

Date: March 19, 2024

To: Honorable Mayor and City Council

From: Councilwoman Megan Kerr, Fifth Council District
Councilwoman Suely Saro, Sixth Council District

Subject: **Recommendation to develop a Speed Safety System Use Policy and a Speed Safety System Impact Report**

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation to request the City Manager to work with the Public Works Department and relevant departments to begin the process in developing a Speed Safety System Use Policy, a Speed Safety System Impact Report, and proposal for an automated Speed Safety System Pilot Program pursuant to AB 645¹ to City Council within 45 days.

DISCUSSION

Over the past few years, Long Beach has experienced a troubling increase in pedestrian fatalities due to drivers not adhering to speed limits and exhibiting unsafe driving behavior in areas with significant foot traffic. These incidents often occur along popular business corridors, where pedestrians are more likely to be present. Traditional traffic enforcement measures and reduction in speed limits have proven insufficient to address the problem, resulting in a need to explore alternative solutions.

Automated traffic enforcement systems have been shown to effectively reduce traffic violations and improve overall traffic safety. By leveraging technology such as speed cameras and other automated devices, these systems can efficiently detect and penalize traffic law violators. The implementation of such a system in Long Beach could significantly enhance pedestrian safety and discourage dangerous driving behaviors.

However, it is crucial to recognize that automated traffic enforcement systems and related financial penalties associated with traffic citations have the potential to disproportionately harm people living on low income. Therefore, any proposal should consider the impact of citing on these residents and suggest measures to mitigate potential negative consequences.

¹ AB 645, as amended, Friedman. Vehicles: speed safety system pilot program.
https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billNavClient.xhtml?bill_id=202320240AB645

In May 2016, the City Council adopted a resolution to pursue the Vision Zero goal to eliminate all traffic fatalities and severe injuries while increasing safe, healthy, and equitable mobility for all. This approach focuses on street design, education, and policy changes to create a safer environment for pedestrians, cyclists, and drivers. The implementation of this approach resulted in the Safe Streets Long Beach program, which was presented to the City Council in July, 2020. Seven years after the commitment to the Vision Zero goal, communications to City Council District offices around speeding and traffic safety have only increased. While we work to achieve the design, goals associated with the Safe Streets Long Beach action plan, we need to work concurrently on enhanced enforcement as it becomes more apparent that residents will not self-correct.

The passage of Assembly Bill 645² authorized the City of Long Beach, among others, to establish a Speed Safety System Pilot Program. This law requires Long Beach to adopt a Speed Safety System Use Policy and a Speed Safety System Impact Report before implementing the program and requires the City to engage in a public information campaign at least 30 days before implementation of the program, including information relating to when and where the systems would begin detecting violations and where the systems would be utilized. At the November 14, 2023, meeting of the city's Mobility, Ports, and Infrastructure Committee, the staff report by the Public Works Department and City Manager's Office on Assembly Bill 645 recommended a said policy and report be brought before City Council.³

This item requests the City Manager work closely with the Public Works Department and other relevant stakeholders to research and develop a proposal for a Speed Safety System Pilot Program, including a Speed Safety System Use Policy and a Speed Safety System Impact Report, targeting areas with high foot traffic along popular business corridors, schools, and residential areas.

The City Manager shall provide the City Council with 45 days of the adoption of this agenda item.

This matter has been reviewed by Budget Development Officer Jennifer Rodriguez on March 8, 2024.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation requests the City Manager work with Public Works Department and other relevant stakeholders to develop a Speed Safety System Use Policy, a Speed Safety System Impact Report, and proposal for an automated Speed Safety System Pilot Program pursuant to AB 645 to City Council within 45 days. This Recommendation is anticipated to require a minimal impact on staff hours beyond the normal budgeted scope of duties and is expected to have a minimal impact on existing City Council priorities. Actual implementation and management of a Speed Safety System is anticipated to require a significant level of staff hours beyond the normal budgeted scope of duties and have a significant impact on meeting other City Council priorities.

² AB 645, as amended, Friedman. Vehicles: speed safety system pilot program.

https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billNavClient.xhtml?bill_id=202320240AB645

³ <https://longbeach.primegov.com/Portal/viewer?id=0&type=7&uid=44a65e3c-9992-470f-ae73-c99e7f801e64>

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SUGGESTED ACTION

Approve recommendation.

Respectfully submitted,

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Megan Kerr, Councilwoman, Fifth District

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Suely Saro", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Suely Saro, Councilwoman, Sixth District