

RESOLUTION NO. RS2023-XXX

A resolution to amend Ordinance No. BL2021-594 to authorize lowering the speed limit on streets designated as local streets on the Major and Collector Street Plan within the General Services District from 30 miles per hour to 25 miles per hour, allowing exceptions to that general reduction to be granted by the Metropolitan Traffic and Parking Commission, and amending Section 12.20.020 of the Metropolitan Code.

WHEREAS, Ordinance No. BL 2021-594, approved February 3, 2021, authorized lowering the speed limit on streets designated as local streets on the Major and Collector Street Plan within the Urban Services District from 30 miles per hour to 25 miles per hour; and,

WHEREAS, Tennessee Code Annotated subsections 55-8-153(c)(2) and (d) allow the legislative bodies of municipalities and counties to prescribe lower speed limits within certain areas, zones, streets, or roads within their jurisdictions; and,

WHEREAS, Metropolitan Charter Section 11.904 authorizes the adoption of traffic regulations establishing speed zones upon Metropolitan streets and roads by the Metropolitan Traffic and Parking Commission; and,

WHEREAS, lowering the speed limit on streets designated as local streets on the Major and Collector Street Plan within the General Services District from 30 miles per hour to 25 miles per hour has been proposed to increase safety for pedestrians, cyclists and motorists; and,

WHEREAS, at its meeting on April 10, 2023, the Metropolitan Traffic and Parking Commission passed a motion approving this resolution; and,

WHEREAS, to the extent there is a need to make exceptions to the general speed limit reduction accomplished by the Neighborhood Speed Limit Reduction Project, and to allow the speed limit to remain at a speed other than 25 miles per hour in some locations, it is advisable for the Metropolitan Traffic and Parking Commission to be authorized to approve such exceptions; and,

WHEREAS, NDOT's recent review of speed data has revealed a 3.5 mph drop in speed along local streets in the USD where posted speed limits were reduced from 30 mph to 25 mph compared to local streets in the GSD that retained their 30 mph posted speed limit. The 3.5 mph drop (23.3 MPH USD, 26.8 MPH GSD) is based on an average of the most commonly observed vehicle speeds traveled; and,

WHEREAS, a federal study of pedestrian/vehicle crashes in the US shows that collisions at an impact speed of 23 miles per hour are half as likely to cause pedestrians severe injury or death as collisions at 31 miles per hour; and

WHEREAS, Section 12.20.020.A. of the Metropolitan Code currently provides for the speed limit in an area within the General Services District (GSD) where there is not a duly authorized and posted speed limit sign to be 30 miles per hour; and,

WHEREAS, it is further advisable, in conjunction with the Neighborhood Speed Limit Reduction Project, to lower the speed limit of 30 miles per hour on local streets in the GSD, specified in Section 12.20.020.A. to 25 miles per hour.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ENACTED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE METROPOLITAN GOVERNMENT OF NASHVILLE AND DAVIDSON COUNTY:

Section 1. Speed limits on streets designated as local streets on the Major and Collector Street Plan within the General Services District in urban and suburban neighborhoods are hereby generally lowered from 30 miles per hour to 25 miles per hour, except for those for which exceptions are made pursuant to the process, and the Metropolitan Traffic and Parking Commission and its staff are hereby authorized to post appropriate signage indicating the speed limit reduction.

Section 2. Authority is retained by the Metropolitan Traffic and Parking Commission to officially adopt the above-referenced general speed limit reduction as well as any exceptions to the speed limit reduction, to allow the speed limit to remain at a speed other than 25 miles per hour in some locations. Upon receipt of a request for such an exception, the Commission shall hold a noticed public hearing on the request, and may grant an exception to the general speed limit reduction if the testimony at the public hearing supports it. Upon adoption of such an exception by the Commission, the Commission and its staff shall post or retain appropriate speed limit signage, accordingly.

Section 3. Section 12.20.020.A. of the Metropolitan Code of Laws is hereby amended by deleting it in its entirety, and replacing it with the following: A. Twenty-five miles per hour within the Urban Services District and General Services District urban and suburban neighborhood local street network;

Section 4. Amendments to this legislation shall be approved by resolution.

Section 5. This ordinance shall take effect from and after its final passage, the welfare of The Metropolitan Government of Nashville and Davidson County requiring it.

RECOMMENDED BY:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Diana Alarcon, Director  
Nashville Department of Transportation  
and Multimodal Infrastructure

INTRODUCED BY:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

APPROVED AS TO THE  
AVAILABILITY OF FUNDS:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Kelly Flannery, Director

\_\_\_\_\_  
Council Members

Department of Finance

APPROVED AS TO FORM

AND LEGALITY:

---

Assistant Metropolitan Attorney

### Analysis

This ordinance, as amended, reduces the speed limit on local streets on the Major and Collector Street Plan within the General Services District (GSD) from 30 miles per hour to 25 miles per hour. Section 11.904 of the Metro Charter grants the power and authority to the Metro Traffic and Parking Commission, as part of the traffic regulations, to establish “speed zones” upon Metro streets and roads based upon the findings of the commission. T.C.A. § 55-8-153 authorizes local legislative bodies to prescribe lower speed limits within certain areas, zones, streets, or roads within their jurisdictions. The Neighborhood Speed Limit Reduction Project recommended lowering the speed limit on streets designated as local streets on the Major and Collector Street Plan within the Urban Services District from 30 miles per hour to 25 miles per hour to increase safety for pedestrians, cyclists, and motorists. The Traffic and Parking Commission approved the Neighborhood Speed Limit Reduction Project in November 2019.

In addition to lowering the speed limit on local streets, this resolution provides that the Traffic and Parking Commission will retain the authority to grant exceptions to the reduced speed limit for certain roads after holding a public hearing on the requested exception if the testimony at the public hearing supports it.

A link showing a list of the streets that would be subject to the 25 mph restriction has previously been provided to the Council and can be found [\(INSERT WEBSITE LINK\)](#)

Future amendments to this ordinance could be approved by resolution.

The Traffic and Parking Commission approved this resolution at the April 10, 2023 meeting.

*Fiscal Note: The estimated cost to Metro for the replacement of speed limit signs is \$75,000, broken down as follows: Parts and materials - \$55,000, labor and overtime - \$10,000, contingency - \$10,000.*