



CITY OF SALINAS

TRAFFIC AND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION STAFF REPORT

DATE: NOVEMBER 14, 2019

DEPARTMENT: PUBLIC WORKS

FROM: ANDREW EASTERLING, TRAFFIC ENGINEER

TITLE: WEIGHT RESTRICTION ON INDEPENDENCE BLVD

RECOMMENDED MOTION:

Recommended the Traffic and Transportation Commission consider recommending to City Council a “No Trucks over 10 tons” weight restriction on Independence Boulevard.

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended the Traffic and Transportation Commission consider recommending to City Council a “No Trucks over 10 tons” weight restriction on Independence Boulevard.

BACKGROUND:

The City of Salinas manages approximately 290 centerline miles of road network. It is recommended that pavements receive low-cost maintenance every 5-7 years to avoid higher repair/replacement costs in later years. Traffic Loads and environmental conditions deteriorate pavement over time. Limited General Fund resources for road maintenance over the past decade stemming from the Great Recession punctuated by recent years of heavy rainfall further deteriorated the pavement to its current condition. In 2018 public works completed a city-wide slurry seal project, the first in several years.

In 2017, the City worked with the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) and Adhara Systems, Inc. to perform a pavement condition survey and update the City’s existing StreetSaver Online Pavement Management System (PMS) developed by MTC. The resulting 2017 Pavement Condition Assessment Data Collection Report, dated November 13, 2017, was used to identify current City streets in reasonably good condition to receive a low-cost slurry seal treatment. City Council approved the slurry seal project on various streets at its July 2, 2018 meeting.

Independence Blvd is estimated to have little remaining service life, with a low pavement condition index in the Pavement Condition Assessment Data Collection report. A slurry seal treatment would not be recommended on Independence Boulevard where further reconstruction of the structure asphalt concrete is needed. Consequently, Independence Boulevard was not included in the 2018 slurry seal project.

City Staff received concerns from the community that the maintenance on Independence Boulevard was an oversight. Following these concerns, a Councilmember requested the evaluation of a weight restriction on Independence Boulevard. However, the City has no policy for which to consider weight restrictions on City streets and there are limited technical documents to offer guidance for such a recommendation.

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) has established a vehicle classification system that uses 13 vehicle types distinguished by the number of axles. The classifications were established for use in pavement and bridge design. Truck traffic is generally considered as class 4 and above, these vehicles include; large delivery trucks, buses, garbage trucks, maintenance trucks, box trucks, and freight tractor/trailer trucks. A weight restriction will affect business operations and private delivery services. If a weight limit is to be considered, staff recommends establishing a maximum weight limit which does not impact small delivery trucks but would restrict large freight trucks.

Traffic pneumatic tube counts on Independence show that the average daily traffic is approximately 7640 vehicles per day with 7.9% truck traffic(class 4 and above), which is roughly 604 trucks per day. An 8-ton weight restriction would still permit the use of most class 4 while generally restricting class 5 and above. Class 5 and above truck traffic represents 7% of the daily traffic which accounts for roughly 535 daily truck trips. However, an 8-ton weight restriction may have a significant impact on business operations and delivery services. In order to preserve delivery operations, staff would recommend a higher threshold for a weight restriction.

Alternatively, a 10-ton weight restriction was considered which would still permit the use of most class 4 and class 5 vehicles while generally restricting class 6 and above. Class 6 and above truck traffic represents 0.2% of the daily traffic which accounts for roughly 16 daily truck trips. A 10-ton weight restriction would restrict the large tractor-trailer trucks which typically damage the pavement the most. But the existing volumes for class 6 and above are relatively low and the effect on pavement preservation may be minor.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS:

Weight restrictions will not eliminate heavy vehicle trips, but would redistribute heavy vehicle trips onto different City streets, typically resulting in longer heavy vehicle trips lengths and increased overall delay. Redistributed trips onto Boronda Rd, Natividad Rd or Constitution Blvd will increase traffic loads and accelerate the need for maintenance on these streets while preserving Independence. The weight restriction may not be an effective City-wide systematic strategy for preserving streets. Additionally, longer heavy vehicle trip lengths increase delay for all roadway users and increase emissions and greenhouse gas production.

STRATEGIC PLAN INITIATIVE:

The “No Trucks over 10 tons” weight restriction on Independence Boulevard addresses the current City Council’s goals of Well Planned City and Excellent Infrastructure, and Quality of Life.

DEPARTMENT COORDINATION:

Public works department is responsible for the installation and maintenance of weight restriction signage. The Salinas Police Department is responsible for enforcing weight restrictions once proper signage is posted.

FISCAL AND SUSTAINABILITY IMPACT:

The estimated cost of installing weight restriction signs is \$1,500. Sufficient funding is available in the current streets maintenance budget to fund proposed sign installation.

ATTACHMENTS:

Attachment 1: Weight restriction exhibit