STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

PAT MCCRORY
GOVERNOR

ANTHONY J. TATA
SECRETARY

May 23, 2013

Mr. Bryan Gruesbeck
Town Manager
Town of Pittsboro
P. O. Box 759
Pittsboro, NC 27312

Dear Mr. Gruesbeck,

Thank you for your inquiry into a possible speed limit reduction on US 15/501 between Rock Springs Cemetery Church Road and Northwood High School. Our office has completed our study into your request by looking at current speeds, volumes, intersection access and a five year accident history throughout the study segment.

Speed data, which was collected on the south end of the US 64 overpass reflected an average 85th percentile speed of 61.9 mph indicating that motorists are comfortable and reasonably compliant with the current 55 mph speed limit. Overall development which accounts for all access points along the segment was minimal at 18% while average daily traffic volumes were 15,600 vehicles per day.

Within the limits of the 15/501 study segment there were a total of 37 reported accidents, exclusive of animal collisions. From the narratives of each accident it was determined that there were only three accidents in which speed was a contributing factor, of these, all three occurred during ice/rain conditions. What was most telling was the breakdown of the intersection related accidents, as summarized below:

Lowes/Powell Place (45 mph, signalized).....6 total accidents, 1 Rear End, 1 Fail to Stop, 4 Fail to Yield
64 EB Ramps (55 mph, unsignalized).....5 total accidents, 1 Fail to Stop, 4 Fail to Yield
64 WB Ramps (55 mph, unsignalized).....5 total accidents, 2 Fail to Stop, 3 Fail to Yield
Northwood HS (55 mph, signalized).....8 total accidents, 5 Rear End, 3 Fail to Yield (Ages of Rear End Drivers were 81,16,17,16,17)

With the remaining accidents involving improper lane change and unauthorized U-turns it is evident that vehicle speed has little to no impact as a contributing factor in reported accidents and that driver inattentiveness seems to be the predominant cause. Based on the information that was collected and analyzed, our recommendation is to not lower the existing speed limit along the requested study segment at this time. We will be glad to review this location again if there are changes in development, field conditions, or accident data changes.

It is our pleasure to assist you and the Town of Pittsboro, please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any questions, or if this office can be of further assistance.

Sincerely,

David B. Willett
Division Traffic Engineer

cc: Richard W. Hancock, P.E.
R. W. Stone II, P. E.
Jeffery B. Loflin, P.E.
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