

REPORT TO THE CITY COUNCIL



DATE: June 5, 2018

TITLE: Ordinance Adding Chapter 12.24 to the Desert Hot Springs Municipal Code to Establish a Safety Enhancement Zone

Prepared by: Dale Mondary, Chief of Police

Reviewed by: Jennifer Mizrahi, City Attorney

Daniel Porras, Community Development Director

RECOMMENDATION

- 1) Approve First Reading, read by title only, "An Ordinance of the City Council of the City of Desert Hot Springs, California, adding Chapter 12.24 "Safety Enhancement Zones" of Title 12 "Streets, Sidewalks, and Public Places" of the Desert Hot Springs Municipal Code to establish Safety Enhancement Zones and increase fines and penalties for Municipal Code violations in areas designated as a Safety Enhancement Zone; and
- 2) Adopt a Resolution of the City Council approving the Palm Drive Corridor between Pierson Boulevard and Camino Aventura as a Safety Enhancement Zone, which would take effect upon the effective date of the Ordinance.

BACKGROUND

Since 2003, the City of Desert Hot Springs has experienced an increase in traffic collisions, specifically fatal traffic collisions, involving vehicle vs. vehicle, vehicle vs. bicyclist and vehicle vs. pedestrian. In 2016, a safety analysis report showed that between years 2003-2012, there were 18 bicycle collisions and 52 pedestrian collisions that occurred in the City. In 2016, there were 7 fatal traffic collisions and in 2017 there were 8 fatal traffic collisions. Since 2007, there has been 12 fatal traffic collisions on Palm Drive. Specifically, the collisions occurred between Pierson Boulevard and Camino Aventura. The intersection of Palm Drive and Camino Aventura is controlled by one stop sign that controls west bound traffic at Camino Aventura. In several public comment periods of recent City Council meetings, residents raised concerns of speeding motorists during early and afternoon hours while children are walking to and from school.

In the 2016 City of Desert Hot Springs Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan, statistics show that the faster a vehicle is traveling, the survivability rate of a pedestrian decreases. Out of the 10 pedestrians that were struck by vehicles traveling at or below 20 mph, 9 survived. Additionally, out of the 10 pedestrians that were struck by vehicles traveling at or below 30 mph, 5 survived. Lastly, out of the 10 pedestrians that were struck by vehicles traveling at or below 40 mph, only 1 survived.

DISCUSSION:

Ordinance - As part of a comprehensive approach by the City of Desert Hot Springs to prevent traffic collisions and improve pedestrian safety, the proposed is an enabling Ordinance allowing the City Council to establish Safety Enhancement Zones within the City via Resolution, upon adoption of certain findings. The proposed Ordinance further authorizes the City to conduct reviews of the effects of safety zones in order to measure their effectiveness. These periodic reviews allow the City to determine whether a Safety Enhancement Zone is no longer needed, whether the zone should be expanded, or whether additional safety zones should be created. The proposed Ordinance grants the City another tool to address traffic safety and the flexibility to respond to community needs.

Resolution – The Resolution designates a Safety Enhancement Zone on Palm Drive (between Two Bunch Palms Trail and Camino Aventura) and it allows fines to be doubled when violations

occur within this Safety Enhancement Zone. By enacting a Safety Enhancement Zone, motorists will likely reduce their speed to avoid the double fines. Pedestrians will more likely avoid collisions or survive lower speed collisions as a result. Over the long term, the overall traffic safety of the City should improve.

FISCAL IMPACT

None at this time.

EXHIBIT(S)

- 1) Draft Ordinance
- 2) Draft Resolution