along SE 28<sup>th</sup> and along Scott Avenue, this is an appropriate location for a four-way stop, and staff recommends that it be installed at this intersection.

At their August 12, 2008 meeting, the Traffic Safety Committee approved a staff recommendation that a sidewalk feasibility study be conducted by the Engineering Department in this vicinity, and that a four-way stop be installed at the intersection of SE 28<sup>th</sup> Street and Scott Avenue, but requested further study on the issue of SE 28<sup>th</sup> Street as a truck route between Market Street and Scott Avenue. Staff has collected additional data and looked at other alternatives.

Traffic counters were placed on SE 28<sup>th</sup> Street about midway between Market Street and Scott Avenue for a five-day period from mid-Wednesday, September 10, to mid-Monday, September 15, to collect traffic volumes, speeds and vehicle classification. The traffic volume averaged about 1,700 vehicles per day (vpd) on weekdays, about 1,100 vpd on Saturday, and about 700 vpd on Sunday. Vehicle speeds were also recorded, and showed an average speed of 24-25 mph for northbound and southbound traffic, with an 85<sup>th</sup> percentile speed of 29 mph.

A total of 608 three-axle or larger trucks were counted, representing 8.8% of the total 6,876 vehicles. An additional 379 two-axle trucks or buses were counted (5.5% of total). An additional 147 vehicles (2.1% of total) could not be classified, but would most likely have been some type of truck or truck/trailer

combination. Taken together, a total of 1,134 two-axle or larger trucks were counted during these five days, or 16.5% of the total traffic. This would represent approximately 182 trucks on an average weekday, with approximately half of those trucks being three-axle or larger.

Staff has investigated the possibility of extending Market Street east of SE 28<sup>th</sup> Street to connect directly with SE 30<sup>th</sup> Street. Such a connection could allow trucks to “bypass” the existing houses along SE 28<sup>th</sup> Street and on Scott Avenue between SE 28<sup>th</sup> and SE 30<sup>th</sup> Streets. However, this connection would run through other residentially-zoned property and would require acquisition of several residential properties. A rough cost estimate for this connection is \$1.6 million, including design, property acquisition, and construction. The connection at SE 30<sup>th</sup> Street would be on the approach fill on the south side of the railroad viaduct, which would not be a very good location for an intersection, especially for heavy trucks to pull out onto this busy roadway. Overall, this connection is not considered to be a very viable alternate.

At the October 14, 2008 meeting, a Traffic Safety Committee member made a proposal to extend Market Street to the east to go under the E. 30<sup>th</sup> Street viaduct and then connect back south to Raccoon Street east of E. 30<sup>th</sup>, and possibly to Scott Avenue (copy attached). While eliminating the difficult connection with E. 30<sup>th</sup> Street just south of the viaduct, this route would be substantially more expensive and would impact additional residential properties east of E. 30<sup>th</sup> Street.

Staff has also further reviewed the potential routing of trucks from the businesses in this area if the truck route designation is removed from SE 28<sup>th</sup> Street. For trucks to and from Mid America Recycling on SE 28<sup>th</sup> Street, they currently go past a total of 19 houses on SE 28<sup>th</sup> Street, and then an additional 15 houses on Scott Avenue over to SE 30<sup>th</sup> Street, with a total distance of 0.5 mile. If they went west on Market, they would still go past two houses on SE 28<sup>th</sup> Street, and five houses on Market to SE 18<sup>th</sup> Street. If they go south on SE 18<sup>th</sup> Street to Maury and then back east to SE 30<sup>th</sup>, they would go past 30 houses on Maury, as well as a medical clinic and the Chesterfield Community Center. Trucks making this loop of Market Street and Maury Street would travel a total distance of 3.2 miles and would also have to cross seven railroad lines, including the main north-south Chicago Northwestern line twice.

Trucks from Titan Tire would be similar, except they would go past five houses on E. Market between the plant and SE 28<sup>th</sup> if they use SE 28<sup>th</sup> and Scott, and would not go past those houses if they go west on Market. If the trucks go north on SE 18<sup>th</sup> Street to Grand Avenue, they would cross numerous railroad crossings and go past a total of 16 houses, a small park and a fire station.

Staff did meet with the manager of MidAmerica Recycling, and he expressed his sympathy for the tragic accident, their emphasis on safety for their truck drivers and their willingness to comply with whatever the City decides regarding the truck routes. Officials from Titan Tire did not want to meet or comment about the truck route. Staff did not meet with the Iowa Department of Transportation or Department of Economic Development, as there are no known funding programs which would be available to fund any extension of Market Street to SE 30<sup>th</sup> Street. Future construction of the proposed SE Connector road would provide a major new connection to Market Street, and could reduce the out-of-distance travel for trucks by about one-half and eliminate several railroad crossings. Staff made the following recommendations to the Traffic Safety Committee.

1. The current truck route designation through this area should not be changed until construction of a segment of the SE Connector. This would minimize out-of-distance travel, eliminate some railroad crossings and avoid sending trucks in front of other houses.

2. The Police Department work with the residents in this area concerning bicycle and pedestrian safety, through their HONRA (Hispanic Outreach Neighborhood Resource Advocate) unit officers.

Staff further recommended that the previous items approved by the committee be included in the overall recommendation:

3. A sidewalk “feasibility study” should be conducted by the Engineering Department.
4. A four-way stop should be installed at SE 28<sup>th</sup> Street and Scott Avenue.

At their October 14, 2008 meeting, the Traffic Safety Committee approved 7:1 a motion to:

1. Not accept staff’s recommendation regarding the truck route designation in this area, and instead to delete SE 28th Street as a truck route.
2. Step up police enforcement of the truck route ordinance.
3. That Committee Member John Morrissey’s suggestion to re-route truck traffic be included in the report being prepared for Council.
4. Keep staff recommendations 2 through 4 intact.

**PREVIOUS COUNCIL ACTION(S):**

Date: June 23, 2008

Roll Call Number: 08-1149

Action: Request from Council Member Brian Meyer to speak regarding the Scott Avenue truck route. SPONSOR: Meyer. Moved by Meyer to refer to City Manager and Traffic Safety Committee for review and recommendation on the following: 1) signage designating as truck route, 2) speed limit, 3) change location of truck route, and 4) sidewalks in area. Motion Carried 7-0.

**BOARD/COMMISSION ACTION(S): TRAFFIC SAFETY COMMITTEE**

Date: October 14, 2008

Roll Call Number: N/A

Action: The Traffic Safety Committee unanimously approved a motion to delete SE 28th Street as a truck route; step up police enforcement of the truck route ordinance; that Committee Member John Morrissey’s suggestion to re-route truck traffic be included in the report being prepared for Council; and keep staff recommendations 2 through 4 intact.

Date: August 12, 2008

Roll Call Number: N/A

Action: The Traffic Safety Committee approved a staff recommendation that a sidewalk feasibility study be conducted by the Engineering Department in this vicinity, and that a four-way stop be installed at the intersection of SE 28<sup>th</sup> Street and Scott Avenue, but requested further study on the issue of SE 28<sup>th</sup> Street as a truck route between Market Street and Scott Avenue.

**ANTICIPATED ACTIONS AND FUTURE COMMITMENTS: NONE**

For more information on this and other agenda items, please call the City Clerk's Office at 515-283-4209 or visit the Clerk's Office on the second floor of City Hall, 400 Robert D Ray Drive. Council agendas are available to the public at the City Clerk's Office on Thursday afternoon preceding Monday's Council meeting. Citizens can also request to receive meeting notices and agendas by email by calling the Clerk's Office or sending their request via email to [cityclerk@dmgov.org](mailto:cityclerk@dmgov.org).