


CITY OF LOS ANGELES
INTER-DEPARTMENTAL MEMORANDUM

Date: February 04, 2016

To: Honorable City Council
c/o City Clerk, Room 395
Attention: Honorable Mike Bonin, Chair, Transportation Committee

From: Seleta J. Reynolds,  General Manager
Department of Transportation

Subject: **IMPLEMENTATION OF SCHOOL SAFETY ZONE SPEED LIMITS / CITY OF LOS ANGELES SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL (SRTS) STRATEGIC PLAN**

SUMMARY

The Los Angeles Department of Transportation (LADOT) seeks authority to implement “School Safety Zone” speed limits at the twenty-three (23) recommended street segments adjacent to eleven (11) Safe Routes to School (SRTS) prioritized school sites. These speed limits have been determined in accordance with California Assembly Bill 321 (Nava), which allows for speed limits ranging from 15 – 25 miles per hour (MPH) at eligible residential streets adjacent to schools.

RECOMMENDATION

That the City Council, subject to approval of the Mayor:

1. ADOPT the attached resolution, establishing speed limits at twenty three (23) recommended street segments in accordance with California Assembly Bill 321 (Nava).

BACKGROUND

The City of Los Angeles Safe Routes to School (SRTS) Strategic Plan was launched in 2012. A key tenant of the Strategic Plan is to use a data-driven process to target improvements at high need schools. LADOT, in partnership with LAUSD, developed a methodology for prioritizing schools. A list of the Top 50 prioritized schools (Top 50 Schools), in addition to the prioritization methodology, is included in the SRTS Fact Sheet (Attachment A).

The SRTS Strategic Plan has been one of several ongoing initiatives that laid the groundwork for Vision Zero Los Angeles, launched by Mayor Eric Garcetti in August 2015. To support Vision Zero, LADOT developed the High Injury Network (HIN) to spotlight the streets with a high concentration of collisions that result in severe injuries and deaths, with an emphasis on those involving people walking and bicycling. The HIN shows that over 65% of all severe and fatal traffic collisions involving people walking occur on just 6% of our city streets. Additionally, school age children (under 18 years old) are among our most vulnerable population, and traffic collisions are the leading cause of death for those between 2 and 14 years old.

With nearly 56% of all fatal and severe injury collisions occurring within ¼ mile of a school, and all Top 50 Schools located on or within ¼ mile of the HIN, successful implementation of the SRTS Strategic Plan will help achieve Vision Zero's goal to eliminate all traffic deaths by 2025. To achieve this goal, LADOT is proposing to use any legal tool available to protect and enhance the safety of school children.

This memo outlines a proposal to pursue "School Safety Zone" speed limits around eleven (11) schools, in accordance with California Assembly Bill (AB) 321 (Nava) (Attachment B). Five (5) of the proposed schools for safety zone implementation are located directly on the HIN (Pacoima Elementary, Menlo Ave Elementary, Young Oak Kim Elementary, Hollywood High, and Breed St Elementary), with the remaining six (6) located no further than one block length from a HIN corridor.

DISCUSSION

On January 1, 2008, California Assembly Bill (AB) 321 (Nava) (Attachment B) went into effect. AB 321 allows for a California city to evaluate the speed limits at schools located in residential districts, on two lanes roads, with existing speed limits of 30 miles per hour (MPH) or less. If the engineering evaluation indicates that the existing 25 MPH school zone speed limit exceeds what is reasonable or safe, the city may, by resolution, establish a lower school speed limit of 15 – 20 MPH in the area less than 500 feet from or passing a school building or grounds and extend to the school zone speed limits of 25 MPH up to 1000 feet from school property.

The process for implementing this program is specifically defined by the amended Vehicle Code Section 22358.4 (Attachment C) and defined herein:

Area 1: Distance less than 500 feet from or passing a school building or grounds in a residential district:

1. The local authority shall determine upon the basis of a traffic survey, pursuant to Section 627 of the Vehicle Code, that the prima facie speed limit of 25 MPH is more than what is reasonable or safe.
2. By resolution, the City may declare the proposed prima facie speed limit of 15 or 20 MPH whichever is justified as the appropriate speed limit by the traffic survey.
3. Signs shall be erected to indicate the new prima facie speed limit. The sign must indicate that the speed limit is for when school children are present.

Area 2: Distance of 500 feet to 1000 feet from or passing a school building or grounds in a residential district:

1. The local authority shall determine upon the basis of a traffic survey, pursuant to Section 627 of the Vehicle Code, that the prima facie speed limit of 30 MPH is more than what is reasonable or safe.
2. By Resolution, the City may declare the proposed prima facie speed limit of 25 MPH is justified as the appropriate speed limit by the traffic survey.
3. Signs shall be erected to indicate the new prima facie speed limit. The sign must indicate that the speed limit is for when school children are present.

Selection Criteria

Schools selected for implementation of School Safety Zone speed limits: (1) have been awarded funding for infrastructure improvements; (2) are a Safe Routes to School prioritized school; and (3) have streets that have been evaluated to be eligible for reductions in speed limits. Seven of the schools are included in the Top 50 Safe Routes to School prioritized list, and were awarded Active Transportation Program (ATP) SRTS funds. Four were awarded Safe Routes to School Cycle 3 funds in 2011.

Evaluation Results

LADOT performed traffic surveys in accordance with AB 321 and Section 627 of the Vehicle Code. Each eligible school site was found to be in a residential district with two lanes, and the speed limit was posted 30 MPH or less, which meets the primary criteria of AB 321. The results of the survey are summarized in Table 1. Maps indicating the designated street segments by school are included in Attachments D through M.

Table 1: Evaluation of AB 321 Eligibility

School	Council District	ESC ¹	Findings	Eligibility
Charles Maclay Middle School / Sara Coughlin Elementary School	7	North	Due to the number of pedestrians, bicyclists and vehicles at the school during the drop off and pick up and the residential density, it has been determined that 15 MPH When Children Are Present signs should be posted on Borden Avenue and Gain Street.	Yes
Pacoima Elementary School	7	North	Due to the number of pedestrians, bicyclists and vehicles at the school during the drop off and pick up and the residential density, it has been determined that 15 MPH When Children Are Present signs should be posted on Herrick Avenue and Norris Avenue.	Yes
Dolores Huerta Elementary School	9	East	Due to the number of pedestrians, bicyclists and vehicles at the school during the drop off and pick up and the residential density, it has been determined that 15 MPH When Children Are Present signs should be posted on 31 st Street, 32 nd Street and Main Street.	Yes
Menlo Ave Elementary School / Manual Arts High School	9	East	Due to the number of pedestrians, bicyclists and vehicles at the school during the drop off and pick up and the residential density, it has been determined that 15 MPH When Children Are Present signs should be posted on 41 st Drive and 42 nd Street.	Yes
West Vernon Elementary School	9	East	Due to the number of pedestrians, bicyclists and vehicles at the school during the drop off and pick up and the residential density, it has been determined that 15 MPH When Children Are Present signs should be posted on Grand Avenue and 43 rd Street.	Yes

¹ LAUSD Educational Service Center

Del Olmo Elementary School / Virgil Middle School	13	East	Due to the number of pedestrians, bicyclists and vehicles at the school during the drop off and pick up and the residential density, it has been determined that 15 MPH When Children Are Present signs should be posted on 1 st Street, Madison Avenue, New Hampshire Avenue and Juanito Avenue.	Yes
Young Oak Kim Academy / New Covenant Academy	13	East	Due to the number of pedestrians, bicyclists and vehicles at the school during the drop off and pick up and the residential density, it has been determined that 15 MPH When Children Are Present signs should be posted on Shatto Place.	Yes
Hollywood High School	13	West	Due to the number of pedestrians, bicyclists and vehicles at the school during the drop off and pick up and the residential density, it has been determined that 15 MPH When Children Are Present signs should be posted on Orange Drive.	Yes
Selma Avenue Elementary School	13	West	Due to the number of pedestrians, bicyclists and vehicles at the school during the drop off and pick up and the residential density, it has been determined that 15 MPH When Children Are Present signs should be posted on Selma Avenue and Cherokee Avenue.	Yes
Sheridan Street Elementary School	14	East	Due to the number of pedestrians, bicyclists and vehicles at the school during the drop off and pick up and the residential density, it has been determined that 15 MPH When Children Are Present signs should be posted on Sheridan Street.	Yes
Breed Street Elementary School	14	East	Due to the number of pedestrians, bicyclists and vehicles at the school during the drop off and pick up and the residential density, it has been determined that 15 MPH When Children Are Present signs should be posted on Breed Street and Chicago Street.	Yes

Timeline and Materials

Upon approval by the City Council, School Safety Zones will be launched as quickly as possible. Ideally this program will be launched in conjunction with the spring 2016 semester of LAUSD. Implementation will consist of an array of activities including sign installation, outreach and education, and enforcement will begin.

A tentative schedule is listed below:

- February 2016: City Council Adoption of the Resolution.
- February 2016: Baseline speed data collection to support evaluation.
- February 29 – March 5, 2016: Project information and notification distributed to school.
- February 29 – March 5, 2016: Sign installation
- March 7 – March 18: Dissemination of education and speed enforcement warnings period
- March 19 – 27, 2016: LAUSD Spring Break

- March 28 – June 10: Speed enforcement citations period
- June 10, 2016: LAUSD's Last Day of Instruction

Implementing and evaluating these School Safety Zone speed limits will inform recommendations for a citywide program in support of the SRTS Strategic Plan.

FISCAL IMPACT

No direct impact to the City's General Fund is anticipated.

c: Barbara Romero, Office of Mayor Eric Garcetti
Borja Leon, Office of Mayor Eric Garcetti
Chief Charlie Beck, LAPD
Commander Michael Williams, LAPD
Lt. Aaron Pisarzewicz, Los Angeles School Police
Michael Romero, Los Angeles Unified School District

Attachments

- A. Safe Routes to School Strategic Plan Fact Sheet
- B. Assembly Bill 321 (Nava)
- C. California Vehicle Code Section 22358.4
- D. Safety Zone Speed Limit Areas for Pacoima Elementary School and Charles Maclay Middle School
- E. Safety Zone Speed Limit Areas for Dolores Huerta Elementary School
- F. Safety Zone Speed Limit Areas for Menlo Avenue and West Vernon Elementary Schools
- G. Safety Zone Speed Limit Areas for Frank Del Olmo Elementary School and Virgil Middle School
- H. Safety Zone Speed Limit Areas for Young Oak Kim Academy
- I. Safety Zone Speed Limit Areas for Hollywood High School and Selma Avenue Elementary School
- J. Safety Zone Speed Limit Areas for Breed Street and Sheridan Street Elementary Schools