



City of Oceanside

300 North Coast Highway,
Oceanside, California 92054

Staff Report

File #: 25-1109

Agenda Date: 12/3/2025

Agenda #: 17.

DATE: December 3, 2025

TO: Honorable Mayor and City Councilmembers

FROM: Public Works Department

TITLE: INTRODUCE AN ORDINANCE TO ESTABLISH SPEED LIMITS UPON VARIOUS STREETS

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the City Council introduce an ordinance amending Article XIV, Section 14.1 of the Oceanside Traffic Code by establishing various new speed limits on streets identified in Table A (Attachment A).

BACKGROUND AND ANALYSIS

The basic speed law, per the California Vehicle Code (CVC), Section 22350, states, "No person shall drive a vehicle upon a highway at a speed greater than is reasonable or prudent having due regard for weather, visibility, the traffic on, and the surface and width of, the highway, and in no event at a speed which endangers the safety of persons or property."

Speed limits are established by either of the two following conditions:

- **Statute:** Speed limits established by state legislature, including statutory maximum speed limits (such as maximum speed limit of 55 miles per hour, mph, on two-lane undivided roadway) and prima facie speed limits by statute (such as 25 mph in a residence/business district). Prima facie speed limits are a type of statutory speed limit that applies in designated special areas or zones. For statutory speed limits, corresponding Engineering & Traffic Surveys (E&TSs) are not required and they are enforceable by law even if the speed limit sign is not posted.
- **Speed Zone:** A speed zone is the speed limit established based on an E&TS for a particular segment of a roadway, for which a statutory speed limit is not appropriate (such as, lowering the speed limit for a 55 mph road when 85 percent of the traffic is traveling at 35 mph or below). A speed zone is established by local governments by ordinance through preparation of an E&TS. For speed limits established by a local government ordinance, E&TSs and their resulting speed limit findings are enforceable by law after the proper signs giving notice of the new speed limits are erected.

The process of establishing a speed limit requires that an ETS be completed in which necessary data is included in the study justifying a specific speed limit for a road. A few of the requirements reviewed

in the process of establishing a new speed limit and completing an E&TS, are the 24-hour traffic volume, reported traffic collision history, and the critical speed. The critical speed (also referred to as the 85th percentile) is the speed at or below which 85-percent of the traffic is traveling. Establishing a new speed limit with an E&TS also allows the Police Department to enforce the posted speed limit.

One way to achieve reasonably safe roadways and to enhance efficient traffic flow is to establish proper and reasonable speed limits that can be enforced. Establishing a speed limit that is reasonable can help achieve voluntary compliance by the majority of drivers without the need for the presence of a police officer.

Speed limits are established by rounding the critical speed, obtained from a speed survey, to the nearest five (5) miles per hour increment. There are situations where a speed limit can be reduced and still be enforceable. For example:

- Option 1: If the critical speed is 37 mph, then it would round down to the nearest 5 mph increment, which would be 35 mph. If there is appropriate justification to lower the speed limit another 5 mph (such as a higher collision rate than the statewide collision rate), then the speed limit could be lowered to 30 mph (CVC 22358.6(b)).
- Option 2: If the critical speed is 38 mph, then it would round up to the nearest 5 mph increment, which would be 40 mph. CVC allows the authority to lower the speed limit another 5 mph, which would be 35 mph.
- Option 3: After appropriate rounding and reduction, CVC 22358.7 (established through Assembly Bill 43) allows for an additional 5 mph reduction in speed limit by local agencies on those facilities that generate high concentration of bicyclists or pedestrians.

In addition to basic speed law, Assembly Bill 43 (AB 43) took effect on January 1, 2022 and aims to enhance road safety and reduce traffic fatalities by reforming how speed limits are set in California.

All the street segments listed in Table A (attached) show the current posted speed limit and the proposed speed limit established by the new Engineering & Traffic Survey(s). In Table A, where the proposed speed limit has an asterisk, CVC 22358.7 was utilized to bring the speed limit down an additional 5 mph.

In summary, the ETSs prepared for this item resulted in the following recommendations:

- One (1) new speed zone
- Eight (8) Decreased the Speed Limits on Existing Speed Zones
- Six (6) Maintained the Speed Limits on Existing Speed Zones

FISCAL IMPACT

The installation of new speed limit signs on all new/re-established segments will cost approximately

\$3,300. All expenses will be charged to the Street Traffic Control account 640621101.5355, which has a currently available balance of \$109,000; therefore, sufficient funds are available.

COMMISSION OR COMMITTEE REPORT

Not applicable.

CITY ATTORNEY'S ANALYSIS

The referenced documents have been reviewed by the City Attorney and approved as to form.

Prepared by: Abraham Chen, Associate Traffic Engineer

Reviewed by: Hamid Bahadori, Public Works Director

Submitted by: Jonathan Borrego, City Manager

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Staff Report
2. Table A (Attachment A)
3. Ordinance