



**CITY OF NORMAN, OK  
STAFF REPORT**

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**MEETING DATE:** 10/12/2021

**REQUESTER:** Katherine Coffin

**PRESENTER:** David Riesland, Transportation Engineer

**ITEM TITLE:** CONSIDERATION OF ADOPTION, ACCEPTANCE, REJECTION, AMENDMENT, AND/OR POSTPONEMENT OF RESOLUTION R-2122-44: A RESOLUTION OF THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF NORMAN, OKLAHOMA, SUPPORTING THE OKLAHOMA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION'S PROPOSED MODIFICATIONS TO POSTED SPEED LIMITS ON INTERSTATE 35 THROUGH THE CITY OF NORMAN

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**BACKGROUND:**

The Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) has been adopted by the City of Norman Code of Ordinances as the city's Traffic Code. The MUTCD contains language specific to the establishment and posting of speed limits on streets and highways. Specifically, the MUTCD states that Speed zones (other than statutory speed limits) shall only be established on the basis of an engineering study that has been performed in accordance with traffic engineering practices. The engineering study shall include an analysis of the current speed distribution of free-flowing vehicles. The policy within the City of Norman has been to conduct the appropriate engineering study in order to justify changing an existing posted speed limit. This policy has been adhered to strictly. However, there are some roadways within the Norman city limits, such as Interstate 35, State Highway 9, and US Highway 77 that do not fall within the jurisdiction of the City of Norman. Rather, these three specific roadways fall under the jurisdiction of the Oklahoma Department of Transportation (ODOT).

ODOT follows a procedure very similar to that utilized for City of Norman maintained streets and roadways. In this case, the engineering study is performed by either the Division 3 Traffic Engineer or the Traffic Division at ODOT Headquarters. Recently, ODOT conducted an engineering study to evaluate the existing posted speed limits on Interstate 35 through Norman. Once the study is completed, the City is contacted for a letter of support or a resolution in support of the proposed speed limit change. Once the support from Norman is obtained, ODOT will then proceed to the Oklahoma Transportation Commission to receive ultimate approval for the proposed change based upon the support received from each entity including Norman.

**DISCUSSION:**

Upon conclusion of the engineering study, ODOT's conclusion was that existing posted speed limits would require a number of revisions. In the northbound direction, the posted speed limit

would be reduced from 70 mph to 65 mph just south of the State Highway 9 West interchange. This limit would be carried through Norman and Moore where it is further reduced to 60 mph at the Oklahoma County Line. For southbound traffic, the posted speed limit would maintain the existing 65 mph speed limit from the Oklahoma County Line through Moore. Upon reaching the boundary between Moore and Norman, the existing 60 mph speed limit would be increased to 65 mph. This limit would remain in effect until reaching a point just south of the State Highway 9 West interchange. A map of the corridor showing the proposed changes is attached. This map also shows the existing speed limits on Interstate 35 in the area which shows numerous changes in both directions, both up and down, that motorists must endure in the study area.

The Resolution with the Agenda Item is required by ODOT in order to advance their request for the proposed change to the Oklahoma Transportation Commission. A copy of the draft Agenda Item that ODOT will send to the Oklahoma Transportation Commission is also attached. Staff has verified that no other action is required on the part of the City of Norman to effect this proposed change.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

Staff recommends approval of Resolution R-2122-44 showing City of Norman support for the proposed speed limit changes on Interstate 35 through Norman. The result will be a more consistent drive for motorists without constant, seemingly arbitrary changes to the posted speed limit.