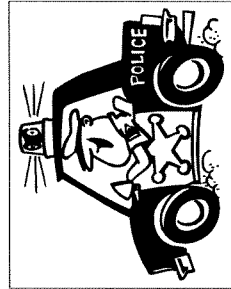


## ***Is the use of the mobile radar speed display panel an effective tool?***

The Thousand Oaks Police Department has an operational mobile radar speed display panel to help deter speeding throughout areas of the City. The radar speed display panels are used where speeding concerns are the greatest, both as a visual deterrent to speeding and to help raise neighborhood awareness of speeding concerns.

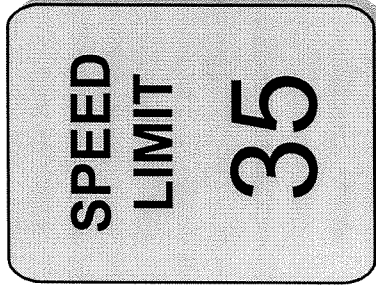
## ***What about increasing the number and size of speed limit signs?***

Increasing the number of speed limit signs is somewhat effective during the first two months of installation because larger signs are used and flags attract attention. However, after motorists become aware of the signs, effectiveness is reduced and typically drivers begin to ignore the signs. Additional signs may reduce the aesthetic qualities of neighborhoods and residents may be opposed, especially in newer tracts.



In compliance with the AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT, those needing special assistance to read this publication should contact the Building Division at (805) 449-2500. Notification will enable the City to make reasonable arrangements to ensure accessibility to the information in this publication.

# Speed Limits



City of Thousand Oaks  
Public Works Department  
(805) 449-2400



### **How are speed limits set?**

The California Vehicle Code is the governing authority on speed limits. Speed limits that are set **by law** include the following:

- 15 mph at railroad crossings with restricted visibility, in any alley, and at uncontrolled intersections with restricted visibility.
- 25 mph on residential streets, streets in business districts unless posted otherwise, streets adjacent to school zones when children are present, and streets adjacent to senior centers, if posted.
- 65 mph maximum on most State and Federal highways.

### **How are other speed limits set?**

All other speed limits (i.e., 30, 35, 40, 45, 50 and 55 mph) are established based upon the actual measured speed of traffic which is determined by a Traffic Engineering Survey. Traffic Engineers and the Police Department continuously monitor more than 240 road segments in Thousand Oaks to ensure that speed limits are properly set.

### **Who conducts speed surveys and how often are they performed?**

City staff perform and are certified to conduct speed surveys. The City Traffic Engineer is required to sign all surveys attesting to their accuracy, and the City

Council approves all speed limits as set forth in the Municipal Code. Speed surveys are conducted every five years. If major road improvements, such as new striping, widening, etc., are completed before the five-year period, a new survey is conducted to reflect the new road conditions.

### **Will lowering the speed limit encourage motorists to slow down?**

Lowering the posted speed limit 5 mph below the speed at which most motorists are driving is referred to as “down zoning”. This practice is generally accepted by the public, however, research has shown that down zoning rarely causes drivers to slow down. Traffic studies reflect that motorists are not significantly influenced by posted speed limit signs; rather, the majority of motorists (85 percent) will drive at a speed that is reasonable, prudent, and safe based on the apparent roadway and traffic conditions.

In certain instances, the courts have allowed the lowering of speed limits if there is sufficient justification. The basis for justification includes road conditions not readily apparent to the driver such as, accident records, driveways hidden from view, sight distance restrictions, a high percentage of pedestrians hidden from view, etc.

### **What is a “speed trap”?**

A “speed trap” occurs when the posted speed limit is arbitrarily set too low to comply with the speed limit law. California

courts have held that speed traps are unlawful, making the posted speed limit essentially unenforceable. For this reason, a Traffic Engineering Survey is conducted to set speed limits for each street in the City that falls within the 25 to 55 mph category.

There are no speed traps in Thousand Oaks. City Traffic Engineers ensure that all speed limits are accurate and set close to the actual measured speed of most vehicles on the road.

### **What about installing stop signs to force motorists to slow down?**

It is a common misconception that stop signs are used for speed control. The State Traffic Manual strongly discourages the use of stop signs for speed control purposes. The most effective deterrent to speeding is increased police enforcement. An encounter with the police is the most effective control for speeders.

