TOWN OF Herndon VIRGINIA

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MEMORANDUM

To: Dan Hoffman
Town Manager

From: John Irish
Deputy Director of Public Works - Engineering

Date: April 3, 2026

Subject: Speed Limit Compliance on Dranesville Road
Higher Fine Zone between Park Avenue and Herndon Parkway

Introduction

In August 2025 a resident submitted a complaint for perceived unsafe traffic conditions in the 700 block of Dranesville Road, between Park Avenue to the south and Herndon Parkway to the north. The complaint cited increased traffic volume in recent years and vehicle speeds in excess of posted speed limits creating an unsafe environment for pedestrians and bicyclists.

The subject segment of Dranesville Road has a 25 mph posted speed limit. It consists of one vehicle and one dedicated bicycle lane in each direction, separated by a landscaped median. The subject segment of Dranesville Road also serves as a connection route to both Herndon Elementary School and Herndon High School. The road is classified as a major collector and serves residential driveways directly.

Background

A cross-section reconfiguration reduced the number of lanes from 4 vehicular lanes to 2 vehicular and 2 bicycle lanes in approximately 2011. This effort was completed under a Safe Routes to School project.

The Traffic Engineering Improvement Committee (TEIC) has previously processed a complaint regarding traffic speed in the vicinity of the current request. In May 2022, the same resident (as the current complaint) requested speed feedback signs be installed along Dranesville Road. Electronic speed feedback signs were installed at two locations:

- Northbound, north of Worchester Street
- Southbound, south of 3rd Street

Note that data collected in 2020 indicated that 85th percentile speeds supported traffic calming along Dranesville Road (measured 85th percentile speeds more than 10 mph above the posted speed limit).

See **Attachment 1** for the location of existing speed limit and speed feedback signs.

Analysis

Department of Public Works staff routinely collect traffic volumes along Dranesville Road between Herndon Parkway and 3rd Street (approximately biennially). Data indicates a reduction in total traffic volume between 2016 (7,860 daily vehicles) to 2026 (7,177 vehicles). Given the classification and relative network connectivity of Dranesville Road, **traffic volume is consistent with expected daily totals**.

For the period of October 20-24, 2025, Department of Public Works staff conducted continuous traffic speed and volume collection on Dranesville Road between 3rd Street and Worchester Street. The following data was collected:

- Northbound: 85th percentile speed: 35 mph
- Southbound: 85th percentile speed: 35 mph

Throughout the day, speeds were 1-2 mph higher outside of school travel periods but remained mostly consistent regardless of time of day. Note that data indicates that vehicular 85th percentile speeds have declined 2-3 mph since the installation of electronic speed feedback signs.

Staff observations occurred on November 3, 2025 during school travel time. Pedestrians and bicyclists were observed to use facilities along Dranesville Road, primarily for access to Herndon High School and Herndon Elementary School. Vehicle behaviors appeared appropriate and trips primarily occurred through the study area.

Herndon Police Department (HPD) performs enforcement activities along this section of Dranesville Road, though the median and intersection configurations of the roadway makes speed enforcement more challenging to perform. School congestion also reduces the need for vehicular speed enforcement during school arrival and dismissal periods.

Policy

The Town of Herndon's *Traffic Calming and Crosswalk Standards* states that an 85th percentile speed 10 mph in excess of posted speeds indicates that traffic calming may be appropriate at a location. Despite this threshold being met by field data, the designation of Dranesville Road as a bus route (school and transit), bicycle facility, and major collector limit the options available for traffic calming.

Vehicle speed data before and after the 2022 speed feedback sign installation indicate some improvement in speed limit compliance without installation of physical traffic calming (speed bumps, curb extensions, etc.). Staff recommend additional non-physical traffic calming to further improve speed limit compliance without imposing limitations on bus and bicycle traffic. Discussions between DPW and HPD staff suggest that an increase in speeding fines coupled with seasonal enforcement activity may help to further improve speed compliance rates during transitional/high activity times such as the beginning of the school year or beginning of Spring.

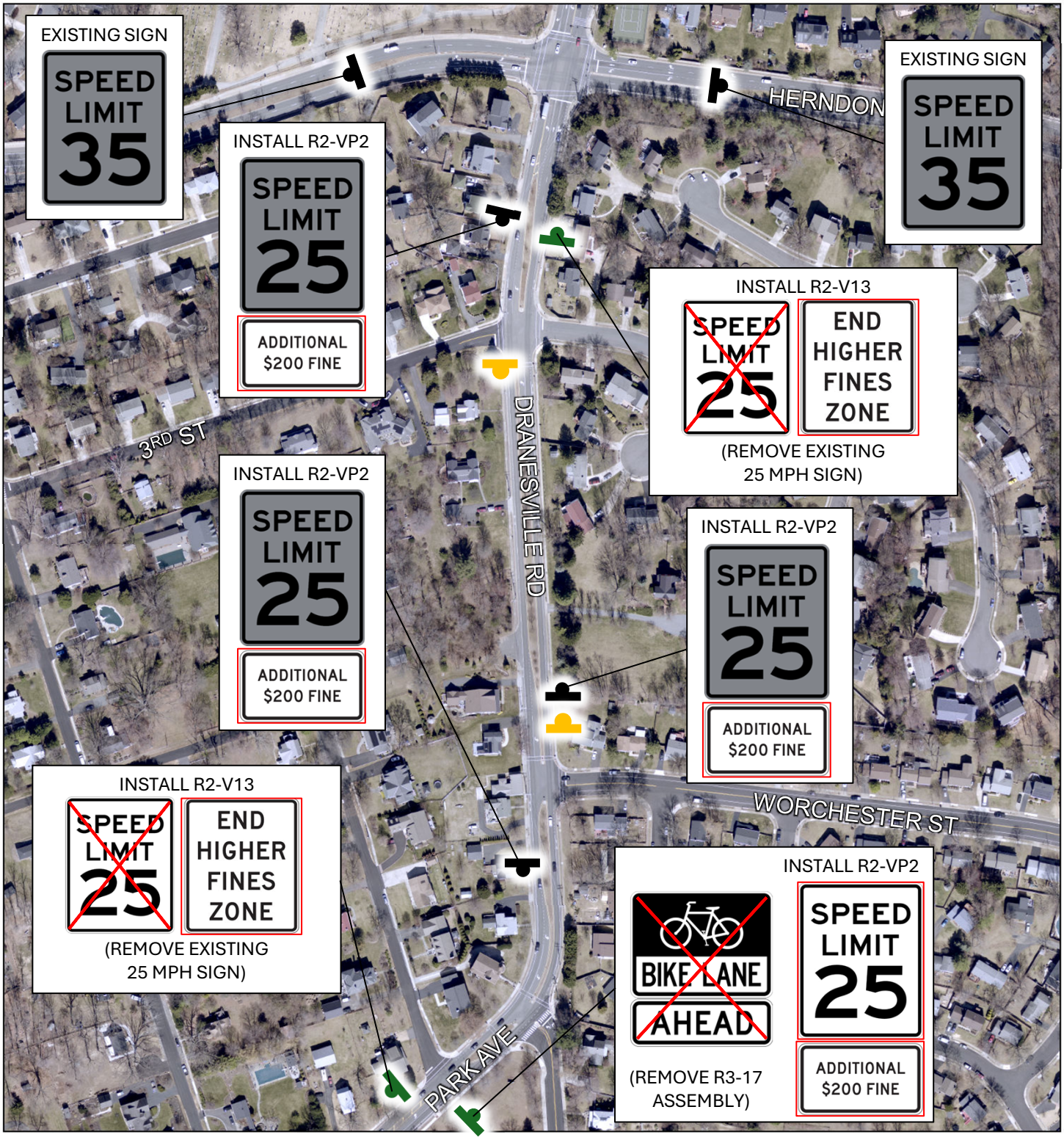
The town is authorized to install additional $200 fine signs per Section 46.2-878.2 of the Code of Virginia. As the town owns and maintains all roadways within its political boundaries, there is no required coordination with the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) nor Fairfax County. However, town staff have still considered and adhered to technical elements of the published VDOT policy. In order to implement the increased fine zone, per Section 42-4 of the Town Code, the Town Council is required to pass a resolution to establish the higher-fine speed zone after public hearing.

Recommendation

DPW staff recommend installing a zone establishing an additional $200 fine for speeding on Dranesville Road between Herndon Parkway and Park Avenue. The recommended speed limit fine increase area is shown in **Attachment 1**. Note that installation of "END HIGHER FINES ZONE" signs replace existing speed limit signs; these signs are posted within 400-500 feet of another speed limit sign; as such, staff considers the signs as potentially redundant and replacement balances installation of the higher fine area without adding sign 'clutter'. Similarly, the bike lane sign assembly on Park Avenue west of Dranesville Road is redundant with one located 375 feet to the southwest.

If approved by Town Council, staff will work to install signs in the coming weeks (depending on equipment availability). Staff also recommend post-implementation data collection to determine the effectiveness of increased fines. Staff will then consider if further action is needed to manage speed limit compliance including physical traffic calming measures.

Attachment 1



NOTE: SIGNS TO REMAIN ARE SHOWN IN GREY. MODIFICATIONS ARE SHOWN WITH RED.

1:4,000

0 0.03 0.05 0.1 mi

0 0.04 0.08 0.16 km

LEGEND

- EXISTING SPEED LIMIT SIGN
- PROPOSED NEW SIGN
- EXISTING SPEED FEEDBACK SIGN

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Town of Herndon
Fairfax County Historical Imagery Viewer