

## Legislation Text

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**File #:** 18-276, **Version:** 1

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Presenter/Contact  
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**SUBJECT:**

Discuss and consider the first reading of an ordinance amending Section 126-136 (a) to amend the school speed zone for the New Braunfels Christian Academy Elementary.

**BACKGROUND / RATIONALE:**

**Council District:** 3

A citizen contacted the City of New Braunfels requesting that staff review the school speed zone signs for the New Braunfels Christian Academy (NCBA) Elementary along Kerlick Lane and Mission Hills Drive. Kerlick Lane and Mission Hills Drive are both listed as Minor Collectors in the 2012 approved thoroughfare plan and provide direct access to residential properties.

A school zone is a section of roadway adjacent to a school or a school crosswalk where signs designating a school are present. A school speed zone is a special reduced speed zone for schools allowed by ordinance and defined by school speed signs. Ideally, school speed zones should be kept short to enhance driver compliance. School speed zones are intended for pedestrian safety and not to facilitate vehicle movements. The Texas Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (TMUTCD) provides guidance that the point of a school speed zone should be at least 200 feet in advance of a school crossing if the school speed limit is less than 30 mph.

The posted school speed limit is 20 mph between 7:00-9:00 a.m. and 2:00-4:00 p.m. on school days. The posted speed limit outside of those times is 30 mph. The school hours for the NCBA Elementary are 8:05 a.m. through 3:10 p.m. The school zone starts on Kerlick Lane near the intersection with Ridge Drive and on Mission Hills Drive approximately half-way between Mission View Court and Valley View Lane. The attached map shows the limits of the existing school speed zone.

An engineering evaluation was conducted during school operations during both morning and afternoon times. Pedestrian activity was observed on both Kerlick Lane and Mission Hills Drive near the school property. Additionally, speed data was collected in four locations during normal school operations for seven consecutive days:

- Kerlick Lane near Ridge Drive, at the beginning of the school speed zone;
- Kerlick Lane near Twin Oaks Drive, closer to the NCBA Elementary campus;
- Mission Hills Drive near Evergreen Lane, at the beginning of the school speed zone; and
- Mission Hills Drive near Ridge Hill Drive, closer to the NCBA Elementary campus.

Tables 1 through 4 in the attached file show the results of this data collection.

The results of the speed studies showed that there is considerable non-compliance with the school zone speed limit on the outer edges of the existing school speed zone. Additionally, the existing school speed zone is much larger than what is recommended in the TMUTCD.

Based on this information, staff recommends shortening the school speed zone for the NCBA Elementary to better protect pedestrians near the school grounds and improve compliance with the posted school zone speed limit. The revised school speed zone would also include portions of Ridge Hill Drive and Timber Drive to cover where higher pedestrian activity occurs.

If the school speed zone is approved, times of 7:00 a.m. - 8:15 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m. will be posted. The request is supported by the Police Department, who will enforce the school speed zone, as well as the NCBA Elementary principal.

**ADDRESSES A NEED/ISSUE IN A CITY PLAN OR COUNCIL PRIORITY:**

2006 Comprehensive Plan: Transportation Goal 21: Provide a system of convenient and safe transportation facilities through comprehensive, cooperative, and continuing transportation system planning and development.

**FISCAL IMPACT:**

Traffic control signs cost approximately \$150 each. Sufficient funding is available in the FY17-18 approved streets and drainage budget.

**COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:**

The Transportation and Traffic Advisory Board unanimously approved the recommendation to City Council to amend the school speed zone for the New Braunfels Christian Academy with an amendment to relocate the beginning of the school speed zone on Mission Hills Drive to half-way between Evergreen Lane and Ridge Hill Drive on April 12, 2018.

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION:**

Staff recommends revising the school speed zone for the New Braunfels Christian Academy Elementary to:

- Mission Hills Drive from the intersection with Kerlick Lane to 585 feet to the southeast;
- Ridge Hill Drive from the intersection with Mission Hills Drive to 545 feet to the southwest;
- Timber Drive from the intersection with Kerlick Lane to 100 feet to the southeast; and
- Kerlick Lane from the intersection with Mission Hills Drive to 515 feet to the northeast.