

**OFFICE OF THE CITY MANAGER
DES MOINES, IOWA**

**CITY COUNCIL COMMUNICATION 96-414
SEPTEMBER 23, 1996 AGENDA**

SUBJECT:	TYPE:	SUBMITTED BY:
EAST UNIVERSITY AVENUE SPEED LIMIT REVISION	◆ RESOLUTION ORDINANCE RECEIVE/FILE	JAMES THOMPSON TRAFFIC AND TRANSPORTATION DIRECTOR

SYNOPSIS —

The following request for a speed limit revision on East University Avenue between East 35th Street and the East City Limits has been reviewed by staff and is recommended for approval.

FISCAL IMPACT —

N/A

RECOMMENDATION —

Refer to the Legal Department for preparation of ordinance revisions.

BACKGROUND —

In response to a serious motorcycle accident that occurred at the intersection of East University Avenue and Williams Street, last July the Iowa Department of Transportation (IDOT) agreed to review the existing 45 mph speed limit on East University Avenue. On August 9, 1996, there was a fatal accident at the same location, also involving a left-turning vehicle from University Avenue being struck by an oncoming motorist. This intersection has averaged 15 accidents per year over the past five-year period.

Following these two recent accidents, IDOT installed additional speed limit signs, along with accompanying red flags, to draw the motorists attention to the speed limit. The City also installed a flashing yellow beacon above the speed limit sign for westbound traffic entering the City Limits. A major improvement is planned for the intersection of East University and Williams, including left-turning lanes on University, with construction scheduled for spring 1997.

On September 13, 1996, the City received a recommendation from IDOT that the current speed limit be reduced to 40 mph because of the accident experience along this section of roadway. A copy of this correspondence is attached. Staff concurs with this recommendation.

At their September 17, 1996 meeting, the Traffic Safety Committee also concurred that the speed limit on East University Avenue (Iowa 163) from East 35th Street to the East City Limits be lowered from 45 mph to 40 mph.

The following modification to the Municipal Code will place this speed limit into effect:

SEC. 27-830. EAST UNIVERSITY AVENUE.

East University Avenue, from East Thirty-fifth Street to the East City Limits, ~~45~~ 40 miles per hour.

Attachments



Iowa Department of Transportation

Area Maintenance Office
12493 University Avenue
Clive, Iowa 50325-8667

515-225-2349
FAX: 225-2769

Jim Thompson, Director
Traffic and Transportation
City of Des Moines
Armory Building
602 E. 1st Street
Des Moines, Iowa 50309-1881

September 13, 1996

Ref: 451

Dear Mr. Thompson,

Please find enclosed an approved application to install and maintain a flashing yellow beacon. This beacon would be installed on the 45 mph sign located at the ~~west~~ city limits for westbound traffic. ^{EAST}

On August 19, 1996 there were two additional speed limit signs installed eastbound west of Williams Street. A westbound 45 mph speed limit sign that was located east of Williams street was relocated to west of Williams.

Also on August 19 there were 5 speed limit signs marked with red flags at the following locations;

1. Westbound 45 mph sign at the city limits
2. Westbound 45 mph sign west of Williams Street
3. Westbound at the first 35 mph sign
4. Eastbound at a new sign 1500 feet west of Williams Street
5. Eastbound at a new sign 800 feet west of Williams Street.

The Iowa DOT also completed a speed study between E. 33rd Street and the ECL of the City of Des Moines. I have enclosed a copy of the speed study map for your review.

As you can see the study shows the prevailing speed to be at or above the posted speed limit of 35 mph or 45 mph respectively. The accompanying data sheets indicate that the 40 mph speed is complied with from 15 to 51 percent of the time. Also tested was the pace speed for all traffic. Most runs indicated a speed greater then 40 but many times less than 45.

Based on the study and on recent accidents in the area,
we would recommend that the existing 45 mph zone be
reduced to 40 mph.

Please review this information and recommendation and let
me know if you concur. We will then begin the process to
reflect the change from 45 to 40 mph.

E 35th + ECL

Sincerely



Cy Quick, P.E.
Area Maintenance Engineer

cc: D.L.Stevens
R.L.Laudencia-CITC