

# Greensboro Department of Transportation Speed Zone Policy & Guidelines

## Speed Limit Policy

In accordance with NC General Statute 20-141, municipal speed limits are established at 35 mph unless otherwise posted. Speed limits that differ from this are established and posted as necessary for the purpose of indicating a safe, consistent and reasonable speed to protect all roadway users. Speed limits are established in accordance with Chapter 16 of the Greensboro Code of Ordinances covering “Motor Vehicles and Traffic” and in accordance with all other local, state and federal requirements and guidelines.

All streets maintained by the City of Greensboro are subject to this policy. Speed limits on state maintained streets are established by the North Carolina Department of Transportation. The department will coordinate efforts with NCDOT to revise speed limits on state maintained streets within the city limits.

## Guidelines for Establishing Speed Limits

The department manages speed limits by considering functional classification of the roadway, traffic volumes and roadway context to determine the appropriate level of evaluation. A speed limit study may be initiated by the Department or at the request of citizens. The City’s Thoroughfare Plan and Collector Street Plan establish street classifications. Streets that are designated as “Local” streets may be posted below the statutory speed limit of 35 mph without an engineering investigation. All other streets require a documented engineering investigation which includes a speed study and also considers other relevant environmental factors.

### Local Streets

When evaluating a speed limit on a local street GDOT will:

- Review crash data to check for any apparent patterns or problems related to speeding traffic.
- Review the street(s) to determine if conditions warrant a speed limit reduction. The following factors will be considered:
  - \* Length of speed zone
  - \* Continuity within the street network
  - \* Traffic patterns
- Identify eligible street(s) and initiate the process to lower the speed limit to 25 mph.

Wherever possible, the Department will coordinate speed limit changes within neighborhoods by studying adjoining streets and making any necessary adjustments at that time.

## **Collectors, Minor and Major Thoroughfares**

When requested to lower the speed limit on a major/minor thoroughfare or collector street GDOT will:

- Educate the customer on the function of collectors and thoroughfares and explain how they differ from local streets.
- Identify the analysis area and determine if an engineering study is appropriate.
- If appropriate, conduct an engineering study considering the following:
  - \* Roadway context
  - \* Vehicle speed and volume study
  - \* Pedestrian and bicycle activity
  - \* Crash data
  - \* Adverse roadway alignment
  - \* Number of lanes
  - \* Presence of a median
  - \* Number and spacing of traffic signals
  - \* Number and spacing of driveways
  - \* Presence and configuration of pedestrian and bicycle facilities
  - \* Presence of on-street parking and level of usage
  - \* Location of street lighting
- A decision will be made based on engineering judgment, the results of the study and recommendations of an expert system such as USLIMITS2 or NCHRP 966.

Actions will include one or more of the following:

- \* Provide police with results of speed study.
- \* Post existing speed limit.
- \* Post a modified speed limit.
- \* Improve any sub-standard items. (Sight obstructions, lighting, etc.)