



County of Fresno

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Fresno, California
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Legislation Text

File #: 19-0167, **Version:** 1

DATE: March 12, 2019

TO: Board of Supervisors

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

SUBJECT: Amendment of the Fresno County Ordinance Code to Modify the Chapter on Speed Limits

RECOMMENDED ACTION(S):

Conduct second hearing on and adopt an Ordinance amending Chapter 11.24 - Speed Limits of the Fresno County Ordinance Code, Sections 11.24.010 through 11.24.100, to reflect various changes to the Ordinance Code as a result of recent traffic studies; and waive the reading of the Ordinance in its entirety.

The recommended action pertains to two road locations within the boundary of Fresno County. The first location was studied for an established speed limit and is proposed for adoption into the Ordinance. The second location is currently in the Ordinance and will have no speed change but will have a technical change. The Vicinity Maps display the locations and the limits of the new speed zone. The speed limits are intended to improve traffic safety and service for consistency with existing conditions. This item pertains to locations in Districts 1 and 4.

ALTERNATIVE ACTION(S):

If the recommended action is not approved by your Board, the Speed Limits chapter of the Fresno County Ordinance Code will remain unchanged.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no Net County Cost associated with the recommended action. The estimated cost to replace or install speed limit signs is \$215 for materials and \$150 for labor and equipment for a total estimated cost of \$365. Sufficient appropriations and estimated revenues are included in the Department of Public Works and Planning - Roads Org 4510 FY 2018-19 Adopted Budget.

DISCUSSION:

On February 26, 2019, your Board conducted the first hearing to amend Sections 11.24.010 through 11.24.100 of Chapter 11.24 - Speed Limits of Fresno County Ordinance Code, related to two road locations.

The purpose of a speed limit is to regulate traffic so that reasonable driving speeds are maintained. National and State guidelines recommend speed limits be set so that the fifteenth percentile of the fastest motorists are subject to a citation with the burden to prove their driving was safe at the time of the citation. Arbitrarily low and restrictive limits set by local authorities on classified County roads are defined in the California Vehicle Code (CVC), Section 40802 as speed traps, and are not enforceable by radar.

Sections 22357 and 22358 of the CVC allow a local authority to determine, upon the basis of an engineering and traffic survey, a prima facie 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 (E&TS) are required as the basis for local authorities to establish speed limits higher or lower than those prescribed in the CVC. These 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 appropriate speed limit is recommended based upon analysis of the acquired data and actual road and traffic conditions. According to the CVC, only those prima facie speed limits based on E&TS are enforceable by radar.

The public, other agencies and County staff initiate requests for changes to existing speed limits, which require an amendment to the Fresno County Ordinance Code, Sections 11.24.010 through 11.24.100 of Chapter 11.24 - Speed Limits.

Staff proposes changes to the Speed Limits chapter of the Ordinance Code relating to two road locations (or portions of the road defined by the boundaries, otherwise known as "speed zones"), and the locations are separated into the following categories: (1) New Speed Zone, and (2) No Speed change.

(1) New Speed Zone: Location(s) proposed for establishment into the Ordinance with a recently established speed limit, supported by E&TS:

1. Garfield Avenue from Mount Whitney Avenue to ½ mile north of Mount Whitney Avenue will be 45 miles per hour.

(2) No Speed change, but rather a technical change supported by E&TS:

1. Lincoln Avenue from 1/8 mile west of Fig Avenue to Cherry Avenue, will remain 35 miles per hour, and was previously defined as "Lincoln Avenue from Fig Avenue to Cherry Avenue."

A notice that the Fresno County Speed Limits Ordinance is proposed for change was published in the Fresno Business Journal before the second hearing on March 12, 2019. With your Board's approval, the ordinance amendment will take effect 30 days if and after it is adopted during the second hearing and, where required, signs will be replaced or installed shortly thereafter.

OTHER REVIEWING AGENCIES:

The California Highway Patrol (CHP) provides traffic enforcement on County roads. The CHP was notified on January 7, 2019 for review of the proposed ordinance amendment. The CHP responded on January 11, 2019 and did not provide negative comment.

REFERENCE MATERIAL:

BAI #9, February 26, 2019

ATTACHMENTS INCLUDED AND/OR ON FILE:

Vicinity Maps
Speed Zone Ordinance

CAO ANALYST:

Sonia M. De La Rosa