

**Raleigh Police Department:  
A Problem-Oriented Approach to Speeding in a School Zone**

**1. Project Summary**

Responding to community concerns about speeding is a priority in the Raleigh Police Department, resulting in officers issuing nearly 25,000 speeding citations in 2001. Nearly 42 percent of all tickets are issued on thoroughfares with posted speed limits of 25 to 35 **mph** - residential areas or school zones that experience few collisions but reflect citizen demands and perceptions of problems. The department has never used traffic studies to verify the prevalence or temporal distribution of problems, to develop priorities, or measure the impact of our efforts. Controlling speeding in school zones is particularly important to protect the safety of children. Our department decided to address the problem of speeding in the Wakefield Pines school zone containing three contiguous schools and 3500 students.

In 2001, Raleigh police issued nearly 300 citations for speeding in the school zone. The average speed of citations was 38 mph - 13 mph over the posted speed. Eleven percent of citations were for speeds exceeding 45 mph. To learn more about speeding on the roadway, we collected information through:

- Focus group with area officers
- Focus group with school staff, SROs and PTA leaders
- Survey o f parents of students
- Survey o f **speeders**

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Data showed that youthful drivers constituted a very small portion of the problem. The primary speeders were parents of school-aged children, and many of these attended the three schools. Commuters also contributed to the problem.

In responding to the **problem**, we focused our efforts on educating drivers about their speed. These efforts included:

- Erecting temporary speed signs to flash vehicle speed;
- Providing information in the PTA newsletter about speeding; and
- Distributing an educational flyer to parents in school carpool lanes

The project produced an immediate reduction in speeding, with average speeds falling from 36 to 31 mph in the morning and from 38 to 31 in the afternoon. The proportion of drivers complying with the speed limit (including a 5 mph tolerance) more than doubled when the educational effort occurred. Although some of this impact deteriorated within the first week of the project, much of the reduction was maintained. Comparison of data before the project and three weeks later showed a 42% increase in compliance in the morning, rising from 892 to 1270 vehicles, and a 59% increase in the afternoon, rising from 474 to 754 vehicles.

## **2A. Scanning**

Students going to and from schools in private passenger vehicles are at greater risk to their safety than those in school buses, walking or bicycling, according to a national study.<sup>1</sup> Motor vehicle crashes during school arrival and departure times account for about 14 percent of all deaths of children involved in motor vehicle crashes; and half of these deaths occur during school zone times when teenagers are driving. Efforts to improve vehicular safety during school times are particularly important to prevent fatalities, and improve parent perceptions of safety and walkability of schools located in residential areas.

Historically, police and citizens in Raleigh (NC) have been concerned about problems with speeding, particularly speeding occurring in residential areas. In 2001, the Raleigh Police Department, serving a population of 300,000, elected to carefully examine the problem of residential speeding and selected a particular problem area for close examination. Unable to examine the hundreds of problem locations across the city at once, we elected to focus on a particular problem - a stretch of road on **Wake field Pines Drive** that included three contiguous school zones. Since the three schools opened in 1999 and 2000, police and citizens had been concerned about the location. While there had been no crashes on the roadway, there had been numerous complaints from parents about speeding during morning and afternoon school zone times, posing risks to pedestrian safety and reflecting parental concerns about their childrens' well-being.

Wakefield Pines Drive is a four-lane divided thoroughfare with a median. The roadway serves three contiguous schools - an elementary, middle and high school - and

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<sup>1</sup> Transportation Research Board, 2002.

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the posted speed of 35 drops to 25 **mph** for nearly four hours of each school day. This time period reflects the staggered start and dismissal times of the three schools, and is posted at the lower speed from 7 to 8:45 am. and 2:00 to 3:30 p.m. The school zone comprises .5 mile of the .8-mile long thoroughfare.

Traffic volume on **Wakefield Pines Drive** averages about 11,000 vehicles per day - about one-third to half of the traffic occurs during school zone periods, when the student population of approximately 3,500 must arrive and depart - approximately 46 percent of those students are in the high school. The thoroughfare also provides access to a large residential community and serves as a thoroughfare in the northern suburban area of the city.

Since the schools on **Wakefield Pines Drive** opened in 1999 and 2000, parents of students in the schools have routinely expressed concerns about speeding in the school zone, and have responded by calling the police department, schools and Department of Transportation. The street is well posted, with numerous signs throughout the school zone that mark the boundaries of the school zone indicating the active time of the school zone and the speed limit. A pedestrian-activate signal was installed in 2002 and Raleigh police - consistent with prevailing police practices in the jurisdiction - have carried out extensive enforcement efforts, writing approximately 339 citations for speeding on the thoroughfare during 2001-2002; 248 citations were issued during school zone times. Research for this project, however, suggests that enforcement of speeding has an immediate but not a long lasting effect on speeding;<sup>2</sup> as soon as the police presence is removed, speeding resumes.

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<sup>2</sup> Scott, 2001.

2B. Analysis

A baseline survey of traffic volume and speed on Wakefield Pines Drive was conducted by the Raleigh Department of Transportation. The study demonstrated the volume of traffic concentrated in the school zone time periods, and the summary statistics generated for the roadway suggested that 85 percent of drivers drove at or less than 42 mph. While this statistic seemed reasonable for a posted 35 mph speed limit, DOT generated the statistic based on traffic volume over a 24-hour period and thus the measure did not reflect variations in the posted speed limit related to the changing speed limits that existed on the roadway. Raw data were not available for reanalysis, however, a review of the summary data by hour of the day suggested that speeding during times approximating school zone periods were substantial (See Table 1).

**Table 1: Sample Data from Initial Traffic Study  
Wakefield Pines Drive  
May 2002**

	<b>Eastbound 7-8 a.m.</b>	<b>Westbound 8-9 a.m.</b>
25 mph or less	23% (117)	40% (221)
26-34 mph	62% (317)	39% (215)
35 – 45 mph	12% (60)	14% (78)
More than 45 mph	3% (18)	7% (40)

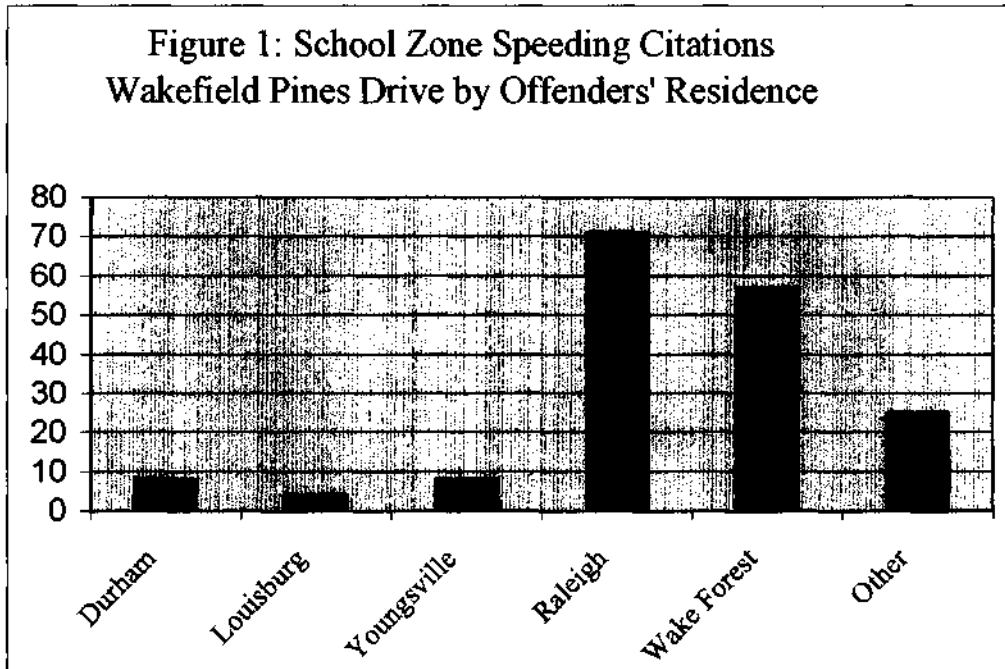
Since research suggests enforcement, signage, signals and other measures have a temporary effect on speeding, we sought to identify the persons primarily engaged in speeding on Wakefield Pines Drive, in order to gather information and design a response to interrupt their patterned activity.

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We theorized that most speeders on Wakefield Pines Drive were routine users of the roadway, rather than infrequent drivers. Our thinking is that infrequent drivers would be less likely to speed excessively as they would be unaware of risks associated with the roadway; in contrast, routine drivers of the roadway may have more information and experience from which to make decisions about speeding. This assumption was supported by the work of Scott (2001) and Corbett and Simon (1992), suggesting that drivers make calculated decisions about speeding.

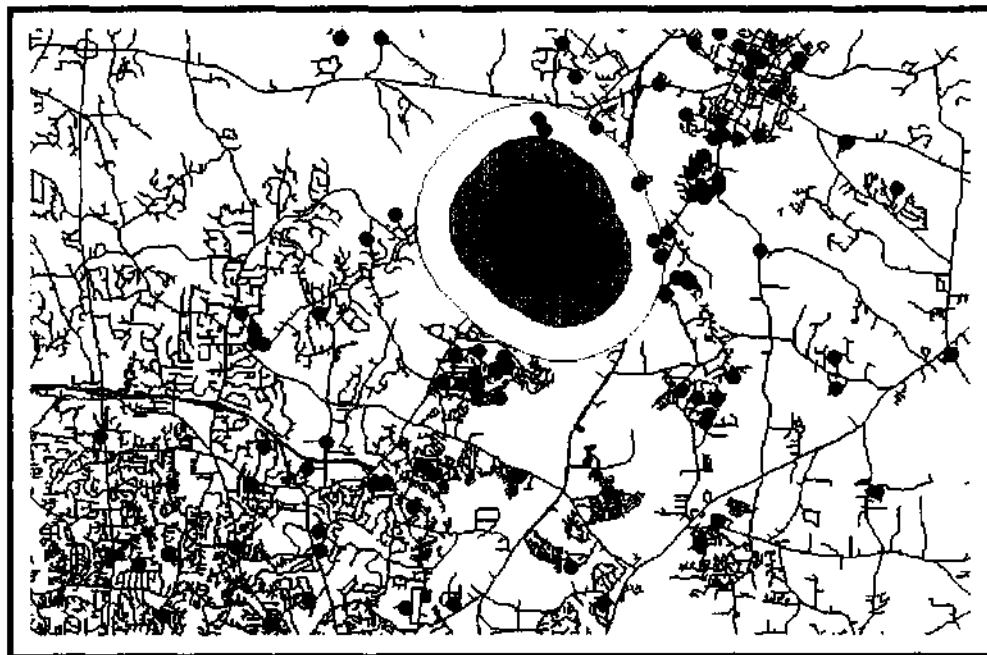
We concluded that routine drivers, hence regular speeders, thus might consist of nearby residents, heading to and from work or home; commuters traveling from suburban locations and cutting through on the thoroughfare into the city; or school related traffic, such as high school drivers or parents dropping off or picking up children at school.

An initial examination of citations suggested that about 60 percent of speeders lived outside the city limits Raleigh (see Figure 1), and many of the speeders with Raleigh addresses did not appear to live close to Wakefield Pines Drive (see Figure 2). Further examination of the data - in collaboration with school personnel and PTA representatives - shed light on this finding as the catchment area for the high school covered a wide geographic area. (Later data showed that 62 percent of students lived more than two miles away from the schools, rendering the map less useful than initially anticipated.)



**Figure 2**

**Distance of Speeders' Residences from the Spots of Their Violations  
Wakefield Pines Area**



0 1.25 2.5 5 7.5 10 Miles



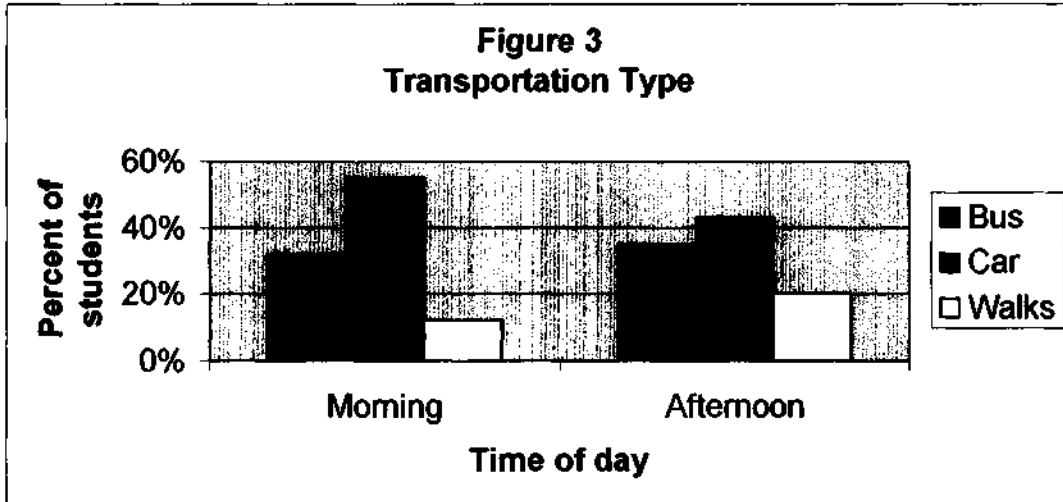
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Analysis of citations issued in the area suggested that high school drivers were not the primary speeders. Of 238 citations issued during school periods on Wakefield Pines Drive, most - 87 percent - were issued to drivers 19 years old or older. This information cast doubt on the primacy of youthful drivers as the speeders on the roadway.

To develop a better understanding of the speeding **problem**, in September 2002, we developed and administered a **14-item** survey to parents of students in Wakefield elementary, middle and high schools. The survey was administered by providing the survey to students to take home in their backpacks. A total of 1,234 parents responded, providing a response rate estimated at 35 percent. We anticipated that the survey would provide baseline information about the concerns of parents, and could shed light on the speeding problem. We also hoped to establish a framework for working with parents to reduce speeding.

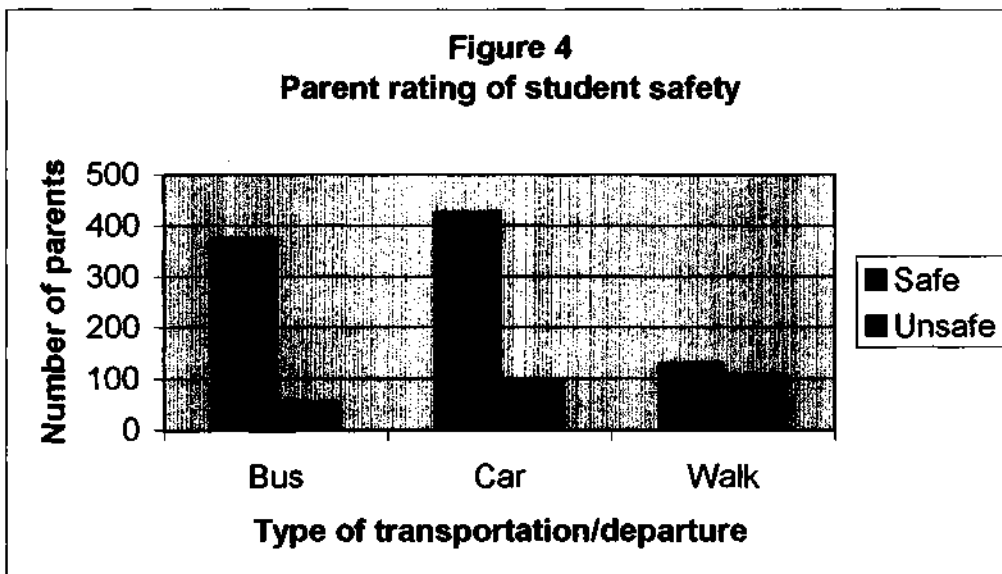
The survey indicated that more than half of the parents drive their children to school in the morning while about 12 percent walk to school. The pattern is diminished in the afternoon: about 35 percent of parents pick up their children while 20 percent walk home from school. (See Figure 3.) Of note, the survey contrasts with the pattern of speeding as vehicle speeds are higher in the afternoon than the morning. Since research suggests that traffic congestion slows traffic, it seems reasonable that the reduced traffic volume in the afternoon contributes to more speeding - a conclusion supported by the data in Figure 6.





The parent survey provided other information about parent concerns:

- Only 27 percent of parents rated their child as extremely safe going to and from school.
- Parents of Wakefield children who walk to school were most concerned about their safety. Only 13 percent of parents whose children walk to school rated their child's safety as extremely safe. (See Figure 4.)
- About one-quarter of parents (28 percent) think most drivers drive safely in the Wakefield school zone while only 38 percent of parents feel there are sufficient consequences for unsafe driving and speeding. Of note, many parents expressed concern about youthful drivers in the area.



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To learn more about speeders in the area, we developed a questionnaire to be administered to speed violators in the school zone. For purposes of the study, speeding was considered as traveling at 30 mph or more. During a one-week period, 187 individuals were stopped for speeding in the school zone. The drivers were informed about their speeding, and given the option to answer a few survey questions. All chose to respond to the brief questionnaire. The survey showed that:

- While the average speed of persons stopped was 39 miles per hour, about 23 percent of the speeders were driving at 40 mph or more - 15 miles or more over the speed limit and 6 percent of the speeding drivers were driving at 50 miles per hour or more.
- More than two-thirds of drivers (71 percent) said they were aware of the speed limit, but were distracted (37 percent) or in a hurry (25 percent).
- Although some of the speeders were youthful - about 13 percent were 19 years old or younger - most of the speeders were on their way to work or home.
- A large group of speeders - 48 percent - reported having children in school. These drivers should be aware of the safety risks during school zone times. In fact, more than half of the parents speeding - 55 percent - have children in Wakefield high, middle or elementary schools.

## 2C. Response

Findings from the analysis suggested that speeders on Wakefield Pines Drive during school times consisted primarily of commuters and parents. High school students appeared to play a minor role in speeding. To raise awareness of actual speeds, speed information signs were placed in the school zone that informed drivers of their actual speed in November 2002. During this time, information was distributed to parents about the speeding problem through the use of the school newsletter.

To target parent speeders, speed information trailers were set up again in April 2002. This time uniformed officers were stationed in the morning at the carpool lanes

for all three schools. Parents were then given a pink informational pamphlet that closely resembled that of the citation used by the department. (See Figure 5.)

**Figure 5**

**THIS COULD BE A  
NORTH CAROLINA UNIFORM  
CITATION**

Defendant: Drivers on Wakefield Pines  
Dr.

When: School days  
Time: 7:30 – 8:30 am & 2:15 – 3 pm

**Speeding endangers your child going  
to and from school**

- Nearly 2/3 of drivers in this school zone exceed the speed limit – some drivers travel at more than 60 mph!
- Almost all the speeders in this school zone are *not* young people but are adult drivers
- More than half the speeders in this school zone are *parents* of school children

**Did *you* speed to school today?**

**PLEASE SLOW DOWN!**

The flyer included information on the role of parents as speeders in the school zone, and refuted the myth that speeders were predominately high school students or

commuters. On the reverse side, additional information about speeding in school zones was included. Many parents were shocked with the information and supportive of the police efforts to reduce speeding.

As part of the response to speeding on Wakefield Pines Drive, we also teamed with a local hospital to publicize the problem and its programming effort called "Walk this Way" that focused on the safety of the children who walk to or from school. The program will fund a poster contest to **further** target parents about their role in speeding on Wakefield Pines Drive. Although this effort will not come to fruition until the fall of 2003, it will continue the educational effort targeted towards parents. In addition, posters may be displayed along the roadway, further targeting the commuter portion of the speeding problem.

## **2D. Assessment**

In contrast to the traffic study described early in this report as conducted by the Raleigh Department of **Transportation**, we were able to obtain **our** own electronic traffic counters for the police department in April 2003. These traffic counters provide a reliable measure of the amount and distribution of speeding. In contrast to the manual report provided by DOT, our traffic counters produce electronic data that can be analyzed in differing ways. In addition, we can set up the traffic counters whenever the need arises and thus need not rely on another agency for routine data collection.

The acquisition of reliable data on traffic and speed volume enabled us to calculate baseline information about the prevalence of speeding on Wakefield Pines Drive. While DOT data calculated average and 85<sup>th</sup> percentile speeds, we elected to

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calculate the portion of drivers complying with the 25 mph posted speed, and incorporated a 5 mph buffer into that speed. Thus, the baseline data on compliance - displayed in Figure 6 and noted as t1 - showed that only 25% of drivers in the morning and 19% in the afternoon were complying with speed limits prior to focused police efforts in April 2003. In response to the implementation of police educational efforts (noted in column labeled t2), compliance nearly doubled, rising to 58% and 49% respectively in the morning and afternoon school periods. This improvement reflected a virtual doubling of the proportion of drivers complying with the speed limit. Earlier experience with speed enforcement - and its rapid decay - encouraged us to further monitor the impact of our efforts. Sure enough, within four days (noted in Figure 6 as t3), compliance declined to 42% and 31% respectively in the morning and afternoon periods - an 18 percent drop in the number of drivers complying with the speed limit in the morning, and a 16 percent decline during the afternoon. Concerned that this level of compliance would further decay, we again measured compliance on May 13 (noted as t4), and found that compliance was fairly stable. While compliance in the morning period had dropped 3 percent in two weeks (from 1313 to 1270), compliance in the afternoon increased by 3 percent (from 731 to 754).

Although the impact of the educational effort declined from t2 to t3, analysis of speeds from t1 to t4 show that our efforts resulted in an overall 42% increase in compliance with the speed limit in the morning, rising from 892 to 1270 vehicles, and a 59% increase in the afternoon, rising from 474 to 754 vehicles. We also recognize that we set a very conservative threshold for compliance by including a 5 mph tolerance over the 25 mph limit. Although speeding citations issued on this thoroughfare average 13

mph over the posted speed, we felt that a 5 mph tolerance was a reasonable goal. Had we set the tolerance at 10 mph over the limit, the data would have demonstrated a much higher level of compliance.

**Figure 6**  
**Police Impact on Vehicle Speeds on Wakefield Pines Drive 2003**

	<b>14-Apr-03</b>	<b>24-Apr-03</b>	<b>28-Apr-03</b>	<b>13- May-03</b>
	<b>t1</b>	<b>t2</b>	<b>t3</b>	<b>t4</b>
	<b>Baseline</b>	<b>Education</b>	<b>Followup</b>	<b>Followup</b>
<b>Volume</b>				
All Day	11,239	11,187	N/A	11,353
A.M. School	3,638	2,787	3,143	3,236
P.M. School	2,503	1,768	2,354	2,180
<b>School Time Average</b>				
A.M.	36 mph	30 mph	32 mph	38 mph
P.M.	38 mph	31 mph	35 mph	42 mph
<b>Compliance (30 mph or less)</b>				
A.M.	25% (892)	58% (1609)	42% (1313)	39% (1270)
P.M.	19% (474)	49% (866)	31% (731)	35% (754)

While we are encouraged by increased compliance, we do not feel that the speeding problem on Wakefield Pines Drive has been permanently resolved and plan to monitor the problem when school resumes in the fall of 2003. In particular, average speeds in the area are higher than we would like, and appear to reflect the behaviors of a handful of speeders who drive at excessive rates of speed - more than 20 mph over the limit. This small number of excessive speeders were also identified in Table 1 and through the stop-and-query survey suggesting that 5 percent of drivers exceeded 50 mph during school times. While we were not able to specifically identify these aggressive drivers, we believe that strategic enforcement and enhanced penalties may be necessary in order to detect and deter these drivers. Since these aggressive speeders may drive

parental concerns about child safety and pose the greatest risk for pedestrian fatalities, it is important to detect or deter these few drivers.

In addition, we are prepared to pursue installation of a flashing signal during on school days during designated hours, consistent with our finding that a portion of the speeders are commuters who have no school-age children and were unaware of the school zone speed limit. School zone speed limits are in effect only when school is in session. Since Raleigh has many schools that operate on year-round or other non-traditional calendars, the flashing signal would alert the non-parent drivers to days when school is in session. Studies of flashing signals have shown these devices to be effective in reducing speeding in school zones.<sup>3</sup> Early in the project, we included installation of a flashing signal as a potential response but learned that the Department of Transportation does not recommend such installation because it has not been shown to be effective. At the time, we elected to adopt the least intrusive responses early in the project but will pursue installation of a flashing signal if we are unable to maintain acceptable driving speeds.

**Long-Term Implications.** The project has broader implications for the City of Raleigh than the reduction in speeding in one school zone. There are a total of 122 public schools in Wake County - 17 high, 26 middle and 79 elementary schools that serve nearly 100,000 students. The police department has invested a large amount of enforcement effort in these locations. Although data cannot reliably indicate the number of citations written in school zones, an analysis of the posted speed for citations shows that 9% of all speeding citations in 2001 were issued where the posted speed limit was 25 mph, as is typical although not restricted to school zone areas. Some school zones are

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<sup>3</sup> Schrader 1999

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posted at higher speeds. Further analysis of speeding in school zones using electronic counters can reliably demonstrate the amount of speeding in school zones, permit comparisons between different areas, and allow police to prioritize and focus on areas with the largest problems, and detect the impact that may be associated with unique responses developed for different areas. We are eager to learn more about the composition of speeders in school zones, including the frequency with which parents - those most vocal about speeding problems - contribute to speeding.

**Routine Practices.** The Raleigh Police Department has regularly responded to citizen complaints about speeding, especially complaints in residential areas. The department typically assigns an officer to the location of the complaint without any empirical verification of the nature or the extent of the speeding problem. The officer has no empirical **data** to focus the enforcement effort or determine the impact of enforcement. Enforcement actions have comprised the exclusive response of the department to speeding and are reflected by nearly 25,000 speeding citations written in 2001; nearly 43 percent were issued on roadways posted at 25-35 mph that rarely experience speed-related collisions. The number of speeding citations issued by police officers exceeds the number of Part I crimes reported in the city.

The Raleigh Police Department has recently moved towards becoming a data-driven agency improving data access, quality and analysis; empirical data about traffic volume, speed and collisions are data that will be incorporated into planning resource allocation, assessing problem locations and evaluating impact. To facilitate this, the police department has recently purchased state-of-the-art speed measuring devices.



**Policies and Planning.** The project has also caused our police department to become much more aware of the need to be involved in planning for new residential developments. In our view, the siting of three schools contiguously reflects poor planning. As a result, we are exploring ways the police department can be further involved in planning for new schools and communities. Similarly, the project called our attention to a law that makes it possible for drivers speeding in excess of 15 mph over the posted limit *and* in excess of 55 mph to lose their license. It seems reasonable that driving substantially over posted speeds in school zones should also subject speeders to loss of license. Similarly, speeding in a school zone currently does not result in a fine different than that for speeding in any other location although it does result in additional drivers' license points. We feel that the fine for speeding in a school zone should be increased - probably to \$250 - similar to laws governing speeding in construction zones. The police department's attorney has drafted legislation to increase fines for speeding in a school zone to mirror the fines for speeding in a construction zone.

### **3. REFERENCE LIST**

Corbett, C. and F. Simon. 1992. Decision to Break or Adhere to the Rules of the Road, Viewed from the Rational Choice Perspective. *British Journal of Criminology* 32 (4): 537-549.

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Schrader, M.H. 1999. Study of Effectiveness of Selected School Zone Traffic Control Devices. *Transportation Research Record* No. 1692: 24-29

Transportation Research Board. 2002. *The Relative Risks of School Travel: A National Perspective and Guidance from Local Community Assessment*, 2002.

C. Saibel et al. 1998. Vehicle Speeds in School Zones. Olympia WA: Washington Traffic Safety Commission.

#### **4. AGENCY AND OFFICER INFORMATION**

To initiate this project, all sworn personnel in the Raleigh Police Department were surveyed to identify the most common problem in their assignment and to identify problems that officers felt could be improved through a problem solving approach. Speeding in residential areas was ranked high by all officers, but personnel in the 2200 Squad, a predominately residential district, rated the problem as number one. A single squad of officers worked primarily on the problem under the supervision of the district commander and a supervisor. A smaller group of officers took primary responsibility, and others were kept apprised of project progress through roll call briefings. Other police personnel were involved at different phases of the project - school resource officers assisted with the parent survey and the traffic unit carried out much of the stop-and-query survey. The project team was assisted with analysis by a professor at North Carolina State University, supported with funding from a demonstration grant from the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services. The project team received no direct training although resource materials (Scott, 2001), technical assistance and guidance were provided as part of the COPS grant. In addition, project personnel attended two conferences to share progress on the project and learn about other problem-solving efforts.

No additional incentives were provided to officers for their involvement in the project, however, the opportunity to develop more effective responses to continuing problems was clearly a primary motivation for some personnel to participate. In addition,

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the work of officers was well known by command staff and line officers routinely briefed the chief about their progress. Officers were allowed to flex their hours as necessary to attend meetings, implement solutions and accomplish other project-related tasks.

Personnel working on the project traveled to present project briefings at two conferences.

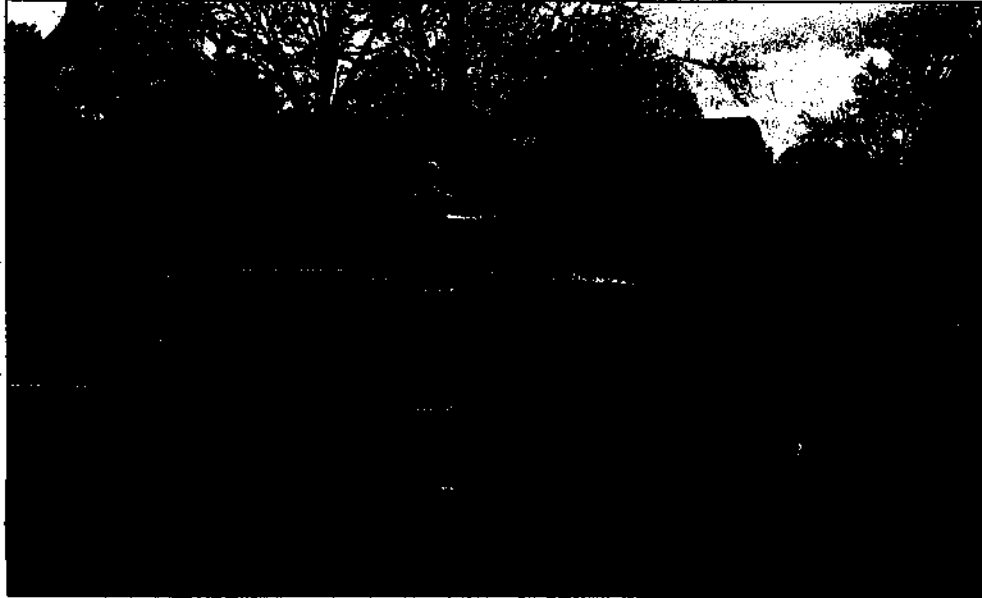
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*'Stand-alone solutions don't work. You have to hit it from a broad perspective.'*

CAPT. JOHN ANNIS, RALEIGH POLICE DEPARTMENT

# Ways to slow a speeder



R.L. Munn of the Raleigh police clocks traffic speeds with his Falcon radar gun on East Millbrook Road.

STAFF PHOTOS BY ROBERT WILLETT

## *Raleigh is picking from array of options*

By SARAH LINDENFELD HALL  
STAFF WRITER

RALEIGH — Cobblestone streets. Reducing the citywide speed limit on neighborhood streets from 35 mph to 25 mph. Heftier fines for speeding in school zones.

City officials are tackling that perennial neighborhood complaint — speeding traffic — with a handful of studies and initiatives this year. The result could be drastic changes to the appearance and rules on Raleigh's roads.

The outcome of one \$150,000 study, said Jimmie Beckom, the city's transportation director, is "going to include some recommendations that are a very different way of doing business on residential streets and residential neighborhoods."

As in most communities with cul-de-sacs and suburban subdivisions, residents in Raleigh have begged the city for relief from speeding motorists for years.

They have called the police to crack down. Some have persuaded the City Council to reduce the speed limit in their neighborhood to 25 mph. In North Haven in North Raleigh, they even made their own 25 mph signs, and residents drive through the neighborhood at the speed limit during rush hour — like a pace car at a stock-car race.

In 2000, the city spent \$81,000 on a test plan to put speed humps in North Raleigh's Brentwood neighborhood. The



Raleigh officer D.L. Bond hands the driver of the SUV a pink slip. The posted limit on the stretch of road nicknamed 'the Millbrook Speedway' is 35 mph, but officers have clocked cars going 60 mph there.

humps slowed down traffic slightly, but the fire department complained that they damaged trucks and slowed response times.

Last year, the council agreed to do a more comprehensive study. The city has hired consultants to work with a committee made up of city planning, transportation, police and fire officials, plus two residents. Transportation officials plan to hold a series of public meetings in the next couple of months to gather more suggestions and com-

plaints. The council will get a report by May, then decide how to proceed.

"What I'm hoping for is a portfolio of options that our city leaders can draw on, perhaps more quickly and more confidently, so that the existing problems in neighborhoods can be prioritized and dealt with, and also as new problems arise we feel we have a solution set at our disposal," said Jim Tarantino, a three-year North Haven resident who sits on

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## SPEEDER

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the committee.

The consultants will look at measures that communities across the country have tried to slow traffic. What works, experts say, are obstacles that make motorists feel they need to slow down or that force them to slow down.

They include textured streets with cobblestones or bricks, raised intersections and crosswalks and traffic islands that force motorists to make a turn. Street trees, buildings close to roadways and busy sidewalks also help because they make motorists feel more closed in, said Joseph Hummer, associate professor of civil engineering at N.C. State University.

"You need to change how people perceive that street," he said.

Some council members have toyed with the idea of reducing the citywide speed limit in neighborhoods from 35 mph to 25 mph, though that idea is on hold for further study of how to cut speeding.

Durham doesn't enforce a 25 mph limit. Nor does Charlotte, Greensboro or Winston-Salem.

A year ago, the Fayetteville City Council reduced the speed limit on all residential streets from 35 mph to 25 to eliminate the street-by-street process neighborhoods had to follow. The change has meant fewer complaints about speeding, said Rusty Thompson, the city's traffic engineer, though there remain some problem spots.

Raleigh council member Benson Kirkman thinks the idea could work in the capital. Because so many neighborhoods have successfully reduced the limit to

25 mph, slowing traffic on the rest of the streets would at least make speed limits more consistent, he said.

Drivers recently expressed mixed views on the idea.

"Ridiculous is what I'd say," said Neil Manning, 20, an N.C. State University student gassing up his silver TransAm at a Texaco in West Raleigh. "Unless it's a school area, 35 mph is plenty enough."

But Ona S. Briles, 54, said she thinks a 25 mph limit is a good idea — especially in neighborhoods, where children play and people walk. She just isn't sure a lower speed limit would work.

"Good luck to 'em," said Briles, who was driving a station wagon. "They'll need lots of luck."

Kirkman and others agree it will take a menu of measures to curb speeding.

That's one of the lessons Raleigh

police have learned as they focus street by street with speed studies and traffic enforcement. The department is considering pushing a statewide law that would increase the fine for speeding in a school zone, bringing it more in line with speeding in a work zone, said Capt. John Annis, who is the police point person on the issue.

The fine is \$25 if a driver is caught speeding in a school zone, according to the state Division of Motor Vehicles. It's \$250 for a ticket in a work zone.

"Stand-alone solutions don't work," Annis said. "You have to hit it from a broad perspective."

*Staff writer J. Andrew Curtiss contributed to this report.*

*Staff writer Sarah Lindenfeld Hall can be reached at 829-8983 or slinden@newsobserver.com.*

## RICHARD BURR

**BORN:** Nov. 30, 1955, Charlottesville, Va.

**HOME:** Winston-Salem

**EDUCATION:** Wake Forest University, bachelor's in communication.

**CAREER:** National sales manager for Carswell Distributing Co.

**POLITICS:** Republican, elected to U.S. House in 1994.

**COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS:** Vice chairman, House Energy and Commerce Committee; member, House Committee on Intelligence and Task Force on Terrorism.

**KEY ACCOMPLISHMENT:** Sponsored Food and Drug Administration Modernization Act of 1997.

## BURR

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he spoke with Karl Rove, the president's chief strategist, and Ken Mellman, the White House political director. "This seat is of significant interest to them," Burr said.

Carter Wrenn, a longtime GOP strategist, said putting the heat on Edwards is an extra incentive for the White House to become involved in North Carolina.

"From the White House point of view, they want to give Edwards a little grief on the home front, pin him down a little bit and make it tougher for him to run for both at once," Wrenn said.

Last year, Bush became heavily involved on behalf of selected GOP Senate and gubernatorial candidates — including Dole — both in primary and general elections.

"The president last time spent considerable political capital and rolled the dice and got involved in numerous campaigns and was successful," said Marc Rotterman, a Republican consultant. "I think they are trying to re-create it this time. That will benefit Congressman Burr. I think Congressman Burr is the odds-on favorite to win the nomination. You cannot underestimate the backing of the Bush White House and the impact it has on primary voters."

Burr said the national party's three top Democratic targets in

2004 are Edwards; Sen. Ernest Hollings of South Carolina, who is considering retiring; and Sen. Zell Miller of Georgia, who is retiring.

Burr does not start the race as well-known as Dole, who had held two Cabinet posts and been president of the American Red Cross. In fact, Burr said he should be considered an underdog.

Like Edwards, Burr is a photogenic, personable baby boomer who Republicans think will do well in the suburbs. His voting record is conservative, with the American Conservative Union giving him an 88 out of a 100 score in 2000. As vice chairman of the Commerce Committee, he has strong ties to industries, including pharmaceuticals, health care, tobacco and electric utilities.

But he has a reputation for seeking pragmatic solutions on such issues as prescription drug coverage for the elderly.

"I clearly disagree with the positions he has taken on a number of things," Burr said of Edwards. "I think I have something refreshing, if not new, to offer the state. He and I look at the federal tax burden in a different way. I have been supportive of reducing taxes, and he has supported increasing or maintaining taxes."

He said he sharply differs with Edwards on malpractice reform, saying lawsuits against doctors are "strangling the health care