



**CONSIDER AMENDMENTS TO CHAPTER 21 OF THE CHAPEL HILL CODE OF ORDINANCES TO REGULATE SPEEDS IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE VISION ZERO RESOLUTION**

**STAFF REPORT**

TOWN OF CHAPEL HILL PLANNING DEPARTMENT  
Colleen Willger, Director  
Bergen Watterson, Transportation Planning Manager  
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**AMENDMENT REQUEST**

Amend Chapter 21 of the Chapel Hill Code of Ordinances to change the Town-wide default speed limit to 25 mph, decrease speed limit on two Town roads, establish school zones, create a process to establish Neighborhood Slow Zones, and prohibit dooring. The text amendments would:

- Simplify Speed Limit Code and signal the Town’s commitment to safe speeds, consistent with the Vision Zero Resolution passed by Town Council on October 13, 2021 that establishes a commitment to prioritizing the safety of vulnerable road users;
- Bring all Town-owned streets to speed limit of 25 mph or lower;
- Establish school zones at all Chapel Hill-Carrboro City Schools in Chapel Hill jurisdiction and set a 20 mph speed limit for those on Chapel Hill-owned roads;
- Authorize Neighborhood Slow Zones, community-driven traffic calming measures to improve safety for vulnerable road users; and
- Add a dooring ordinance to the Town Code of Ordinances, which would prohibit the improper opening of a vehicle door to endanger moving traffic, including vehicles, bicycles, and pedestrians.

**DATE**

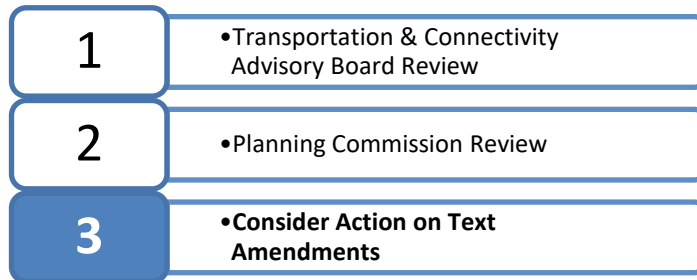
May 4, 2022

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

That the Council receive public comment and consider enacting the proposed ordinance changes.

**PROCESS**

Tonight, the Council is asked to consider action on the proposed Code of Ordinances Text Amendments.



**DECISION POINTS**

Tonight’s proposal is to amend the Traffic Code (Chapter 21) of the Chapel Hill Code of Ordinances to include the following changes:

- Amend Section 21-11, Speed Regulations, to standardize a Town-wide speed limit of 25 mph, decrease speed limits on Piney Mountain Road and Legion Road, establish new school zones, and authorize Neighborhood Slow Zones.
- Amend Section 21-10, One-way streets, and Sec. 21-63-64, Reserved, to create a new article for schedules of designated street regulations.
- Amend Section 21-20, Interference with traffic, to include a provision on dooring.



## **TECHNICAL REPORT: PEDESTRIAN AND BICYCLIST SAFETY**

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The following is a summary of the proposed text amendments that would amend the Chapel Hill Code of Ordinances in accordance with Vision Zero goals:

**1. Amend Section 21-11, Speed Regulations, to standardize a Town-wide speed limit of 25 mph, establish new school zones, and authorize use of neighborhood slow zones.**

This amendment would eliminate the need to identify each street with a speed limit of 25 mph. This amendment would bring the Code up to date with the Town's standard operating procedures and reflect the Town's commitment to traffic safety.

This amendment would lower speeds from 35 mph to 25 mph on Piney Mountain Road from Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard to Summerlin Drive and on Legion Road from Ephesus Church Road to the eastern corporate limits.

This amendment would establish school zones speed limits at all public schools in Chapel Hill, which would lower speed limits to 20 mph on Town-owned roads during corresponding hours.

This amendment would authorize the use of Neighborhood Slow Zones as a feasible traffic calming mechanism. Neighborhood Slow Zones are a community-driven approach to achieving safe speeds on neighborhood streets in line with Vision Zero goals. This amendment would not establish any Neighborhood Slow Zones but would provide a process for establishment.

**2. Amend Section 21-10, One-way streets, and Section 21-63-64, Reserved, to create a new article for schedules of designated street regulations**

This amendment would establish a new article in the Code of Ordinances for schedules of street regulations. One-way streets are currently listed under Article II, Traffic Control Devices. This amendment would establish a new Article VII with a schedule for Neighborhood Slow Zone designation, should they be made into permanent speed limit changes.

**3. Amend Section 21-20, Interference with traffic, to include a provision on dooring.**

This amendment would make it unlawful for an operator of a vehicle to unsafely open the door of their vehicle and create a harmful situation for other road users.

### **BACKGROUND AND NEXT STEPS**

February 22, 2022	Transportation and Connectivity Advisory Board reviews Vision Zero text amendments
March 15, 2022	Planning Commission review and recommendation on proposed Vision Zero text amendments
May 4, 2022	Council to consider action on Vision Zero text amendments