

MC 23-17- Montgomery County – Maximum Speed Limits Outside Urban Districts

Amendments Requested by Montgomery County Council

Current Law

Default Speed Limits

Current law establishes the following specific “default” speed limits for different types of roads (Transportation Article - 21-801.1):

- 15 mph in alleys in Baltimore County
- 30 mph on all highways in a business district
- 30 mph on undivided highways in a residential district.
- 35 mph on divided highways in a residential district
- 50 mph on undivided highways in other locations
- 55 mph on divided highways in other locations.

The terms “business district”, “residential district”, and “urban district” are defined in §21-101 of the Transportation Article.

Local Authority to Set Speed Limit Above or Below Default Speed Limit

Current law authorizes a local authority (e.g., County) to set the speed limit along certain types of roads above or below the default speed limit after conducting a traffic and engineering and traffic study (Transportation Article - 21-803).

If a local authority decides, after conducting a traffic and engineering study, that it is “reasonable and safe” to set a speed limit above or below the default speed limit, the new limit does not take effect until the local authority provides “appropriate signs giving notice of the limit”.

For roads located “outside an urban district”, current law sets a “floor” of 25 mph. This means that a local authority may, after conducting a traffic and engineering study, set the speed limit along a road below the default speed limit for that particular type of road, as long as the speed limit does not go below 25 mph.

Summary of Bill

The bill changes the “floor” for roads located “outside an urban district” in Montgomery County from 25 mph to 15 mph. This means that the County may, after conducting a traffic and engineering study, set the speed limit along these roads below the default speed limit, as long as the speed limit does not go below 15 mph.

Proposed Amendment

On page 2, in line 13, strike “15” and substitute “20”.

Explanation

This amendment changes the “floor” for roads located “outside an urban district” in Montgomery County to 20 mph.