

City of Arts & Innovation

City Council Memorandum

TO: HONORARY MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL DATE: MAY 19, 2026

FROM: PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT WARDS: ALL

SUBJECT: CITYWIDE SPEED LIMIT REDUCTION PROGRAM – A SAFE STREETS FOR ALL GRANT FUNDED PROJECT

ISSUES:

Approval of the Citywide Speed Limit Reduction Program, a Safe Streets For All grant funded project, which includes Policy Recommendations and Implementation Plan and a revised citywide speed limit schedule which would amend the entire section 10.76.010 (Speed Limit Schedule) of the Riverside Municipal Code designating the prima facie speed limits for certain streets and portions thereof in accordance with provisions of section 10.20.020 and 10.20.030 via adoption of an Ordinance.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

That the City Council adopt an Ordinance amending Riverside Municipal Code (RMC) Section 10.76.010 designating the prima facie speed limits for streets and portions thereof in accordance with provisions of section 10.20.020 and 10.20.030.

ORDINANCE INTRODUCTION:

On May 5, 2026, the City Council (1) introduced an Ordinance amending Riverside Municipal Code (RMC) Section 10.76.010 designating the prima facie speed limits for streets and portions thereof in accordance with provisions of section 10.20.020 and 10.20.030; (2) approved the proposed Citywide Speed Limit Reduction Program, which includes Policy Recommendations and an Implementation Plan; and (3) authorized City staff to install new speed limit signs and pavement markings throughout the City as determined from the revised speed limit schedule and as required by the California Vehicle Code (CVC). The motion carried with Councilmembers Falcone, Conder, Mill, Perry, and Hemenway voting aye, and Councilmembers Cervantes and Robillard absent.

BOARD RECOMMENDATION:

The Transportation Board met on March 4, 2026, to consider the amendment to the entire RMC Section 10.76.010, to recommend approval of the Citywide Speed Limit Reduction Program, and to recommend City Staff to install new speed limit signs as determined from the revised speed limit schedule. The Board unanimously recommended that the City Council approve all the staff recommendations with the stipulation to amend the requested portion on Victoria Avenue from

Tyler Street to La Sierra Avenue and change it to 35 mph.

BACKGROUND:

The Public Works Department performs Engineering and Traffic Surveys (E&TS) to establish appropriate speed limits on City streets including those classified as collector or arterial roadways and local roadways which do not meet the CVC definition of a “Residence District”. These surveys include consideration of prevailing speeds as determined by traffic engineering measurements, accident data, unusual conditions not readily apparent to motorists, residential density, and pedestrian and bicyclist safety. These surveys are performed in accordance with CVC and California Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (CA MUTCD) and enable both establishment and enforcement of the posted speed limit on City streets.

In 2021, the approved Assembly Bill No. 43 (AB 43) resulted in several changes to the CVC that authorized local jurisdictions to consider additional parameters when setting speed limits on certain streets. Additionally, Assembly Bill 1938 (AB 1938), clarifies and codifies the legislative intent of AB 43 by reaffirming that local agencies may reduce posted speed limits below the 85th percentile speed when supported by appropriate engineering justification, while maintaining full compliance with enforceability standards and the E&TS requirements of the CA MUTCD. The 85th percentile speed is the speed at or below at which 85 percent of the vehicles traveled. Consistent with AB 43, AB 1938, and the latest CVC statutes, the total reduction from the measured 85th percentile speed, including both the initial rounding and any additional reductions, may not exceed 12.4 miles per hour, ensuring that posted speed limits remain both reasonable and enforceable under radar and lidar requirements.

The Public Works Department selected RK Engineering Group, Inc. (RK Engineering), a private engineering consulting firm, to complete the Engineering and Traffic Surveys (E&TS) updates and related analyses required for the review of the speed limits on City roadway segments. RK Engineering responsibilities include collecting traffic and speed data, preparing updated E&TS documentation, identifying potential safety corridors, and developing recommended speed limit adjustments consistent with the CA MUTCD and CVC. The CVC provides local authorities with the ability to modify speed limits based on the findings of an E&TS.

DISCUSSION:

An Engineering & Traffic Survey (E&TS) was conducted for 321 roadway segments citywide for potential posted speed limit reduction, for validation of speed surveys within legal timing compliance, and for feasible roadway segment boundary limits. Utilizing the engineering methodology, statutory requirements and standards, speed limit recommendations have been made for all study area roadway segments. This evaluation is provided in conjunction with a broader strategy that combines engineering analysis, education, outreach, and enforcement measures to promote safer travel throughout the city. The project resulted in the recommendation to lower the speed limits at 135 roadway segments in the range of 5-10 miles per hour (MPH) than the current speed limit posted. There were no roadway segments recommended for speed limit increases compared to currently posted speed limits. Figure 1 illustrates the rate of increase in pedestrian survival compared to reduced vehicular speeds.

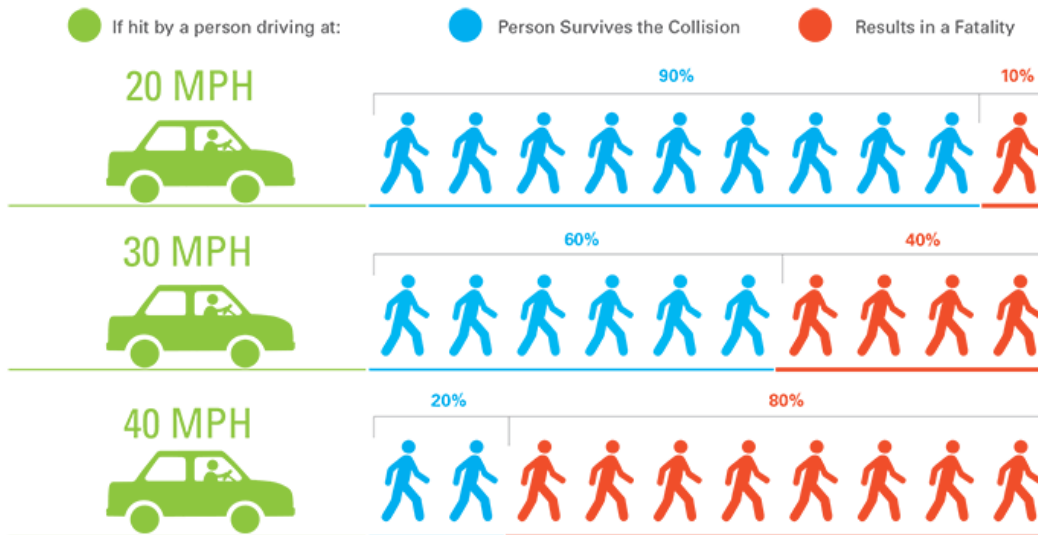


Figure 1. Vehicle Speed comparison to change of Pedestrian Injury and Fatality.
 Image Source: San Francisco MTA Vision Zero Action Plan, 2015

Studies have shown that there is a direct correlation between the speed of a vehicle and the severity of a collision. A pedestrian involved in a collision with a moving vehicle traveling at 20 mph has a 90% chance of survival; at 30 mph, the survival rate drops to 60%, and at 40 mph, it is only 20%.

Recognizing these statistics, the Traffic Engineering Division in conjunction with its consultant prioritized safety when conducting speed surveys; utilizing all available options within the guidance to ensure speed limits are set at the safest speed possible.

Reported traffic collision data was obtained from the California Crash Reporting System (CCRS) for a 5-year period spanning July 1, 2020, to June 30, 2025, to determine and designate Safety Corridors. The CA MUTCD defines a Safety Corridor as “a roadway segment within an overall roadway network where the highest number of serious injury and fatality crashes occur.” The Safety Corridor designation must not exceed one-fifth of the overall roadway citywide network. Safety Corridors are eligible for the additional 5-mph speed limit reduction below the 85th percentile speed authorized under AB 43. There were 63 roadway segments that were identified as Safety Corridors within the Citywide Speed Limit Reduction Program which is just under twenty percent (20%) of the total 321 roadway segments evaluated. These locations represent the portions of the citywide network with the greatest concentration of severe and high-risk collisions and form a prioritized subset of the roadway network.

Additional provisions that authorize an additional 5-mph speed limit when supported by engineering judgement and one of the following criteria are met: the subject roadway is adjacent to a land use or facility that generates a high concentration of bicyclists or pedestrians, the subject roadway is an identified safety corridor, the subject roadway falls within Business Activity District, reduction would allow for the retention of the current posted speed, or for engineering safety / operational considerations.

The Policy Recommendations and Implementation Plan for the Citywide Speed Reduction Program were developed to guide consistent implementation of speed management treatments across the City as speed limits are lowered. Roadway segments with excessive speeding where the 85th percentile speed exceeds the recommended speed limit by 8 miles per hour, or more

are prioritized. Additional prioritization criteria include Safety Corridor designation, roadway classification, and the presence of vulnerable road users such as pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit users. The implementation plan emphasizes cost-effective, easily deployable speed management treatments, including pavement speed limit markings and vehicle speed feedback signs, installed in accordance with CA MUTCD standards. As part of this policy, it is also recommended that these treatments are integrated into various planned roadway projects, allowing the City to systematically address speed-related safety concerns while supporting long-term capital planning and future funding opportunities. The Public Works staff will coordinate with the Police Services Department for targeted speed enforcement once the new speed limits are adopted.

Following the guidance outlined above, the consultant developed Citywide speed limit recommendations. Public Works staff reviewed and agreed with the recommendation which resulted in:

- Speed limits remained unchanged on 150 segments.
- Speed limits reduced on 135 segments.
- New posted speed limits established on 36 segments.

A complete list of the 321 street segments analyzed, the recommended speed limit, and a comparison to the existing speed limits is included as Attachment 2.

Public Works Traffic Engineering staff met with Riverside Police Services Department in December 2025 and presented the proposed speed limit recommendations. Once the ordinance is adopted, the speed limit schedule (**RMC Section 10.76.010**) updated, and new signs installed, city staff will coordinate citywide targeted enforcement with the police department.

Additionally, Assembly Bill 382 (AB 382), was signed into law by California Governor Newsom on October 10, 2025, authorizes local authorities, by ordinance or resolution, to determine and declare a prima facie speed limit of 20 miles per hour in a school zone, as defined, subject to specified conditions, including, among others, when a school speed limit sign states “children are present” and children are present, and when a school speed limit sign states specific hours, as specified prior to the law becoming effective statewide on January 1, 2031. While this report does not recommend any such reductions to occur immediately, AB 382 has been integrated in the preface to the proposed RMC Section 10.76.010 to authorize the city, via ordinance, with the flexibility to declare a prima facie speed limit of 20 miles per hour in a school zone given specific condition.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no fiscal impact associated with this report.

Prepared by: Phillip Nitollama, City Traffic Engineer
Approved by: Nathan Mustafa, Interim Public Works Director
Attachments: Ordinance and Exhibit A