

City of Sacramento

Legislation Text

File #: 2019-00743, **Version:** 1

Title:

Re-establishing and Reducing Speed Limits

File ID: 2019-00743

Location: Citywide

Recommendation:

Adopt a Resolution: 1) re-establishing speed limits on various streets; 2) reducing speed limits on various streets; and 3) rescinding Resolution No. 2018-0369.

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Presenter: None

Attachments:

- 1-Description/Analysis
- 2-Attachment 1: Summary of Engineering and Traffic Surveys
- 3-Attachment 2: Justification for Proposed Speed Limits
- 4-Resolution
- 5-Exhibit A: List of Citywide Posted Speed Limits

Description/Analysis

Issue Detail: Under the California Vehicle Code (CVC), a section of a highway or street is a “speed trap” if the prima facie speed limit is not justified by an Engineering and Traffic Survey (E&TS) performed within a specified time period, and the enforcement of the speed limit involves the use of radar or any other electronic device for measuring the speed of moving objects. The evidence of a speeding violation based on a speed trap is inadmissible in court and may result in the inability to prosecute violators of the speed limit. In order to ensure compliance with these requirements, the E&TSs have been performed for re-establishing or reducing speed limits on 51 speed zones on various streets. City Council approval through resolution is necessary for establishing speed limits

on the subject speed zones. Additionally, the previously adopted City Council Resolution No. 2018-0369 for the Citywide posted speed limits must be rescinded and superseded with a new Resolution.

Policy Considerations: The recommendations in this report are consistent with the City's 2035 General Plan goal (M1.1.2) of managing the travel system to ensure safe operating conditions and with the California Vehicle Code.

Economic Impacts: None.

Environmental Considerations:

California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA): The Community Development Department Environmental Planning Services Manager has reviewed the proposed action and determined that this project is exempt from the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) under Class 1, Section 15301(c) of the CEQA Guidelines. Projects exempted under Class 1, Section 15301(c), consist of the operation, repair, or minor alteration of existing highways, streets, sidewalks, gutters, bicycle and pedestrian trails, and similar facilities involving negligible or no expansion of use.

Sustainability: The action requested herein is consistent with the City's long-term sustainability goals to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. A reduction in GHG emission can be achieved by establishing speed limits that are representative of the speed of free-flowing traffic conditions.

Commission/Committee Action: None.

Rationale for Recommendation: The recommendations in this report are to ensure compliance with the CVC in regards to prima facie speed limits. Furthermore, as required by the CVC, these recommendations are made on the basis of the E&TSs that were performed in accordance with the established traffic engineering practices. A brief discussion for each of the proposed speed limits that required justification is presented in Attachment 2.

Financial Considerations: No additional funding is necessary. The costs associated with performing the speed surveys, manufacturing, and installation of speed limit signs is funded from the Department of Public Works, Transportation Division's Fiscal Year (FY) 2018/2019 operating budget (General Fund, Fund 1001). The FY2018/2019 General Fund expenditures were reimbursed by Gas Tax Funds (Fund 2002).

Local Business Enterprise (LBE): Not applicable.

Background: Speed limits in California are governed by Sections 32, 627, 22348 through 22413, 40802, and 40803 of the CVC. According to CVC Section 40802, a section of a highway or street is a “speed trap” if the prima facie speed limit is not justified by an Engineering and Traffic Survey (E&TS) performed within the specified time period, and enforcement of the speed limit involves the use of radar or other electronic device for measuring the speed of moving objects. Under CVC Section 40803, the evidence of a speeding violation based on a speed trap is inadmissible in court. This could result in the inability to prosecute violators of the speed limit. In view of this, the prima facie speed limits on various streets of the City must be determined and established on the basis of an E&TS.

Conducting an E&TS for establishing speed limits is governed by the CVC, and the California Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD). When a speed limit is posted on the basis of an E&TS, it should be established using the 85th percentile speed of free-flowing traffic. California MUTCD standard, consistent with CVC Section 21400(b), states that a posted speed limit shall be established at the nearest 5 mph increment of the 85th percentile speed of free-flowing traffic, except for cases in which the nearest 5 mph increment would require a rounding up. In those cases, the speed limit may be rounded down to the nearest 5 mph increment below the 85th percentile speed, if no further reduction is used. If additional reduction is applied, then the E&TSs shall document in writing the conditions and justification for the lower speed limit and be approved by a registered Civil or Traffic Engineer. Since the E&TSs are usually valid for a period of 7 years, the City must update the E&TSs for each existing speed zone prior to their expiration date. Additionally, the City is required to reevaluate the speed limits on segments of the roadway that have undergone a significant change in roadway characteristic or surrounding land uses.

In order to ensure compliance with the requirements set forth in the CVC, the E&TSs have been performed for 51 speed zones on various streets of the City. These 51 speed zones include:

- (1) Re-establishing the speed limits for 44 speed zones, and
- (2) Reducing the speed limit for 7 speed zones.

The E&TSs for justifying the proposed speed limits were performed in accordance with the requirements set forth in the CVC, California MUTCD and established traffic engineering practices. Attachment 1 presents the summary of the E&TSs for each of the 51 speed zones. A brief discussion for each of the proposed speed limits that require justification is presented in Attachment 2.

Based on the background information presented herein, Staff recommends that the City Council adopt a Resolution approving the re-establishment or reduction of speed limits on the 51 speed zones as listed in Attachment 1.

A list of Citywide posted speed limits that are recommended to be adopted as part of a new City

Council Resolution is presented in Exhibit A. The subject list incorporates the re-established or reduced speed limits for the 51 speed zones as summarized in Attachment 1.

The previously adopted City Council Resolution No. 2018-0369 for the Citywide posted speed limits will need to be rescinded and superseded with a new Resolution in order to incorporate the re-established or reduced speed limits for the above referenced speed zones.