

INDIAN WELLS CITY COUNCIL

March 7, 2024



To: City Council
From: City Manager Department
Prepared by: Peter Castro, Assistant City Manager
Subject: **Signage to Supplement Existing Noise and Speed Enforcement Initiatives**

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS:

Council **DISCUSSES** the addition of temporary or permanent signage to expand on the city's existing noise and speed enforcement initiatives; and

AUTHORIZES the City Manager or their designee to execute any necessary procedures for the implementation of the approved outcome.

BACKGROUND/DISCUSSION:

At the January 17, 2024, Public Safety Committee meeting, the committee received public comment regarding loud vehicles and vehicles traveling at a high rate of speed along Highway 111. The comments specifically brought up how the City of Newport Beach addressed this issue through a program in 2021. The Committee recommended that City Council discuss the item at a future meeting.

Newport Beach Program

The City of Newport Beach received numerous complaints regarding loud vehicles with modified exhaust as well as racing vehicles traveling throughout the city in 2021. These loud and racing vehicles posed a safety risk and affected the quality of life of their residents and visitors. As a result, the Newport Beach Police Department stepped up their traffic enforcement during this period and launched a Loud/Modified Vehicle Exhaust and Street Racing Enforcement Operations through the summer of 2021.

The Police Department issued a press release and placed several temporary and portable electronic signboards with messaging in high traffic areas within the city to educate the public on vehicle exhaust laws in California as well as notify the community of the upcoming enforcement operations. During the summer months, the police department increased enforcement of the California Vehicle Code violations specifically related to vehicles with loud/modified exhaust and street racing. The department partnered with

Laguna Beach Police Department, Huntington Beach Police Department, California Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV), and the California Bureau of Automotive Repair (BAR). Through four separate days of increased enforcement, the overall results were:

- 649 Vehicles stopped for violations
- 500 Vehicles cited for vehicle code violations (which includes loud/modified exhaust)
- 72 vehicles were inspected on-site for modified exhaust violations by a BAR Referee

It is important to note that a loud vehicle violation must occur in the presence of the deputy for the citation to be issued. Additionally, they must have the proper tools, e.g. a decimeter, to measure the volume of the vehicle to show the violation occurred. The Sheriff's Department has stated it is easier to enforce the modified exhaust section of the California Vehicle Code since it does not require the decimeter to measure the sound.

Indian Wells Enforcement

At the City Council's May 18, 2023, meeting, the Council authorized the implementation of a Speeding Initiative. The Speeding Initiative included both Short and Long-Term efforts that included additional enforcement in the City.

The Sheriff's Department has performed this additional traffic enforcement through the Valley Motor Enforcement Team. The team was last in the cities of Indian Wells, Palm Desert, and Rancho Mirage on November 30, 2023. It consisted of 21 motorcycle enforcement officers from the three cities as well as the cities of Cathedral City, Palm Springs, La Quinta, and Desert Hot Springs. There were 220 citations issued during the operation. Specifically in Indian Wells, the citations issued were:

- 36 speed violations
- 9 cell phone violations
- 3 equipment violations
- 1 unlicensed driver

Additionally, when needed, the Sheriff's Department will have their Street Racing Team respond and monitor the City for potential street racing activity.

The Sheriff's Department will continue their usage of the Valley Motor Enforcement Team for vehicle code enforcement. The City can place temporary electronic signage informing the public of the vehicle exhaust laws similar to the Newport Beach program. Additionally, the City can post permanent signs at City entrances that inform the public of the enforcement of loud vehicle laws.

City Council Strategic Goal: This effort aligns with Council's 2023 Strategic Planning Goal to examine opportunities for the Sheriff's Department and the City to further address speeding in the community.

Commission/Committee Recommendations: The Committee endorsed the Speeding Initiative at their April 27, 2023 meeting, and recommended the City Council discuss options to address loud vehicles in Indian Wells.

OPTIONS:

Council can choose to:

1. Make no adjustments to the current enforcement effort;
2. Place temporary electronic signage informing the public about enforcement of loud and speeding vehicles in the City; and work with the Sheriff's Department to have the Valley Enforcement Team perform an additional sting operation in the City;
3. Place permanent signage at the City entrances that address the enforcement of loud/speeding vehicles in the City;
4. A combination of these initiatives; or
5. Provide alternative direction.

FISCAL IMPACT:

The fiscal impact depends on the direction provided by the council. Permanent signs would cost approximately \$250 per sign.