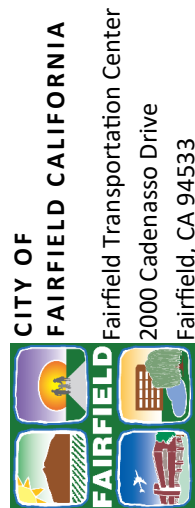


of officers since most of the traffic is voluntarily moving at the posted speed. Blatant speeders are easily spotted, safe drivers are not penalized, and patrol officers aren't asked to enforce and defend unrealistic and arbitrary speed limits. Arbitrary setting of speed limits is against the law and create a "Speed Trap" as defined in the California Vehicle Code.

Most agencies renew Engineering and Traffic Surveys once every 5 years, but can be extended to 7 years and even as much as 10 years if roadway conditions have not changed and **all** the officers have completed proper radar certification/training.

For more information on various programs, visit the City of Fairfield's website.

www.fairfield.ca.gov



Public Works Department



Traffic/Transportation Engineering

Speed Limits

Updated 12/2/2021



CITY OF
FAIRFIELD
CALIFORNIA

How are speed limits established?

All fifty states base their speed regulations on the Basic Speed Law; “No person shall drive a vehicle at a speed greater than what is reasonable or prudent and in no event at a speed which endangers the safety of persons or property.”

Under California law, the maximum speed limit in urban areas is 55 MPH on 2 lane undivided roads and 65 MPH on divided or multilane roads. All other speed limits are called prima facie limits, which are considered by law to be safe and prudent under normal conditions.

Certain prima facie limits are pre-established by State law within the California Vehicle Code (CVC) without the requirement of an engineering and traffic survey (ET&S). These include the 25 MPH speed limit in the business and residential districts, and school zones when children are present.



Residential districts are considered when there are street fronted homes, less than or equal to 40 feet curb to curb, and that there are at least 13 homes along one side of a ¼ mile street segment or 16 along both sides of the same street. The prima facie of 15 MPH speed limit is also established in alleys or; at intersections and railroad crossings, where visibility is very limited. These speed limits do not need to be posted to be enforced.

Speed limits between 25 and 65 MPH, which are adopted by the City Council, are established on the basis of an E&TS. These surveys include an analysis of roadway conditions at impeded free flow conditions, crash records, 10 mph pace (speed range where majority of the motorists drive at), and a sampling of the prevailing speed of traffic as required by law. The state provides a standard for each local agency to follow. The method for establishing speed limits is to set the speed limit at which 85% of the drivers drive. From there, the speeds are rounded the nearest 5 mph increment and can be lowered one 5 mph increment based on roadway conditions not readily apparent to drivers such



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as where the crash rate of the location is greater than the statewide average for similar roads, like that of a two lane roadway or 2 land divided roadway. This standard of application creates uniformity across jurisdictional boundaries. Research has shown that the 85% speed is the speed where the chance to be in a crash is the lowest.

Traffic flowing at a uniform speed results in increased safety and fewer collisions. Drivers are less impatient, pass less often, and minimize rear end type collisions.

