



CITY OF SANTA BARBARA

COUNCIL AGENDA REPORT

AGENDA DATE: October 21, 2008

TO: Mayor and Councilmembers

FROM: Transportation Division, Public Works Department

SUBJECT: Introduction Of Ordinance Amendment Establishing Prima Facie Speed Limits And Discussion of Speed Limit Setting

RECOMMENDATION: That Council:

- A. Introduce and subsequently adopt, by reading of title only, An Ordinance of the Council of the City of Santa Barbara Amending Section 10.60.015 of the Municipal Code, Reducing the Prima Facie Speed Limit on Haley Street from Chapala Street to Milpas Street from 30 to 25 Miles per Hour and Increasing the Prima Facie Speed Limit on De La Vina Street from Micheltorena Street to Haley Street from 25 to 30 Miles per Hour; and
- B. Direct Staff on the appropriate course of action to address the establishment of speed limit determinations on City Streets.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

Some of the Engineering and Traffic Surveys that are used to establish the speed limits on City streets have expired and speed limits on those streets are presently not being enforced by the Police Department. The Police Department has requested that Public Works staff renew expired Engineering and Traffic Surveys on City streets for the purpose of making those streets eligible for speed enforcement using radar.

A report on the methodology for the establishment of speed limits and the option for the reclassification of appropriate streets was presented to the Transportation and Circulation Committee (TCC) on September 25, 2008. The TCC recommended that the Council initiate the reclassification of appropriate City streets for the purpose of allowing radar enforcement without the need to conduct an Engineering and Traffic Survey. The TCC also established a subcommittee to work with Staff on this item.

An Engineering and Traffic Survey has been completed on Haley Street and De La Vina Street and a new speed limit is proposed for these two streets.

DISCUSSION:

Recent Engineering and Traffic Surveys

When using an Engineering and Traffic Survey to establish a speed limit, the recommended speed limit should be established at the five-mile-per-hour increment closest to the 85th percentile speed (which is the speed 85% of the drivers are traveling at or below) unless conditions unforeseen to the driver merit the consideration of a reduction of up to five miles per hour. This methodology is based on the premise that a reasonable speed limit is one that conforms to the actual behavior of the majority of motorists, and that by measuring motorists' speeds, one will be able to select a speed limit that is both reasonable and effective.

Staff recently conducted Engineering and Traffic Surveys on Anacapa, Anapamu, Haley and De La Vina Streets, streets identified as high priority routes for safety and speed enforcement. By adopting Municipal Code Ordinance 10.60.015, Council will establish the speed limits as described in the "Recommended Posted Speed Limit" column below.

Street Name	Segment	Existing Speed Limit	Speed Limit Closest to 85% Speed	Reduction based on Special Characteristics (-5 mph)	Recommended Posted Speed Limit
Anacapa Street	Constance to Mission	30	30	<input type="checkbox"/>	30
Anacapa Street	Mission to Arrellaga	30	35	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	30
Anapamu Street	Santa Barbara to North Milpas	30	35	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	30
Haley Street	Chapala to North Milpas	30	30	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	25
De La Vina Street	Micheltorena to Carrillo	25	35	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	30
De La Vina Street	Carrillo to Haley	25	35	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	30

The 85th percentile speed on four of the six segments is greater than the existing speed limits. Engineering judgment indicated a need for reducing or increasing the speed limit due to special characteristics, such as conditions not foreseen by the driver, residential density, and bicycle and pedestrian use.

Based on spot speed surveys of streets not identified for this report, staff estimates that up to one-third of the 40 non-local streets left to be surveyed will have higher 85th percentile speeds and, therefore, the speed limits may need to be raised when a formal speed survey is conducted.

Alternative Method for Speed Limit Setting

Another option to set radar enforceable prima facie speed limits without conducting Engineering and Traffic Survey is defining a City street as a “local street.” If a City street is defined as a local street in the Federal Functional Classification System Maps (FFCSM) submitted to the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), radar enforceable prima facie speed limits can be established without an Engineering and Traffic Survey. Local streets, according to federal definition, consist of all roads not defined as arterials or collectors on the FFCSM.

Council may define local streets by resolution, and establish a radar-enforceable prima facie speed limit of 25 miles per hour. The City of Ventura recently reclassified many arterial and collector streets to local streets as part of the General Plan amendment process, as a means of specifying enforceable speed limits more consistent with their circulation and livability goals. The process of reclassifying streets takes approximately one year and requires the approval of the Santa Barbara County Association of Governments, Caltrans, and the FHWA.

The California Vehicle Code (CVC) additionally defines a local street as that which is either classified as a local street on the FFCSM or meets specific conditions. Streets meeting this definition are considered “local” for the purpose of radar enforcement. Therefore, prima facie speed limits on non-local streets in business and residence districts of 25 miles per hour can not be enforced using radar unless established through an Engineering and Traffic Survey.

To initiate a street reclassification study, several issues must be considered including the following:

- Federal Surface Transportation Program (STP) funding appropriated for different street classifications;
- Consistency with Circulation Element policies; and
- Balance of automobile traffic with movement of pedestrians, transit and bicyclists.

BUDGET/FINANCIAL INFORMATION:

Reclassification of arterial and collector streets to local streets presents cost implications to both the County and the City because the Federal Surface Transportation Program (STP) funds are apportioned according to both population and arterial and collector lane mileage on the Federal system. SBCAG currently receives approximately \$4,000,000 in STP funds. These funds can not be used on local streets for the purpose of construction, reconstruction, rehabilitation, resurfacing, restoration, and operational improvements. Santa Barbara County has 2463.67 lane miles in the Federal System, with 232.77 being within the City of Santa Barbara. The reduction in funds apportioned would depend upon the number of lane-miles reclassified and is not

known at this time. The reclassification would not affect the apportionment of other transportation funds.

The reclassification study will done by staff and there will not be any cost associated with conducting the study.

PREPARED BY: Browning Allen, Transportation Manager/DvH/am

SUBMITTED BY: Christine F. Andersen, Public Works Director

APPROVED BY: City Administrator's Office