

Legislation Text

File #: 22-969, **Version:** 1

PRESENTER:

Carly Farmer, Engineer

SUBJECT:

Discuss and consider a recommendation to City Council to reduce the speed limit on Morningside Drive between Schmidt Avenue and Solms Road.

DEPARTMENT: Transportation and Capital Improvements

COUNCIL DISTRICTS IMPACTED: 1 & 6

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Staff received a request from a resident to investigate and address speeding on Morningside Drive. The requester was specifically concerned with the lack of stop control on Morningside Drive.

Speed limits on Texas roads, including city streets, are set by statute in Section 545.352 of the Texas Transportation Code. The current speed limit on most city residential streets is 30 mph. The statute includes the following prima facie speed limits:

- Street in Urban District - 30 mph
- Alley in Urban District - 15 mph

Speed limits are set to inform motorists of appropriate driving speeds under favorable conditions. Regardless of the posted speed limit some drivers will operate at speeds where they feel comfortable, given the design of the road and development/activity along the roadside. The overall goal of setting the speed limit is almost always to increase safety within the context of retaining reasonable mobility for motorists.

The maximum speed limits posted should be based primarily on the 85th percentile speed - the speed at or below which 85 percent of the vehicles travel. Other factors that may be considered when establishing or re-evaluating speed limits include the following:

- Road characteristics
- Roadside development and environment
- Parking practices and pedestrian activity
- Reported crash experience

Multiway stops are not to be used for speed control or to arbitrarily interrupt traffic. When multiway stop signs are installed at locations where they are not warranted, there is a high incidence of motorists disregarding the traffic control devices. Well-developed, nationally accepted guidelines outlined in the *Texas Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices* consider the amount of traffic at an intersection, the length of time traffic must wait to enter an intersection, and the safety of an intersection to determine if a multiway stop installation is warranted.

Traffic data collection, review of crash history and a site investigation were conducted for Morningside Drive in May 2022. The specific locations and results of the traffic data collection are shown in the attached traffic study summary. There were twenty-three reported crashes on Morningside Drive between 2017 and 2021, three of which were speeding related.

Morningside Drive functions as a collector roadway in the city's transportation network. A collector roadway collects traffic from local streets and distributes to other local, collector, or arterial streets. The roadway is intended to carry higher traffic volumes at higher speeds.

Based on the site investigation and collected speed data, it is recommended that the regulatory speed limit on Morningside Drive be increased to 35 mph. It is important to note that national and local research and data have shown that reducing the posted speed limit has little to no effect in reducing operating speeds.

The only instance in which a city may lower a speed limit without a traffic study, to as low as 25 miles per hour, is if the road is in an urban district, is less than four lanes, and is not a state highway.

ISSUE:

A resident has contacted City staff with a request to reduce speeding on Morningside Drive between Schmidt Avenue and Solms Road due to safety concerns.

FISCAL IMPACT:

Traffic control signs cost approximately \$150 each. Sufficient funding is available in the FY 2022 approved streets and drainage budget.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends increasing the existing 30 mph speed limit to 35 mph on Morningside Drive and studying the intersection of Morningside Drive and Rueckle Road for an all-way stop warrant in Fall 2022.