

**City of Culver City, California
Agenda Item Report**

Meeting Date: 08/26/2013		Item Number: <u>C-4</u>	
CITY COUNCIL AGENDA ITEM: Adoption of a Resolution Accepting the 2013 Citywide Engineering and Traffic Speed Zone Study			
Contact Person/Dept.: Gabe Garcia/PW		Phone Number: (310) 253-5633	
Fiscal Impact: Yes ☐ No ☒		General Fund: Yes ☐ No ☒	
Public Hearing: ☐		Action Item: ☐	Attachments: ☒
Commission Action Required: Yes ☐ No ☒		Date: _____	
Public Notification: (E-Mail) Meetings and Agendas – City Council (08/20/13); (Courtesy Notice Advertisement) Culver City News (08/15/13 and 08/22/13); Culver City Web Site; Culver City Police Department (08/20/13).			
Department Approval: Charles D. Herbertson (08/15/13)		City Attorney Approval: Carol Schwab (by H. Baker) (08/20/13)	
Chief Financial Officer Approval: Jeff Muir (by M. Noller) (08/20/13)		City Manager Approval: John M. Nachbar (08/20/13)	
<u>RECOMMENDATION:</u> Staff recommends that the City Council adopt a resolution accepting the 2013 Citywide engineering and traffic speed zone study. <u>BACKGROUND:</u> The California Vehicle Code (CVC) requires that each local jurisdiction conduct an Engineering and Traffic Survey (E&TS) every 5 years, with possible extensions to 7, and ten years, (depending on certain criteria being met), in order 1) to set prima facie speed limits – reasonable and prudent speed limits under optimum conditions, 2) to enable the Police Department to utilize radar or other electronic devices for measuring the speeds of moving vehicles; and 3) to enable the Police Department to issue citations to drivers of vehicles exceeding the posted speed limits, based on the readings of the measuring devices. Culver City met the criteria to extend the validity of the current E&TS and conduct the citywide speed survey at the ten year interval. <u>DISCUSSION:</u> On May 13, 2013, the City Council approved a professional services agreement with Minagar & Associates, Inc. conduct and prepare the 2013 E&TS throughout the City. The E&TS used statistical methodologies to determine reasonable speed limits, in compliance with CVC Section 627 and as defined by the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) in the California Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (CA MUTCD) 2012 Edition (Section 2B.13).			

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To make the determination as to the appropriateness of the posted speeds and the collision rate, the following criteria, contained in the CVC and the CA MUTCD, were considered:

- 1) The Critical Speed or the Prevailing 85th Percentile Speed;
- 2) Collision history; and
- 3) Highway, traffic, and roadside conditions not readily apparent to the driver.

The Critical Speed or 85th Percentile Speed

The Critical Speed, or 85th Percentile Speed, is the speed at or below which 85 percent of the traffic is moving on a segment of a road. This is the primary method used in identifying what the majority of drivers believe is a safe and reasonable speed to drive on a roadway segment. The accepted industry practice of setting speed limits is to round the 85th Percentile speed to the nearest whole 5 mph increment, or, if supported by the findings of the report, to drop to the next 5 mph increment.

The Necessity for Reasonably-Set Speed Limits

The 85th Percentile of drivers typically travel at roadway speeds which seem reasonable, given prevailing driving conditions. Speed regulations seen as unreasonable may be disregarded by motorists. Therefore, a “reasonable” speed limit is one that conforms to the actual driving behavior of the majority of drivers. Based on this concept, the CVC provides the Basic Speed Law, which states that:

‘No person shall drive at a speed greater than what is reasonable or prudent having due regard for weather, visibility, the traffic on, and the surface and width of, the highway, and in no event at a speed which endangers the safety of persons or property.’

The purpose of controlling speed limits by signage and enforcement is to restrict the 15 Percentile of drivers who exceed the reasonable and prudent speed. Reasonable speed limits provide law enforcement officers with a means to regulate these drivers who will not conform to what the 85th Percentile of drivers find reasonable and prudent.

Review of Collision History

When the collision rates on our roads were compared to the collision experience of similar roadways in California, according to data published in 2012 only one out of 70 surveyed speed zones were determined to have higher collision rates than expected for comparable roadways, while the remaining 69 locations were all found to experience below-expected collision rates. The one location with a higher rate than expected was Sawtelle Boulevard, between Overland Avenue-Playa Street and

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Sepulveda Boulevard. During the 3-year study period, it had three reported collisions, one more than expected.

Staff Review of the 2013 E & TS

The E & TS has been completed, and the results indicate that all 70 of the surveyed street segments throughout the City, are posted at appropriately-established speed limits under prevailing, free-flowing traffic conditions. Staff from the Engineering Division of the Public Works Department and the Police Department have jointly reviewed and concur with the recommendation that no changes be made to the citywide posted speed limits.

Adoption of the Resolution accepting the 2013 E&TS, and its recommendations, as well as the subsequent filing of a City Clerk-certified copy of the report with the court, will enable the Police Department to continue to use radar or other electronic devices to enforce the posted and recommended speed limits.

A copy of the 2013 E&TS report is available in the Public Works Department – Engineering Division for public review.

FISCAL ANALYSIS:

The E & TS forms the foundation upon which speeding citations are issued. Should the City Council adopt the proposed resolution, the Police Department will remain authorized to issue citations for speeding.

ATTACHMENT:

1. Proposed Resolution

MOTION:

That the City Council:

1. Adopt a resolution accepting the accepting the August, 2013 engineering and traffic survey speed zone study, and rescinding Resolution No. 2003-R073
2. Authorize the City Clerk to certify a copy of the “2013 Citywide Engineering and Traffic Survey” and submit it to the court.