

BILL NO. 20-073

ORDINANCE NO. 19162

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 18, ARTICLE 5 "SPEED REGULATIONS", OF THE INDEPENDENCE CITY CODE AMENDING SPEED ON STREETS THROUGH SCHOOL ZONES AND SCHOOL CROSSING AREAS.

WHEREAS, this proposed amendment would revise the hours of operations of school flashing beacons in school zones and school crossing areas of Sec.18.05.004 of the City Code and 18.05.003 of the Traffic Schedule to improve driver awareness and support safer school child pedestrian activity, and

WHEREAS, this proposed amendment would extend the life and maintenance cost associated with school flashing beacons,

WHEREAS, this proposed amendment would improve and promote greater compliance with the school speed limit in each school zone and school crossing area.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF INDEPENDENCE, MISSOURI, AS FOLLOWS:

SECTION 1. That Section 18.05.004 of the City Code is hereby amended to read as follows:

"SEC. 18.05.004. SPEED ON STREETS THROUGH SCHOOL ZONES AND SCHOOL CROSSING AREAS.

It shall be unlawful for any person to drive in excess of the posted speed limit when passing through a school zone or school crossing area during the ~~hours of 7:00 A.M. to 4:30 P.M.~~ **posted time periods and/or when flashing beacons are activated**, weekdays when school is in session, providing the **flashing beacons and/or the** school zone and the speed limit are erected and properly maintained.

SECTION 2. That Section 18.05.003 of the Traffic Schedule is hereby amended to read as follows:

- A. It shall be unlawful for any person to drive in excess of twenty-five (25) miles per hour when passing through a school area during the ~~hours of 7:00 A.M. to 4:30 P.M.~~ **posted time periods and/or when flashing beacons are activated**, weekdays when school is in session, providing the **flashing beacons and/or the** school zone and the speed limit are erected and properly maintained (formerly Section 18.079):
- B. It shall be unlawful for any person to drive in excess of twenty-five (25) miles per hour when passing through a school crossing at a distance of five hundred feet in either direction from a school crossing area during the ~~hours of 7:00 A.M. to 4:30 P.M.~~ **posted time periods and/or when flashing beacons are activated**, weekdays when school is in session, providing the **flashing beacons and/or the** crossing is clearly marked and the street signs indicating the presence of a school crossing and the speed limit are erected and properly maintained (formerly Section 18.098):
- C. It shall be unlawful for any person to drive in excess of twenty (20) miles per hour when passing through a school zone area during the ~~hours of 7:00 A.M. to 4:30 P.M.~~ **posted time periods and/or when flashing beacons are activated**, weekdays when school is in session, providing the **flashing beacons and/or the** school zone and the speed limit signs are erected and properly maintained (formerly Section 18.099):

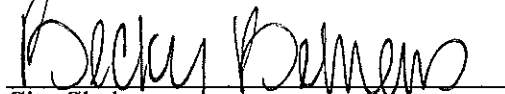
SECTION 3. That all other parts and provisions of the City Code and Traffic Schedule shall be in full force and effect unless previously or subsequently amended or repealed.

PASSED THIS 5<sup>th</sup> DAY OF October, 2020, BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF INDEPENDENCE, MISSOURI.




Presiding Officer of the City Council  
of the City of Independence, Missouri

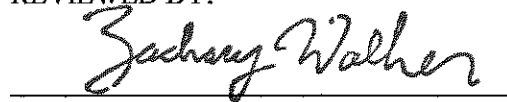
ATTEST:

  
City Clerk

APPROVED - FORM AND LEGALITY:

  
City Counselor

REVIEWED BY:

  
City Manager

**NOTE: Words struck through and bolded are being removed by this ordinance and words underscored and bolded are being added by this ordinance.**

# City of Independence

## AGENDA ITEM COVER SHEET

**BILL NO. 20-073**

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**Agenda Title:**

20-073 - 1R. An ordinance amending Article 5, "Speed Regulations", of Chapter 18 of the City of Independence Code and making other necessary revisions.

**Recommendations:**

Staff recommends approval of the ordinance.

**Executive Summary:**

There are currently 58 school flashing beacons installed within the City of Independence which are active for the Independence, Blue Springs, and Fort Osage School Districts. The school flashing beacons at each school zone, when school is in session, actively flash from 7am to 4:30 pm (9.5 hours). This policy is difficult for law enforcement to actively enforce throughout the day at all locations and minimizes driver awareness and safety of school child pedestrian activity due to multiple school start times, end times, and when no school pedestrian activity is present, such as when students are in class.

**Background:**

It is a common practice among many jurisdictions, in Missouri as well as other states, to focus the time period of actively flashing beacons to when school child pedestrian activity is active and will have the greatest impact to driver awareness and compliance with the school speed limit, encouraging a safer roadway experience for all users. Constantly flashing school beacons throughout the day leads many motorists to ignore the school speed limit because 1) they believe school children to be at home until shortly before school start times or shortly after end times, or 2) they believe school children to be in school and not actively walking to/from school after school has started and before school is dismissed, and 3) they do not expect children to be walking to/from school all throughout the day.

Reducing school flashing beacon times from 9.5 hours daily to 1.75 hours daily will reduce the amount of power these devices consume, as well as, additional future maintenance required from over use. Targeted flashing operations will increase awareness to the most active time periods for when school child pedestrians are walking to and from school. This change will lead to an improved roadway experience, safety for all road user types, and will promote compliance with the school speed limit in each school zone.

While this change does target flexible start and end time periods for school flashers, typically all schools will utilize the flashing operations for only two time periods. This revision does allow flexibility for extended time periods or situational time periods as the school finds necessary to facilitate.

**Emergency Justification:**

This modification is intended to provide flashing operations from 45 minutes before school start time to 15 minutes after school start time and 15 minutes before school end time to 30 minutes after school end time. Municipal Services will work with individual schools to modify flashing operations and provide adequate and accurate flashing operations for school operations.

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**Fiscal Impact:**

There is no fiscal impact anticipated as a result of this amendment to Chapter 18.

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**Department:** Municipal Services

**Contact Person:** Lisa Phelps

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**REVIEWERS:**

**Department**

**Action**

Public Works Department  
Council Action

Approved  
Council Action:

Finance Department

Approved

City Managers Office

Approved

City Clerk Department

Approved

- ATTACHMENTS:**
- Ordinance
  - Map

**Type**  
Ordinance  
Exhibit