



COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO

LAND USE AGENDA ITEM

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

VACANT
First District

JOEL ANDERSON
Second District

TERRA LAWSON-REMER
Third District

MONICA MONTGOMERY STEPPE
Fourth District

JIM DESMOND
Fifth District

DATE: January 8, 2025, and January 29, 2025

01

TO: Board of Supervisors

SUBJECT

TRAFFIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE AND RELATED CEQA EXEMPTION (01/08/2025 – ADOPT RECOMMENDATIONS INCLUDING INTRODUCING AN ORDINANCE; 01/29/2025 – SECOND READING OF AN ORDINANCE, UNLESS ORDINANCE IS MODIFIED ON SECOND READING) (DISTRICTS: 3, 4, & 5)

OVERVIEW

The Traffic Advisory Committee (TAC) supports the Department of Public Works (DPW) traffic engineering program. The TAC was established by the Board of Supervisors (Board) in the 1960s to provide traffic regulations and recommendations within the unincorporated areas of the region. To be effective, the TAC proposes policies that will enhance safety, reduce congestion, and be legally enforceable. The TAC meets every two months to review proposed additions, deletions, or changes to regulatory traffic control devices such as speed limits, stop signs, traffic signals, and parking regulations on County of San Diego (County) maintained roads. Upon receipt of a request or recommendation for the implementation of a traffic safety measure in unincorporated areas, the TAC reviews and investigates the requested item, including engineering and traffic condition studies. The TAC recommendations are provided to the Board for consideration.

The TAC recommends the Board act on four items from the August 2, 2024, TAC meeting:

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District	Item	Location	Action
3	3-A*	Via de Santa Fe from Via de la Valle to Calzada del Bosque in Rancho Santa Fe	Reduce the 40 MPH speed limit to 35 MPH and certify for radar enforcement.
3	3-B*	Via de Santa Fe/El Apajo from Calzada del Bosque to San Dieguito Road in Fairbanks Ranch	Reduce the 45 MPH speed limit to 40 MPH and certify for radar enforcement.
4	4-A*	Fuerte Drive from the La Mesa city limit (west of Grossmont Boulevard) to Chase Avenue in La Mesa/El Cajon	Certify the 35 MPH speed limit for radar enforcement.
5	5-A*	Rock Springs Road from the Escondido city limit (near Hagen Oakes Court) to Bennett Avenue in unincorporated Escondido	Relocate the eastern endpoint, reduce the 40 MPH speed limit to 35 MPH, and certify for radar enforcement.
* Indicates a second reading of the ordinance is required. These items are not in the vicinity of tribal lands.			

Approval of Items 3-A on Via de Santa Fe in Rancho Santa Fe (District 3), 3-B on Via de Santa Fe/El Apajo in Fairbanks Ranch (District 3), 4-A on Fuerte Drive in unincorporated La Mesa/El Cajon (District 4), and 5-A on Rock Springs Road in unincorporated Escondido (District 5) would support speed enforcement which enhances roadway safety. Properly posted speed limits inform drivers on safe speeds, reducing the number and severity of collisions, and allow for enforcement.

The Board's action on Items 3-A on Via de Santa Fe in Rancho Santa Fe (District 3), 3-B on Via de Santa Fe/El Apajo in Fairbanks Ranch (District 3), 4-A on Fuerte Drive in unincorporated La Mesa/El Cajon (District 4), and 5-A on Rock Springs Road in unincorporated Escondido (District 5) would introduce an ordinance to amend speed limit zones. This action would revise the County Code and require two steps. On January 8, 2025, the Board would consider the TAC items. If the Board takes action as recommended on January 8, 2025, then on January 29, 2025, a second reading and adoption of ordinances amending the County Code would be necessary to implement the Board's direction. If the proposed ordinance is altered on January 29, 2025, then on that date a subsequent meeting date will be selected for the ordinance's adoption.

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RECOMMENDATION(S)
TRAFFIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE

District 3:

Item 3-A. Via de Santa Fe from Via de la Valle to Calzada del Bosque in Rancho Santa Fe – Reduce the 40 MPH speed limit to 35 MPH and certify for radar enforcement.

Item 3-B. Via de Santa Fe/El Apajo from Calzada del Bosque to San Dieguito Road in Fairbanks Ranch – Reduce the 45 MPH speed limit to 40 MPH and certify for radar enforcement.

District 4:

Item 4-A. Fuerte Drive from the La Mesa city limit (west of Grossmont Boulevard) to Chase Avenue in unincorporated La Mesa/El Cajon – Certify the 35 MPH speed limit for radar enforcement.

District 5:

Item 5-A. Rock Springs Road from the Escondido city limit (near Hagen Oakes Court) to Bennett Avenue in unincorporated Escondido – Relocate the eastern endpoint, reduce the 40 MPH speed limit to 35 MPH, and certify for radar enforcement.

CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

1. Find that the proposed project is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) as specified under Section 15301 of the CEQA Guidelines because the proposed action involves minor alterations of existing public facilities relating to regulatory traffic control on County of San Diego maintained roadways, resulting in negligible or no expansion of existing or former use.
2. Adopt the Traffic Advisory Committee's recommendations.
3. Approve the introduction of the following Ordinance:
ORDINANCE AMENDING SECTIONS 72.161.90., 72.162.31., 72.169.33., AND 72.169.97. OF THE SAN DIEGO COUNTY CODE RELATING TO SPEED LIMITS ON COUNTY MAINTAINED ROADS IN SAN DIEGO COUNTY (Items 3-A, 3-B, 4-A, and 5-A).

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If, on January 8, 2025, the Board takes action as recommended, then, on January 29, 2025:

1. Adopt the following Ordinance:
ORDINANCE AMENDING SECTIONS 72.161.90., 72.162.31., 72.169.33., AND 72.169.97. OF THE SAN DIEGO COUNTY CODE RELATING TO SPEED LIMITS ON COUNTY MAINTAINED ROADS IN SAN DIEGO COUNTY (Items 3-A, 3-B, 4-A, and 5-A).

EQUITY IMPACT STATEMENT

The review of traffic signs, intersection controls, and roadway markings supports vehicle safety on County of San Diego maintained roads. The transportation system must be safe for all road users, for all modes of transportation, in all communities, and for people of all incomes, races, ethnicities, ages, and abilities. Understanding travel patterns, where correctable crashes are occurring, and the disproportionate impacts on certain communities will allow the Department of Public Works to identify actions to address the underlying causes, improve safety, and ensure there is justice in the enforcement of traffic regulations.

DPW's Local Roadway Safety Plan reviews correctable collisions along road segments within the unincorporated areas of the region and utilizes the Healthy Places Index (3.0) and CalEnviroScreen 4.0 to ensure underserved populations are prioritized. The Traffic Advisory Committee (TAC) relies on the Local Roadway Safety Plan and performs reviews of regulatory traffic control devices such as signs and markings. While adherence to sign and marking standards developed by the California Department of Transportation is crucial to obtaining the compliance of most drivers, the TAC also relies on various community engagement methods such as the Tell Us Now! Mobile app, toll-free hotlines, and a customer service request program to intake reports on a wide variety of traffic concerns and ensure the concerns are addressed.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPACT STATEMENT

The proposed action has social, health and well-being, and environmental sustainability benefits. The Traffic Advisory Committee has made addressing sustainability a top priority by partnering with local communities and industry leaders in a public forum every two months to find timely, reasonable, and cost-effective in-road traffic solutions that reduce costly traffic delays, mitigate vehicle idling to reduce emissions, improve fire response times and regional readiness, and ensure justice in enforcement of traffic regulations.

FISCAL IMPACT

Funds for this request are included in the Fiscal Year (FY) 2024-25 Operational Plan in the Department of Public Works Road Fund. If approved, this request will result in costs and revenue of \$9,704 in FY 2024-25 for staff time, materials, and supplies. The funding source is State Highway User Tax Account. There will be no change in net General Fund cost and no additional staff years.

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BUSINESS IMPACT STATEMENT

N/A

ADVISORY BOARD STATEMENT

The Traffic Advisory Committee (TAC) agenda items are provided to the 28 Community Planning and Sponsor Groups. The items associated with this report are located within the San Dieguito (Items 3-A & 3-B) and Valle de Oro (Item 4-A) Community Planning Group areas. Item 5-A is in the North County Metro Sub-Regional Planning Area and does not have a community group. TAC staff engaged each community group with items on the TAC agenda to solicit their interest in community review. The Chair of the San Dieguito Community Planning Group provided an email in support of certifying the speed limit on Via de Santa Fe between Via de la Valle and Calzada del Bosque (Item 3-A) and lowering the speed limit on Via de Santa Fe/El Apajo between Calzada del Bosque and San Dieguito Road (Item 3-B). Community input is provided in Attachment C. All other Community Planning and Sponsor Groups did not provide input on any items. These items are not in the vicinity of tribal lands.

BACKGROUND

The County of San Diego (County) Department of Public Works (DPW) operates a traffic engineering program that includes services such as establishing all traffic regulations, operating, and maintaining traffic signals and streetlights, issuing traffic control and special event permits, and addressing traffic-related customer service concerns. Members of the public and other agencies can make requests or recommendations for transportation needs within the unincorporated areas of the region. Requests or recommendations such as changes to traffic control, speed limits, stop signs, traffic signals, or parking regulations require direction and approval from the Board of Supervisors (Board).

The Board established the Traffic Advisory Committee (TAC) in the 1960s as an aid in providing uniform traffic regulations throughout the unincorporated region. The goal of the TAC is to provide unincorporated communities with a road system that strives to enhance safety and reduce congestion. To accomplish this, traffic policies are established to provide persons using the road system with consistent and uniform regulations. To be effective, these policies are designed to be legally enforceable.

The TAC is composed of 17 representatives from different agencies including five members-at-large appointed by the Board, one representing each supervisorial district. The members-at-large typically have an interest in transportation planning or engineering issues. Represented agencies also include the California Department of Transportation, California Highway Patrol, Insurance Brokers and Agents of San Diego, Pacific Safety Center, County Office of Education, San Diego Bicycle Coalition, the San Diego County Sheriff's Department, the San Diego County Fire Authority, and DPW. Agenda items are posted online, emailed through an interested person distribution list, and sent to Community Planning and Sponsor Groups prior to the scheduled meeting.

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The TAC meets every two months to review traffic control requests, such as speed limits, stop signs, traffic signals, and parking regulations, submitted by any member of the community, Community Planning and Sponsor Groups, County staff, or other agencies. Upon receipt of a request for the implementation of a traffic safety measure, the TAC reviews and investigates the requested item by gathering and analyzing information such as photographs, prevailing speeds, traffic volume, collision reports, and public testimony. The TAC investigates the request from the perspective of traffic engineers, motorists, bicyclists, pedestrians, law enforcement, school officials, auto insurance representatives, community representatives, and the public. After reviewing the data and discussing alternatives, the TAC submits a recommendation to the Board based on traffic engineering principles, the California Vehicle Code, and driver expectations. The Board then makes the final decision as to what action will be taken.

The TAC recommends the Board act on four items from the August 2, 2024, TAC meeting. The following four items are periodic reviews required every seven years to comply with state law. These items certify or recertify the use of radar for speed enforcement on the listed road segments. In establishing radar-enforceable speed limits, state law requires rounding measured speeds to the nearest 5 miles per hour (MPH) increment. The law also allows an additional 5 MPH reduction based on roadway conditions such as collision history, or allows rounding measured speeds down to the lower 5 MPH increment:

- Item 3-A. This review was requested by DPW staff. Via de Santa Fe in Rancho Santa Fe from Via de la Valle to Calzada del Bosque currently has a posted 40 MPH speed limit. Measured speeds on Via de Santa Fe averaged 42.3 MPH. The TAC recommends reducing the 40 MPH speed limit to 35 MPH and certifying the 35 MPH speed limit for radar enforcement based on measured speeds, equestrians, pedestrians, bicyclists, and State law which allows an additional 5 MPH reduction based on roadway conditions not readily apparent to the driver. There are no schools in the vicinity of this item.
- Item 3-B. This review was requested by DPW staff. Via de Santa Fe/El Apajo in Fairbanks Ranch from Calzada del Bosque to San Dieguito Road currently has a posted 45 MPH speed limit. Measured speeds on Via de Santa Fe/El Apajo averaged 43.1 MPH. The TAC recommends reducing the 45 MPH speed limit to 40 MPH and certifying the 40 MPH speed limit for radar enforcement based on measured speeds and State law which allows rounding measured speeds down to the lower 5 MPH increment. Solana Santa Fe Elementary School, The Nativity School, and Horizon Prep, which are located on El Apajo, were contacted for their input on the item and provided no comment.

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- Item 4-A. This review was requested by DPW staff. Fuerte Drive in unincorporated La Mesa/El Cajon from the La Mesa city limit (west of Grossmont Boulevard) to Chase Avenue currently has a posted 35 MPH speed limit. Measured speeds on Fuerte Drive average 41.2 MPH. The TAC recommends certifying the 35 MPH speed limit for radar enforcement on Fuerte Drive based on measured speeds, pedestrians, limited shoulder, hidden driveways and drainage ditches, and State law which allows an additional 5 MPH reduction based on roadway conditions not readily apparent to the driver. Fuerte Elementary School, which is located on Fuerte Dr, was contacted for their input on the item and provided no comment.
- Item 5-A. This review was requested by DPW staff. Rock Springs Road in unincorporated Escondido from the Escondido city limit (near Hagen Oakes Court) to Bennett Avenue currently has a posted 40 MPH speed limit from Nordahl Road to Bennett Avenue and an unposted 55 MPH maximum speed limit from Nordahl Road to the Escondido city limit (near Hagen Oakes Court). Measured speeds on Rock Springs Road average 42.3 MPH. The TAC recommends relocating the eastern endpoint of the speed zone to the Escondido city limit (near Hagen Oakes Court), reducing the 40 MPH speed limit to 35 MPH, and certifying the 35 MPH speed limit for radar enforcement based on similar roadway characteristics, measured speeds, pedestrians, bicycle presence, and State law which allows an additional 5 MPH reduction based on roadway conditions not readily apparent to the driver. Rock Springs Elementary and Escondido Adventist Academy, which are located adjacent to Rock Springs Road, were contacted for their input on the item and provided no comment.

A summary of TAC recommendations is provided in Attachment A. An ordinance required to implement the Board's direction is presented in Attachment B. Received community input is provided in Attachment C.

ENVIRONMENTAL STATEMENT

The proposed action consists of the approval of recommendations from the Traffic Advisory Committee relating to regulatory traffic control on County of San Diego maintained roadways (e.g., establish parking prohibitions, install traffic control signage, establish and certify/recertify speed limits for enforcement). Section 15301 consists of the operation, repair, maintenance, permitting, leasing, licensing, or minor alteration of existing public or private structures, facilities, or mechanical equipment or topographical features, involving negligible or no expansion of existing or former use. The key consideration is whether the project involves negligible or no expansion of use. The proposed action involves minor alteration of existing public facilities resulting in negligible or no expansion of existing or former use and is therefore categorically exempt from California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) review in accordance with Section 15301 of the CEQA Guidelines.

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LINKAGE TO THE COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO STRATEGIC PLAN

Today's proposed action to certify/recertify speed limits support the Community Quality of Life Initiative in the County of San Diego's 2025-2030 Strategic Plan to provide services that enhance communities through increasing the well-being of our residents and our environments. Today's requested action fulfills this initiative by improving the opportunity for motorists, pedestrians, and bicyclists to interact safely with the roadway and each other.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Dahvia Lynch', with a stylized flourish extending to the right.

DAHVIA LYNCH
Deputy Chief Administrative Officer

ATTACHMENT(S)

- A. Summary of Traffic Advisory Committee Recommendations
- B. Ordinance Required to Implement Recommendations
- C. Community Input