



Legislation Text

File #: 2024-0166, **Version:** 1

A MOTION requesting the King County executive to evaluate strategies to improve traffic safety along county-maintained roads and roadway segments in and around the Fairwood community of unincorporated King County and to prepare a report.

WHEREAS more than one million trips are taken on King County's unincorporated one-thousand-five-hundred-mile road network each day, and

WHEREAS many county agencies have responsibilities for the safety of drivers and pedestrians using the county's unincorporated roads. The road services division of the department of local services is responsible for the safety and maintenance of the county's roadway network, the King County sheriff's office is responsible for enforcement of traffic laws, the King County district court is responsible for adjudicating and processing traffic enforcement citations, and the department of public health is responsible for monitoring safety and public health risks including those related to traffic safety, and

WHEREAS, the Washington Traffic Safety Commission reports that 2023 recorded over eight hundred traffic related fatalities across the state of Washington, the most the state has seen since 1990, and

WHEREAS, traffic crashes are a significant source of injuries and fatalities in King County each year. The Washington Traffic Safety Commission and the road services division of the department of local services report that from 2018 to 2022, six hundred twenty people died in King County in a motor vehicle-related crashes, seventy of which occurred on county-maintained roads and an additional three thousand three hundred seven people were seriously injured, two thousand four hundred ninety-two occurring on a county-maintained road, and

WHEREAS, the department of public health reports that speeding is a major cause of traffic crashes, particularly in those crashes resulting in injury or fatality. From 2018 to 2022, speeding contributed to one hundred ninety fatalities and seven hundred eighty-one injuries, and

WHEREAS, the centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the National Traffic Safety Institute have identified automated traffic safety cameras as an evidence-based best practice for reducing speed and speeding-related crashes, along with related property damage, injuries, and fatalities, and

WHEREAS, the Washington state Legislature enacted engrossed substitute house bill 2384 in March 2024 that allows local jurisdictions greater flexibility in the placement and use of automated traffic safety cameras to detect speed violations, and

WHEREAS, Chapter 307, Laws of Washington 2024, requires that revenues generated from automated traffic safety cameras be used for traffic safety activities related to construction and preservation projects and maintenance and operations purposes, and

WHEREAS, the Fairwood community in unincorporated King County has voiced its concerns regarding reckless driving and speeding on 140th Ave SE and recently voiced those concerns in a community meeting attended by King County councilmember Reagan Dunn, King County sheriff Patti Cole-Tindall, manager of the road services division of the department of local services Tricia Davis, and others, and

WHEREAS, a couple was hit and tragically killed by a head-on collision in 2022 on 140th Ave SE;

WHEREAS, in March 2024, a crash at the intersection of SE 192nd St and 140th Ave SE by a vehicle reportedly traveling at speeds in excess of one hundred twelve miles per hour took the lives of a mother and three children, and seriously injured two more children;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT MOVED by the Council of King County:

A. The council requests the King County executive address the recent increase in traffic related injuries and deaths along 140th Ave SE, and at nearby intersections and roadways, by evaluating all available strategies to improve traffic safety on county-maintained roadways in and around the Fairwood community of

unincorporated King County and prepare a report.

B. The King County executive should consider strategies including, but not limited to:

1. Utilizing traffic enforcement cameras at the intersection of 140th Ave SE and 192nd St, on 140th Ave SE in front of Carriage Crest Elementary School, and at other high-risk locations in and around the Fairwood community of unincorporated King County in accordance with Chapter 307, Laws of Washington 2024, the recently adopted state law;

2. Assessing the feasibility of various traffic calming capital improvements on 140th Ave SE, at the entrances to the Windham Ridge Neighborhood, and in other high-risk areas in and around the Fairwood community in unincorporated King County including, but not limited to, roundabouts, road diets, physical barriers in unused center two-way left-turn lanes, leading pedestrian intervals, and other appropriate roadway countermeasures; and

3. Coordinating emphasis patrols by law enforcement officers along 140th Ave SE and other areas in and around the Fairwood community in unincorporated King County known to experience excessive speeding or higher crash risks.

C. The report should include, but not be limited to:

1. A listing and description of segments along 140th Ave SE and all other county-maintained roads and roadway segments in and around the Fairwood community in unincorporated King County known to experience excessive speeding or higher crash risks and a recommendation for which county-maintained roads and roadway segments should be prioritized for improvement;

2. A listing and description of traffic safety strategies and projects, including capital improvements, that will be developed and implemented to reduce traffic related injuries and deaths along 140th Ave SE and other county-maintained roads and roadway segments in and around the Fairwood community in unincorporated King County and an estimated timeline for their implementation; and

3. An analysis of additional staff and resource needs across King County government departments and

agencies to develop and implement traffic safety strategies and projects along 140th Ave SE and other county-maintained roads and roadway segments in and around the Fairwood community in unincorporated King County.

D. The executive should electronically file the report no later than August 30, 2024, with the clerk of the council, who shall retain an electronic copy and provide an electronic copy to all councilmembers, the council chief of staff, and the lead staff for the local services and land use committee, or its successor.