

Meeting Agendas/Info

CITY COUNCIL COMMUNICATION:

ITEM _____

OFFICE OF THE CITY MANAGER CITY OF DES MOINES, IOWA

01-262

SYNOPSIS -

AGENDA:

Communication from the City Manager regarding a review of the speed limit on Grand Avenue between 56th and 63rd Streets.

MAY 21, 2001

FISCAL IMPACT -

SUBJECT:

N/A

SPEED LIMIT
REVIEW-GRAND
AVENUE BETWEEN
56TH AND 63RD
STREETS

RECOMMENDATION -

Receive and file.

TYPE:

BACKGROUND -

RESOLUTION
ORDINANCE
RECEIVE/FILE

At the March 26, 2001 meeting, City Council received a request from Council Member Chris Hensley to review the speed limit on Grand Avenue between 56th and 63rd Streets, and to give consideration to lowering the speed limit from 35 miles per hour (mph) to 30 mph. By Roll Call

SUBMITTED BY:

No. 01-843, City Council referred this item to the Traffic Safety Committee for review and recommendation.

FLOYD BENTZ, P.E.
CITY ENGINEER

This portion of Grand Avenue, which is one-half mile in length, was reconstructed and widened with 12-foot lanes in 1988 and is a four-lane arterial facility with an additional two-way left-turn lane through the commercially developed area between 59th and 63rd Streets. On Grand Avenue east of 56th Street, there are narrower lane widths than the segment between 56th and 63rd Streets, and the speed limit is 30 mph. There are also a number of schools and churches along this section. West of 63rd Street, in West Des Moines, the speed limit on Grand Avenue is 35 mph.

Staff reviewed this request, including obtaining speed data and an accident summary. The Police Department placed one of the City's

"speed trailers" in the 5900 block of Grand Avenue on April 26, 2001. Data was collected from the trailer which indicated that the average speed was 33 mph, with the 85th percentile speed being 37 mph. It should be noted that data collected from the speed trailer is expected to be somewhat lower than actual conditions, since drivers are more aware of their speed as they approach the trailer. However, these speeds are what staff would expect for a four-lane arterial facility.

The accident history for the five-year period between 1994-1998 for this section of Grand Avenue indicates an average of 14 accidents per year, and a rate of 517 accidents per 100 million vehicle-miles. The statewide average for municipal primary roadways is 467 accidents per 100 million vehicle-miles. This does not include the accidents at the intersection of 63rd Street and Grand Avenue.

The existing 35 mph speed limit on this portion of Grand Avenue is consistent with other similar arterial facilities within Des Moines with 12-foot lanes. Examples of similar four-lane arterial streets with 35 mph speed limits are Douglas/Euclid Avenues, Hickman Road, East 14th Street, Hubbell Avenue, East University Avenue, and Indianola Avenue.

At their May 8, 2001 meeting, the Traffic Safety Committee concurred with the above analysis and recommended that the current 35 mph speed limit be retained for this section of Grand Avenue.
