

**Subject: Ordinance #1579 – Revising RMC 16.01.020 to reduce Speed limits on most Ruston Streets to 20 MPH.**

**Dept. Origin: Mayor’s Office/Police**

**Prepared by: Jennifer Robertson  
 City Attorney’s Office**

**For Agenda of: May 7, 2024**

**Exhibits: Ordinance No. 1579**

**Proposed Council Action:**

This matter is on for First Reading. Unless Directed otherwise, this matter will return for Second Reading and Action on May 21, 2024.

**Concurred by Mayor:** \_\_\_\_\_

Initial & Date

**Approved/form by City Atty:** JSR/4-29-24

**Approved by \_\_\_\_\_ Director:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Approved by Department Head:** \_\_\_\_\_

**INFORMATION / BACKGROUND**

Under Chapter 16.06 of the Ruston Municipal Code (RMC), Ruston adopted the Washington Model Traffic Ordinance (Ch. 46.90 RCW and Chapter 308-330 WAC). Under RCW 46.61.415(3) and WAC 308-330-270, the City Council may change a speed limit to 20 miles per hour (“MPH”). Give that Ruston is becoming more dense with increasing pedestrian traffic, the Mayor’s office requested that an ordinance to reduce speed limits on most Ruston streets be brought forward. Lower speed limits support and encourage motor vehicle travel at lower and more appropriate travel speeds and lower travel speeds for motor vehicles lead to reduced risk of motor vehicle crashes, reduced severity of injuries for crashes that do occur, and a reduced risk that such crashes will result in fatal injury for all road users. In addition, crashes involving pedestrians are more survivable the lower the speed of the traveling vehicle.

In order to reduce speed limits, RMC 16.01.020 which establishes a speed limit within the City needs to be amended to reduce speed limits on certain streets. Currently, the city-wide speed limit is 25 MPH with 30 MPH on Pearl Street (a State highway), 15 MPH in the former Ruston Tunnel and in alleys, and 20 MPH on Commercial Street between Winnifred and Baltimore. If approved, Ordinance No. 1579 would remove the redundant reference to the Ruston Tunnel, clean up language to change “town” to “city” and would set 20 MPH as the speed limit on the following streets:

1. N. 49th Street;
2. N. 50th Street;
3. N. 51st Street;
4. N. 52nd Street;

5. N. 53rd Street;
6. N. Baltimore Street;
7. N. Highland Street;
8. N. Shirley Street;
9. N. Winnifred Street; and
10. Park Avenue.

All alleys would remain at 15 MPH limits with any other streets remaining at 25 MPH, except Pearl Street which would remain at 30 MPH. The City cannot change the speed limit on state highways without the approval of the Washington State Secretary of Transportation.

**RECOMMENDATION / MOTION**

For Discussion and Direction only; no Action Requested. This matter is on for First Reading. Unless directed otherwise, this matter will return for Second Reading and Action on May 21, 2024.

**ORDINANCE NO. 1579**

**AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF RUSTON, WASHINGTON, ESTABLISHING NEW REDUCED SPEED LIMITS TO 20 MILES PER HOUR ON SPECIFIC CITY STREETS, AMENDING SECTION 16.01.020 OF THE RUSTON MUNICIPAL CODE, PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY, PUBLICATION, AND CORRECTIONS, AND ESTABLISHING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.**

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**WHEREAS**, under Chapter 16.06 of the Ruston Municipal Code (RMC), Ruston adopted the Washington Model Traffic Ordinance (Ch. 46.90 RCW and Chapter 308-330 WAC); and

**WHEREAS**, under RCW 46.61.415(3) and WAC 308-330-270, the City Council may change a speed limit to 20 miles per hour (“MPH”); and

**WHEREAS**, lower speed limits support and encourage motor vehicle travel at lower and more appropriate travel speeds; and

**WHEREAS**, lower travel speeds for motor vehicles lead to reduced risk of motor vehicle crashes, reduced severity of injuries for crashes that do occur, and a reduced risk that such crashes will result in fatal injury for all road users; and

**WHEREAS**, RMC 16.01.020 establishes a speed limit within the City and needs to be amended to reduce speed limits on certain streets; and

**WHEREAS**, on May 7, 2024, the City Council held first reading of this Ordinance; and

**WHEREAS**, on May 21, 2024, the City Council adopted this Ordinance during its regular meeting at second reading; **NOW, THEREFORE**

**THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF RUSTON DOES HEREBY ORDAIN AS FOLLOWS:**

**Section 1. New Speed Limits Adopted.** Section 16.01.020 of the Ruston Municipal Code is hereby amended to read as follows:

**16.01.020 Speed limit.**

(a) It is unlawful to operate or move any motor vehicle in the ~~Town~~City of Ruston, except upon North Pearl Street, at a speed greater than 25 miles per hour, unless a lower speed limit is set by the City Council. It is unlawful to operate or move any motor vehicle on North Pearl Street in the ~~Town~~City of Ruston at a speed greater than 30 miles per hour. It is unlawful to operate or move any motor vehicle over or across any street or alley intersection in said ~~Town~~City at a speed greater than 15 miles per hour if the operator's view is obstructed. The operator's view is obstructed when at any time during the last 100 feet of ~~his~~the approach to such intersection ~~he~~the driver does not have a clear and uninterrupted view of such intersection and of the traffic upon all streets and alleys entering such intersection, for a distance of 300 feet from such intersection. It is unlawful to operate or move any motor vehicle in any alley at a speed greater than 15 miles per hour.

(b) ~~It is unlawful to operate any motor vehicle in the Ruston Tunnel area between 51st Street and the Ruston Town limits at a speed in excess of 15 miles per hour. It is unlawful to operate any motor vehicle upon the following streets within the Ruston City limits at a speed in excess of 20 miles per hour:~~

1. N. 49<sup>th</sup> Street;
2. N. 50<sup>th</sup> Street;
3. N. 51<sup>st</sup> Street;
4. N. 52<sup>nd</sup> Street;
5. N. 53<sup>rd</sup> Street;
6. N. Baltimore Street;
7. N. Highland Street;
8. N. Shirley Street;
9. N. Winnifred Street; and
10. Park Avenue.

~~(c) It is unlawful to operate any motor vehicle on Commercial Street, between its intersections with Winnifred Street and Baltimore Street, at a speed in excess of 20 miles per hour.~~

**Section 2. Severability.** If any section, sentence, clause, or phrase of this Ordinance should be held to be unconstitutional by a court of competent jurisdiction, such invalidity or unconstitutionality shall not affect the validity or constitutionality of any other section, sentence, clause or phrase of this Ordinance.

**Section 3. Publication.** This Ordinance shall be published by an approved summary consisting of the title.

**Section 4. Corrections.** Upon the approval of the city attorney, the city clerk, and/or the code publisher is authorized to make any necessary technical corrections to this ordinance, including

but not limited to the correction of scrivener's/clerical errors, references, ordinance numbering, section/subsection numbers, and any reference thereto.

**Section 5. Effective Date.** This Ordinance shall be effective five days after publication as provided by law. The speed limit adopted in Section 1 above will be effective only after both of the following have occurred: (1) this Ordinance has taken effect, and (2) signage with the new speed limit have been installed at all applicable locations.

**ADOPTED** by the City Council of the City of Ruston and attested by the City Clerk in authentication of such passage on this \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2024.

**APPROVED** by the Mayor this \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2024.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Bruce Hopkins, Mayor

**ATTEST/AUTHENTICATED:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Laurie Cassell, City Clerk

**APPROVED AS TO FORM:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Jennifer S. Robertson, City Attorney

PASSED BY THE CITY COUNCIL: \_\_\_\_\_

DATE PUBLISHED: \_\_\_\_\_

EFFECTIVE DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

ORDINANCE NO: 1579