

ORDINANCE NO. BL2019-1492

An ordinance directing the Metropolitan Department of Public Works to complete their analysis for the reduction of vehicular speed limits on neighborhood classified streets, per the Major & Collector Street Plan of Nashville and Davidson County recommended in the 2016 WalknBike Strategic Plan, and to submit a written feasibility report with implementation recommendations to the Metropolitan Council within ninety (90) days hereof.

WHEREAS, the Metropolitan Council recognizes that vehicular speeding in residential areas throughout Nashville and Davidson County poses serious risks to public health and safety and is of significant concern to all citizens; and

WHEREAS, the Metropolitan Council further recognizes that reducing vehicular speed limits can have a demonstrable impact upon safety for both pedestrians and motorists, particularly in residential areas; and

WHEREAS, the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) has concluded that "the relationship between speed and injury severity is consistent and direct. Higher vehicle speeds lead to larger changes in velocity in a crash, and these velocity changes are closely linked to injury severity. This relationship is especially critical for pedestrians involved in a motor vehicle crash, due to their lack of protection."; and

WHEREAS, the NTSB has further found that speed limit reductions on residential streets below 30 mph produces statistically significant speed decreases; and

WHEREAS, the NTSB has examined additional research by the American Automobile Association's Foundation for Traffic Safety, wherein eighty percent (80%) of respondents stated their belief that drivers speeding on residential streets pose a very serious to somewhat serious threat to personal safety; and

WHEREAS, the Transport Research Laboratory has estimated that each one (1) mph speed reduction in average traffic provides a reduction of six percent (6%) in vehicle accidents for urban main roads and residential roads with low average speeds; and

WHEREAS, the Vision Zero Network reports that the number of people walking that will survive being struck by a car driven at 30 mph is 5 out of 10, and that 9 out of 10 will survive when the car is traveling at 20 mph; and

WHEREAS, the Livable Nashville Committee established as one of its Mobility Targets achieving a Vision Zero program goal of 50% reduction in pedestrian traffic fatalities by 2030 with an action plan that included pilot projects lowering speed limits; and

WHEREAS, three geographically distinct neighborhoods implemented pilot projects in 2017 lowering the speed limits to 20 mph on all local streets and demonstrated that the lowered speed limits resulted in lowered vehicular speeds; and further, several of Nashville's early Traffic Calming Neighborhoods have successfully embraced 25 mph speed limits for over 12 years; and

WHEREAS, Section 11.904 of the Metropolitan Charter provides that the Metropolitan Traffic and Parking Commission is authorized to regulate traffic, including "[t]he establishment of speed zones upon metropolitan streets and roads based upon the findings of the commission"; and

WHEREAS, section 12.20.020 of the Metropolitan Code of Laws establishes maximum speed limits in Nashville and Davidson County, but only "[i]n the absence of a posted speed limit sign duly authorized by the traffic and parking commission"; and

WHEREAS, for purposes of achieving comprehensive reductions of speed limits currently enforced for residential streets throughout Nashville and Davidson County, it is appropriate that the Metropolitan Council direct the Metropolitan Department of Public Works to complete a thorough analysis for the reduction of vehicular speed limits on neighborhood classified streets, per the Major & Collector Street Plan of Nashville and Davidson County recommended in the 2016 WalknBike Strategic Plan, and to submit a written feasibility report with implementation recommendations to the Metropolitan Council within ninety (90) days hereof, with the express intent that resulting recommendations be codified through subsequent ordinance; and

WHEREAS, at the request of the Metropolitan Council, the Metropolitan Department of Public Works has been working to improve the neighborhood traffic-calming program and will implement "20 is Plenty" on a case-by-case basis as requested and needed.

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

Section 1. That the Metropolitan Council hereby directs the Metropolitan Department of Public Works to complete a thorough analysis for the reduction of vehicular speed limits on neighborhood classified streets, per the Major & Collector Street Plan of Nashville and Davidson County recommended in the 2016 WalknBike Strategic Plan. Such analysis should be prepared for the general public purpose of safeguarding the health and safety of pedestrians, motorists, and all citizens of Nashville and Davidson County.

Section 2. That the Metropolitan Council hereby further directs the Metropolitan Department of Public Works to submit a written feasibility report with implementation recommendations to the Metropolitan Council within ninety (90) days of the adoption of this ordinance, with the express intent that such recommendations be codified through subsequent ordinance.

Section 3. Be it further enacted, that this ordinance take effect immediately after its passage, the welfare of The Metropolitan Government of Nashville and Davidson County requiring it.

INTRODUCED BY:

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