



Recommendation for Action

File #: 20-2171, **Agenda Item #:** 45.

6/11/2020

Posting Language

Approve an ordinance amending City Code Chapter 12-4 (Speed Limits) to add definitions of neighborhood street, downtown street, and urban core arterial street, and to establish a maximum speed limit of 25 miles per hour on neighborhood streets, a maximum speed limit of 25 miles per hour on downtown streets, and a maximum speed limit of 30, 35, or 40 miles per hour on urban core arterial streets.

Lead Department

Austin Transportation Department

Fiscal Note

This item has no financial impact

For More Information:

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Council Committee, Boards and Commission Action:

May 15, 2020, recommended by the Urban Transportation Commission on a 9/0 vote with Commissioner Reyna absent.

May 28, 2020 - reviewed by the Council Mobility Committee.

Additional Backup Information:

The Austin Transportation Department completed an engineering study to recommend speed modifications for residential streets and downtown streets. This study summarizes the methodology, data, and recommendations to set speed limits based on the context and operating characteristics of streets meeting the criteria set herein.

Residential streets are broadly defined as non-arterial (non-major) streets with some portion of adjacent front- or side-facing residential land use.

ATD sampled existing traffic speeds on approximately 600 residential streets citywide and used statistical analysis for approximately 100 streets to determine how traffic volume, pavement width, posted or prima facie speed limit, and adjacent land use influenced the prevailing (85th percentile) speed. Based on the statistical analysis, the Office of the City Traffic Engineer determined that analysis of the sampled streets and their characteristics was sufficient to base an engineering decision upon related to overall neighborhood or local street network of similar characteristics.

ATD reviewed national best practice on setting speed limits using the approach of a single, comprehensive engineering study to develop recommended speed limit modifications for applicable streets rather than individual engineering studies for each street. ATD also reviewed impacts to actual operating speeds where municipalities have comprehensively modified speed limits. Finally, ATD consulted with one of these municipalities on its experiences in planning and implementing this process to help develop recommendations in this engineering study.

In accordance with state law, this action will authorize the City Traffic Engineer to establish signage to enforce a maximum speed limit of 25 miles per hour. Signage need not be placed on every street indicating 25 miles per hour, but rather signage indicating "Speed Limit 25 MPH Unless Otherwise Posted" or similar, dispersed at a sufficient density as determined by the Office of the City Traffic Engineer shall constitute proper signage.

Strategic Outcome(s):

Mobility; Safety.