

# FINAL BILL REPORT

## E2SSB 6066

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Synopsis as Enacted

**Brief Description:** Establishing crash prevention zones.

**Sponsors:** Senate Committee on Transportation (originally sponsored by Senators Torres, Dozier and Wilson, J.).

**Senate Committee on Local Government**  
**Senate Committee on Transportation**  
**House Committee on Transportation**

**Background:** I-2 Safety Program. The Washington Department of Transportation (WSDOT), through its I-2 safety program, provides regional roadway analyses and public outreach consistent with current highway safety project practices. The process followed, documentation required, and roles and responsibilities outlined for the I-2 safety program are informed by statutory transportation system policy goals and laws related to the federal Highway Safety Improvement Program. Using a Target Zero strategic approach under the program, WSDOT identifies and determines which locations have the highest potential for the reduction of fatal and serious injury crashes and return the greatest benefit for the cost of the project.

City Streets—State Highways. Certain city streets are designated as part of the state highway system. For cities or towns with populations of 32,500 or less, WSDOT is responsible for installing and maintaining the following on such streets: slope stability, traffic control signals, signs, striping, lane marking, and channelization. Once a city or town's population exceeds the 32,500 population threshold as determined by the Office of Financial Management, the transfer of installation and maintenance responsibilities from WSDOT to the city or town takes effect three years from the date of determination. The city or town is then responsible for such installation and maintenance responsibilities at their own expense, subject to approval of WSDOT for the installation and type only. Regardless of city or town population, WSDOT retains full responsibility for route markers and directional signs, along with all maintenance for limited access facilities.

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*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.*

Counties may establish, construct, and improve highways within cities and towns of that county for certain purposes subject to approval by WSDOT for such use or development on any state highway.

Local Automated Traffic Safety Cameras. Local automated traffic safety cameras may be used to detect a variety of moving violations, including speeding in various authorized locations and zones. The local legislative authority with jurisdiction where the traffic safety cameras are to be located must prepare an analysis of the locations within the jurisdiction where traffic safety cameras are proposed to be located before enacting an ordinance authorizing their use. The analysis must include an assessment of equity considerations, and consider the results of the equity assessment when identifying where to locate traffic safety cameras. The analysis must also show a demonstrated need for traffic safety cameras based on rates of collision reports showing near collisions, travel by vulnerable roadway users, evidence of vehicles speeding, and on anticipated or actual ineffectiveness or infeasibility of other mitigation measures.

Additional requirements and conditions on the use of automated traffic safety cameras include certain signage and reporting requirements, restrictions on the use of camera images, notice of infraction processes and adjudication requirements, and limitations on the use of camera infraction revenue.

Operating a Vehicle While Using a Personal Electronic Device. It is unlawful to use a personal electronic device while driving, with exceptions. The base penalty amount for using a personal electronic device while driving is \$48.

**Summary:** Until January 1, 2029, the legislative body of a county, city, or town may create a crash prevention zone (zone) within its jurisdiction by identifying public roads where the incidence of collisions resulting in serious injuries or fatalities is greater than expected for similar roads over the previous five-year period using adopted processes in the *Highway Safety Manual* published by the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials, on the following roadways:

- the portion of U.S. Highway 395 from milepost 23 to milepost 32 between Pasco and Mesa;
- on Highway 12 from Tank Farm Road to A Street; and
- on Highway 12 from Attalia East Road to Nine Mile Canyon Road.

Beginning January 1, 2029, the legislative body of a county, city, or town, or the Secretary of WSDOT may create a zone within its jurisdiction by identifying public roads where the incidence of collisions resulting in serious injuries or fatalities is greater than expected for similar roads or highways over the previous five-year period using adopted processes in the *Highway Safety Manual* published by the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials.

A county, city, or town, or WSDOT may consider and implement safety improvement

approaches in designated zones. A county, with the approval of a city or town, may designate a zone that includes roadways that include public roads within the county and city or town. A county, city, or town may designate a zone that includes roadways managed by WSDOT with the approval of WSDOT. This requirement also applies to zones established prior to January 1, 2029. WSDOT may designate a zone on a state highway within the boundaries of a county, city, or town without the approval of the county, city, or town. A county, city or town must hold a public hearing on the zone map before the establishment of a zone. When local jurisdictions hold a public hearing prior to establishing a zone, WSDOT's regional administrator must be invited to attend.

Once a zone has been designated, the jurisdiction that established the zone must conduct an engineering and traffic investigation of the public roads in the zone to identify options for safety improvements, including any adjustments to the speed limits. A county, city, or town may contract with WSDOT to conduct an engineering and traffic investigation of the public roads in the zone. The Washington State Patrol and local law enforcement agencies must coordinate, within existing resources and to the extent practicable, increased enforcement of traffic laws within the zone in a manner intended to reduce collisions in the zone. WSDOT may use speed reduction methods, approaches, and technologies to reduce speeding within the zone. A city, town, or county may use automated traffic safety cameras to detect speed violations committed within a zone, subject to current requirements and conditions on the use of such cameras, with an authorized penalty amount up to \$290 for each infraction.

For each zone created by a city, town, or county, a corresponding local account must be created and administered by the jurisdiction. Any revenue generated from the use of automated traffic safety cameras to detect speeding violations committed in a zone must first be used to cover the costs of camera administration, including the cost of processing infractions, with any remaining revenue to be deposited into the corresponding local account.

The base penalty amount for unlawfully using a personal electronic device while driving is doubled if the infraction occurs within a zone. The total penalty amount, including statutory assessments, may not be waived, reduced, or suspended. Fifty percent of the penalty amount collected must be deposited into the highway safety fund for such infractions committed in a zone established by WSDOT, to be used only for the same zone purposes applicable to a local corresponding account.

The zone must be dissolved once safety improvements have been implemented. Until January 1, 2029, a zone may also be dissolved at the discretion of the jurisdiction that created the zone. Beginning January 1, 2029, a zone may also be dissolved by the jurisdiction that created the zone or by direction of the Washington State Legislature. A zone created prior to January 1, 2029 may be dissolved prior to, on, or after January 1, 2029 by these methods.

The designation, establishment, investigation, or dissolution of a zone, or any data, reports,

maps, county staff comments, public comments, engineering studies, prior testimony, or other materials prepared or used in connection with the creation or management of a zone is not admissible as evidence in any civil action.

**Votes on Final Passage:**

**Senate** 46 3

**House** 94 2 (House amended)

**Senate** 48 1 (Senate concurred)

**Effective:** June 11, 2026