2000 Main Street,
Huntington Beach, CA
92648

City of Huntington Beach

File #: 21-805 **MEETING DATE:** 11/2/2021

REQUEST FOR CITY COUNCIL ACTION

SUBMITTED TO: Honorable Mayor and City Council Members

SUBMITTED BY: Oliver Chi, City Manager

PREPARED BY: Sean Crumby, PE, Director of Public Works

Subject:
Adopt Ordinance No. 4237 amending Huntington Beach Municipal Code Chapter 10.12 relating to speed limits on Atlanta Avenue between Huntington Street and Beach Boulevard - Approved for introduction 10/19/2021, Vote: 6-0-1 (Peterson-Absent)

Statement of Issue:
Ordinance No. 4237 approved for introduction on October 19, 2021, requires adoption.

Financial Impact:
None. Funding for the implementation of the recommended speed limits is included in the Public Works Department operating budget.

Recommended Action:
Adopt Ordinance No. 4237, "An Ordinance of the City of Huntington Beach Amending Chapter 10.12.080 of the Huntington Beach Municipal Code Relating to Speed Limits."

Alternative Action(s):
Adopt posted speed limits different from those recommended and forgo enforcement using speed-measuring devices for the updated speed limits on Atlanta Avenue from Huntington Street to Beach Boulevard.

Analysis:
When roadway conditions undergo significant changes, an updated evaluation following State procedures is required to post enforceable speed limits on those roadways. Improvements were recently completed on Atlanta Avenue between Huntington Street and Delaware Street, adding an additional eastbound vehicle lane and eastbound bike lane along with new sidewalk on the south side. Due to these changes in roadway conditions, reevaluation of the speed limit is required to continue enforcement.

City staff has performed the three required elements used to establish posted speed limits in accordance with procedures set forth by the State of California. All speed limits shall be established in conformance with the State adopted procedures in order to gain legal support for enforcement of

the posted speed limit. The three elements used to establish speed limits are:

1) Sample the existing travel speeds at representative locations within the roadway segment.
2) Review accident history.
3) Review the street segment to identify roadway characteristics and conditions that may not be readily apparent to motorists.

The review of travel speeds is used to establish a baseline speed limit for a roadway segment. Per California Standards, the posted speed limit is established at the nearest five mile per hour (5 mph) increment of the 85th percentile speed of free-flowing traffic, except as shown in the two options below:

1. The posted speed may be reduced by 5 mph from the nearest 5 mph increment of the 85th percentile speed of free-flowing traffic. Documentation is required of the conditions and justification for the lower speed limit.
2. For cases in which the nearest 5 mph increment of the 85th percentile would require rounding up, then the speed limit may be rounded down to the nearest 5 mph increment below the 85th percentile speed, if no further reduction is used.

Case law has shown the courts will not support any speed limit posting that appears to be arbitrary. In other words, without demonstrated technical information to support the postings. To ensure consistency in establishing speed limits, the State has established very specific procedures, requirements and standards under which all speed limits are to be established. Any speed limit found by the courts to be inconsistent with approved requirements is deemed a “speed trap” and therefore not enforceable.

The current speed limits on Atlanta Avenue between 1st Street and Beach Boulevard Street are 35 miles per hour between 1st Street and Delaware Street, and 40 miles per hour between Delaware Street to Beach Boulevard. Based on the study conducted in accordance with State requirements, the recommended update is a 40 mile per hour speed limit on Atlanta Avenue between Huntington Street to Beach Boulevard. The 35 mile per hour speed limit on Atlanta between 1st Street and Huntington Street will remain. Attachment 1 shows a diagram of the current and recommended updated speed limits.

Attachment 2 documents that staff identified roadway characteristics within Atlanta Avenue between Huntington Street and Beach Boulevard that may not be readily apparent to motorists. Due to these conditions, posting near the 85th percentile speed (45 mph) may not be reasonable and prudent to facilitate the orderly flow of traffic. Documentation of the roadway conditions was provided to use the aforementioned option to reduce the speed limit 5 mph from the nearest 5 mph increment of the 85th percentile speed for a posted speed limit of 40 miles per hour. This speed limit posting matches the current speed limit on Atlanta Avenue east of Delaware Street. Attachment 3 presents the Legislative Draft of the recommended ordinance adopting the speed limit on Atlanta Avenue between Huntington Street and Beach Boulevard. Attachment 4 shows Ordinance No. 4237 amending the enumerated speed limits in Municipal Code Section 10.12.080.

Environmental Status:
None required.

Strategic Plan Goal:
Enhance and maintain public safety.

Attachment(s):
1. Atlanta Avenue Speed Limits
2. Speed Survey Summary Sheets
3. Legislative Draft of Municipal Code Section 10.12.080
4. Ordinance 4237, “An Ordinance of the City of Huntington Beach Amending Chapter 10.12.080 of the Huntington Beach Municipal Code Relating to Speed Limits”