



Staff Report

City Council

Item No. {{section.number}}.{{item.number}}

Meeting Date: May 28, 2025

From: John A. Corella, Director of Public Works

Title: First Reading of an Ordinance to Adopt the 2025 Citywide Speed Limits Survey

RECOMMENDATION:

To introduce and provide first reading, by title only, to an ordinance adopting the Traffic and Engineering Study by Albert A. Webb Associates, establishing the 2025 Citywide Speed Limits in Cathedral City.

BACKGROUND:

The California Vehicle Code (CVC) mandates cities to establish speed limits above 25 mph based on an Engineering and Traffic Survey (E&TS) conducted by a registered traffic engineer. The city's last citywide speed survey was completed in 2019.

On October 8, 2021, Assembly Bill No. 43 (AB 43), California's "Traffic Safety" bill, was signed into law by Governor Newsom. The bill extends the validity of speed limits justified by an E&TS from seven (7) to up to fourteen (14) years, provided a registered engineer evaluates the survey and confirms that specified conditions are met.

AB 43 also grants local agencies more flexibility in setting speed limits within the CVC. It allows for speed limit reductions based on safety considerations, land use, and the presence of vulnerable pedestrian groups, including children, seniors, and individuals experiencing homelessness. Additionally, AB 43 enables lower speed limits in "business activity districts" and modifies the process for conducting traffic surveys.

The changes introduced by AB 43 were designed to enhance roadway safety and provide local jurisdictions with greater flexibility in setting speed limits on non-state highways, particularly in areas frequented by vulnerable populations and within designated business activity, school, and senior zones. Under this expanded authority, cities may adopt lower speed limits when justified by an E&TS and when necessary to enhance public safety and ensure the orderly movement of traffic.

Given the extension of the 2019 Citywide Speed Survey under AB 43 and recent changes to

the city's roadway network due to infrastructure projects, city staff determined it was necessary to assess whether the current speed limits remain appropriate. This transition period provided an opportunity to evaluate roadway safety, traffic flow, and community concerns, all of which are essential in deciding whether updates to the posted speed limits are needed.

On November 13, 2024, the City Council authorized Albert A. Webb Associates (Webb) to conduct an E&TS of the city's General Plan roadways in an amount not to exceed \$45,012. This study has been concluded and includes all arterial, major highways, secondary highways and collector roads in Cathedral City.

On May 14, 2025, the E&TS was presented during the Study Session to City Council for review and discussion. The City Council recommended re-evaluating the following segments:

Street	From	To	Council Recommendation
Date Palm Drive	Vista Chino	30 th Avenue	Reduce from 55 MPH to 50 MPH
Date Palm Drive	30 th Avenue	McCallum Way	Maintain speed at 45 MPH
Vista Chino Drive	West City Limits	Landau Boulevard	Reduce from 55 MPH to 50 MPH
Vista Chino Drive	Landau Boulevard	Avenida Maravilla	Reduce from 55 MPH to 50 MPH
Vista Chino Drive	Avenida Maravilla	Date Palm Drive	Reduce from 55 MPH to 50 MPH
Whispering Palm Trail	30th Avenue	McCallum Way	Maintain speed at 25 MPH

In response to the City Council's recommendations, Webb conducted a re-evaluation of the six (6) proposed roadway segment changes. Using the methodology and requirements outlined in the California Vehicle Code, along with the amendments introduced through AB 43, Webb was able to support five (5) of the six (6) recommendations.

The recommendation to maintain a 25 MPH speed limit on Whispering Palms Trail between 30th Avenue and McCallum Way was the only segment that, based on current data, requires further analysis before formal justification can be made.

After reviewing the available data from the E&TS, including traffic counts, vehicle speeds, and collision history, along with roadway conditions, traffic patterns, surrounding land use, and the proposed Class III Bike Route Project, Webb concluded this segment merits a different approach.

Furthermore, since this roadway segment was not included in the 2019 Citywide Speed Survey, it is not subject to the same timeline as the other roadway segments. As such, Webb recommends postponing the E&TS for this segment and amend the ordinance at a later date, once updated survey data is available to support enforceable speed limits.

On May 21, 2025, staff presented the E&TS modified with City Council recommendations to the Planning Commission. The Planning Commission approved a recommendation for the City Council adopt the study.

DISCUSSION:

Based on the findings from the E&TS, along with additional analysis of roadway segments requested by the City Council, staff recommend modifications to the posted speed limits on thirteen (13) roadway segments, as detailed in the attached 2025 Citywide Speed Survey.

The proposed modifications, whether increases or reductions, are based on an engineering evaluation that considers prevailing traffic speeds, collision history, roadway geometry and operational conditions, adjacent land use characteristics (including commercial and residential density), proximity to school zones as defined by the California Vehicle Code (CVC), and the safety of bicyclists and pedestrians.

The following table provides a summary of the proposed speed limit adjustments based on the E&TS.

Street	From	To	Speed Modification
Date Palm Drive	Vista Chino	30 th Avenue	Reduce from 55 MPH to 50 MPH
McCallum Way	Date Palm Drive	Santoro Drive	Reduce from 30 MPH to 25 MPH
McCallum Way	Santoro Drive	Da Vall Drive	Reduce from 30 MPH to 25 MPH
Mountain View Road	Varner Road	North City Limits	Reduce from 55 MPH to 50 MPH
Palm Drive	Interstate 10	Varner Road	Reduce from 60 MPH to 55 MPH
Ramon Road	Date Palm Drive	Neuma Drive	Reduce from 50 MPH to 45 MPH
Ramon Road	Neuma Drive	Da Vall Drive	Reduce from 50 MPH to 45 MPH
Santoro Drive	30 th Avenue	McCallum Way	Increase from 25 MPH to 35 MPH
Varner Road	West City Limits	Edom Hill Road	Reduce from 55 MPH to 50 MPH
Vista Chino	West City Limits	Landau Boulevard	Reduce from 55 MPH to 50 MPH
Vista Chino	Landau Boulevard	Avenida Maravilla	Reduce from 55 MPH to 50 MPH
Vista Chino	Avenida Maravilla	Date Palm Drive	Reduce from 55 MPH to 50 MPH
30 th Avenue	Date Palm Drive	Santoro Drive	Reduce from 45 MPH to 40 MPH

The speed limit adjustments to these thirteen (13) roadways segments are detailed in Ordinance No. 2025-XX, which is attached to this staff report. The ordinance sets forth the proposed speed limits for all arterial, major highways, secondary highways and collector roads in Cathedral City, based on the findings and recommendations of the 2025 Citywide Speed Survey.

Staff recommend the City Council introduce and provide first reading, by title only, to an ordinance adopting the Traffic and Engineering Study by Albert A. Webb Associates, establishing the 2025 Citywide Speed Limits in Cathedral City.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There will be costs associated with the implementation of this Study, specifically, to remove, replace, and/or add new speed limit signs using Public Works Department staff to comply with the adopted 2025 Citywide Speed Limits Study. City staff estimate 80 new Speed Limit Signs will be required along the 13 roadway segments with revised speed limits.

The total estimated cost for the removal, replacement, and installation of new speed limit signs is \$20,160. This amount includes approximately \$16,800 for labor and materials, along with a 20% contingency of \$3,360 to cover any incidental work. The cost will be covered with funds already budgeted in the Public Works Gas Tax (241) and Measure A (243) Maintenance and Operating Budget.

FIVE-YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN:

Goal E: Safety

Objective: Cathedral City is safe for all who live, work, visit and play in our community.

Action E-2: Continue to explore and utilize technology to promote public safety.

ATTACHMENTS:

Attachment 1 - 2025 Speed Survey Cathedral City

Attachment 2 - Ordinance No. 2025- XX