

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5595

As of February 10, 2025

Title: An act relating to establishing shared streets.

Brief Description: Establishing shared streets.

Sponsors: Senators Alvarado, Lias, Frame, Nobles, Pedersen, Saldaña and Shewmake.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Transportation: 2/10/25.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Allows cities to designate shared streets where pedestrians, bicyclists, and vehicular traffic share a portion or all of the same street.
- Allows cities to establish a 10 mile per hour maximum speed limit on a shared street.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

Staff: Kelly Simpson (786-7403)

Background: Under current law, various provisions exist governing when, and under what circumstance, pedestrians, bicyclists, and vehicular traffic may operate together on public highways. For example, where sidewalks are not provided or are inaccessible, pedestrians may walk on the highway facing traffic, either on the shoulder or as near as is practicable to the outside edge of the roadway. When walking along the roadway, pedestrians must exercise due care to avoid colliding with any vehicle upon the roadway. And when a vehicle is overtaking and passing a pedestrian or bicyclist, the driver must move into a left lane in the direction of travel or, if on a roadway with only one lane in the direction of travel, pass at a safe distance to avoid contact or move completely into the lane for traffic moving in the opposite direction when it is safe to do so.

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

Pedestrians are restricted in certain circumstances to where they may cross roadways and must yield to all vehicles when not crossing in a crosswalk. And bicyclists are subject to certain operating requirements when cycling upon a roadway, for example riding as near to the right side as is safe or as near to the left side as is safe, depending on the configuration of the roadway.

The following maximum speed limits are set in statute as a default, unless a special hazard exists that requires lower speed:

- 25 miles per hour on city and town streets;
- 50 miles per hour on county roads; and
- 60 miles per hour on state highways.

Local authorities may increase or decrease maximum speed limits after first conducting an engineering and traffic investigation finding that the maximum speed is greater or less than is reasonable and safe under the conditions upon a highway. Local authorities may establish a maximum speed limit of 20 miles per hour on a nonarterial highway without conducting an engineering and traffic investigation if procedures to that effect exist.

Summary of Bill: Cities may designate any nonarterial highway to be a shared street. A shared street is a city street where pedestrians, bicyclists, and vehicular traffic share a portion or all of the same street. Cities may establish a maximum speed limit of 10 miles per hour on a shared street.

The following traffic provisions do not apply on a shared street:

- the conditions and limitations regarding pedestrians walking on roadways;
- the rules governing vehicles overtaking and passing pedestrians and bicyclists;
- the rules governing pedestrians crossing roadways; and
- certain operating requirements when cycling upon a roadway.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Creates Committee/Commission/Task Force that includes Legislative members: No.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.