



Board Agenda Item 4

DATE: December 13, 2016

TO: Board of Supervisors

SUBMITTED BY: Steven White, Director
Department of Public Works and Planning

SUBJECT: Ordinance to Amend Sections 11.24.010 through 11.24.100 of Chapter 11.24 of Title 11 of the Fresno County Ordinance Code to Reflect Changes for Speed Limits

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

Conduct first hearing of proposed ordinance to amend Sections 11.24.010 through 11.24.100 of Chapter 11.24 of the Fresno County Ordinance Code to reflect changes for speed limits as listed on the Ordinance Summary Attachment and waive the reading of the Ordinance in its entirety; and set second hearing for January 31, 2017.

Fourteen road locations are proposed for adoption in the Fresno County Speed Limit Ordinance. Two of the locations will reduce, increase or establish the speed limit on said section of roadway as allowed by the California Vehicle Code (CVC), and are detailed in the Speed Zone Ordinance Summary. The remaining 12 locations are technical in nature and do not increase or decrease a speed limit. These will improve traffic safety and service by making speed limits consistent with existing conditions and allow the California Highway Patrol to use radar for the enforcement of the speed limits.

ALTERNATIVE ACTION:

If the recommendation action is not approved by your Board, the existing speed limits may not be enforceable.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no Net County Cost associated with the recommended action. The estimated cost for placing or relocating speed limit signs is \$1,450 for materials and \$1,750 for labor and equipment for a total estimated cost of \$3,200. Funds for this work are included in the FY 2016-17 Public Works and Planning - Roads Org 4510 Adopted Budget. County personnel will perform the work.

DISCUSSION:

CVC Section 22348-22366, Article 1 of Chapter 7 states that an engineering and traffic survey (E&TS) must be conducted prior to posting, modifying or installing a new speed limit. The CVC does not state how the engineering and traffic survey is to be conducted. For this reason, the Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD), which is published by the Federal Highway Administration, is used as a guideline to satisfy this requirement. Because the MUTCD is prepared by Federal Highway Administration, the method and procedures outline has been adopted by government agencies across the country. The MUTCD recommends State and local authorities should evaluate speed limits at least once every 5, 7, or 10 years. It also states a speed limit should be re-evaluated on areas that have undergone significant changes since the last review, such as the addition or elimination of parking or driveways, changes in the number of travel lanes, changes in the configuration of bicycle lanes, changes in traffic control signal coordination, or significant changes in traffic

volumes. It is the policy of the Department to re-evaluate the speed limit every 5 years. Since E&TS must be kept current, individual road segments are re-evaluated every 5 years, but, ordinance changes are recommended more frequently to even out the work load.

Maximum speed limits are not set arbitrarily, i.e. public opinions. Arbitrarily low and restrictive limits set by local authorities on classified County roads are defined in the CVC as speed traps, and are not enforceable by radar. The CVC allows a local authority to determine, based on an engineering and traffic survey, a maximum speed limit upon any street, other than a State highway, to facilitate the orderly movement of traffic that is reasonable and safe. Engineering and traffic surveys include radar measurement of operating speeds, analysis of accident records, and field reviews to inventory road conditions and roadside conditions not readily apparent to drivers. The MUTCD provides guidance and procedures on data collection and for conducting a survey. An appropriate speed limit is recommended based upon analysis of the acquired data and actual road and traffic conditions.

The public, other agencies and County staff can initiate requests for changes to existing speed limits. The speed limit cannot be changed or modified without satisfying the requirements as stated in the MUTCD. The CVC states that changes to a speed limit require the Speed Limit Ordinance be updated prior to any changes being made. A notice that the Fresno County Speed Limit Ordinance is proposed for change will be published in a local newspaper before the second reading of the proposed Ordinance changes. The Ordinance changes will take effect thirty days after the second reading, and signs will be posted shortly thereafter.

OTHER REVIEWING AGENCIES:

The California Highway Patrol provides traffic enforcement on County roads and the proposed changes will need their review and approval. Where proposed changes affect other city jurisdictions, their concurrences will be needed. The CHP approval and city concurrences will occur prior to the second hearing.

ATTACHMENTS INCLUDED AND/OR ON FILE:

Vicinity Maps
Speed Zone Ordinance Summary
Speed Zone Ordinance

CAO ANALYST:

John Hays