



AGENDA MEMORANDUM

First Reading for the City Council Meeting of June 13, 2017
Second Reading for the City Council Meeting of June 20, 2017

DATE: May 31, 2017

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Amending State Speed Limit in Certain Zones (Ocean Drive)
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CAPTION:

Ordinance amending the Code of Ordinances, Chapter 53, Section 53-254 Schedule V, Increase of State Speed Limit in Certain Zones to update portions of Ocean Drive and increase the speed limit on Ocean Drive, from Sand Dollar Boulevard to Naval Air Station Corpus Christi North Gate; providing for severance; and providing for publication.

PURPOSE:

This ordinance amendment will establish a speed limit zone of 50 Miles Per Hour (MPH) along Ocean Drive from Sand Dollar Boulevard to the Naval Air Station Corpus Christi (NASCC) North Gate and clarify the text for the existing speed zone limit along Ocean Drive from Airline Road to the Sand Dollar Boulevard.

Speed limits allow the motorist to operate a vehicle at a reasonable and safe speed under favorable conditions.

BACKGROUND AND FINDINGS:

Texas Legislative Code Section 545.352. Prima Facie Speed Limits establishes 30 MPH as the lawful prima facie speed limit for urban districts within Texas. This means 30 MPH is a reasonable and

prudent speed to drive under normal conditions. A municipality has the authority to alter a speed above or below the prima facie speed limit based on an engineering and traffic investigation.

Officials from NASCC requested Street Operations (Traffic Engineering) to address traffic enforcement issues along Ocean Drive from Sand Dollar Boulevard to the Naval Air Station Corpus Christi (NASCC) North Gate. A staff investigation determined there was no existing ordinance that altered the speed above or below the prima facie speed limit, of 30 MPH, between Sand Dollar Boulevard and the NASCC North Gate. To determine the posted speed limit, a traffic investigation and speed zone study must be performed. In Texas, the guidelines and procedures for a traffic investigation and speed study can be found in the Texas Department of Transportation's (TxDOT's) Procedures for Establishing Speed Zones.

Traffic investigations consider factors such as existing roadway features (curves, surface width, constrained shoulder width, etc.), crash history, cross streets, school crossings, and sites that generate traffic. Speed studies determine the 85th percentile speed, which represents the speed most drivers will be traveling at or below, so they are conducted during average weekdays and under favorable weather conditions. The recommended speed limit is generally set to the nearest value ending in 5 or 0. Guidelines in TxDOT's Procedures for Establishing Speed Zones permit a reduction in the final speed limit to less than 10 MPH below the 85th percentile speed based on engineering judgment and factors considered during the traffic investigation.

Based on the traffic investigation, there have been a total of three (3) crashes reported along this segment from 2013 to 2016. One crash occurred in 2015 and the remaining two were reported in 2016. The typical street cross-section consists of four (4) travel lanes and lacks shoulders. Narrow shoulders are present along a bridge located east of Sand Dollar Boulevard. This segment is surrounded by water and permits direct beach access off the outside gate entry. There is also a lack of lighting in the area which may create visibility issues at night. The speed study determined the measure 85th percentile speed was 60 MPH. Based on the traffic investigation factors, the City Traffic Engineer recommended reducing the final speed limit 10 MPH below the 85th percentile speed to 50 MPH.

The City Traffic Engineer recommended approval of this ordinance amendment to the City Transportation Advisory Commission (CTAC) at their November 28, 2016 meeting. CTAC concurred and approved the recommendation for approval to City Council. Amending this section of the ordinance will require improving the clarity of the existing speed zone limits. This includes revising "entrance of the Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi" to state "Sand Dollar Boulevard".

Toward the NASCC North Gate, the 50 MPH speed zone would transition to 30 MPH speed zone

ALTERNATIVES:

Denial of the proposed amendment to increase the State speed limit above 30 MPH.

CONFORMITY TO CITY POLICY:

Conforms to City Fiscal Policy.

EMERGENCY / NON-EMERGENCY:

Non-Emergency

DEPARTMENTAL CLEARANCES:

Engineering Services, Street Operations (Traffic Engineering)

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

☐ Operating ☐ Revenue ☐ Capital ☒ Not applicable

Fiscal Year 2016-2017	Project to Date Expenditures (CIP only)	Current Year	Future Years	TOTALS
Line Item Budget				
Encumbered / Expended Amount				
This item				
BALANCE				

Comments:

None

RECOMMENDATION:

City staff recommends approval of the ordinance amendment.

LIST OF SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS:

Location Map
Ordinance
Presentation