

# SAINT PAUL SPEED LIMIT EVALUATION

October 3, 2019



# Presentation Outline

- New legislative authority
- Speeds and safety
- National context
- Saint Paul context: stats, policies, and programs
- Engineering study
- Timeline and next steps
- Question and answer

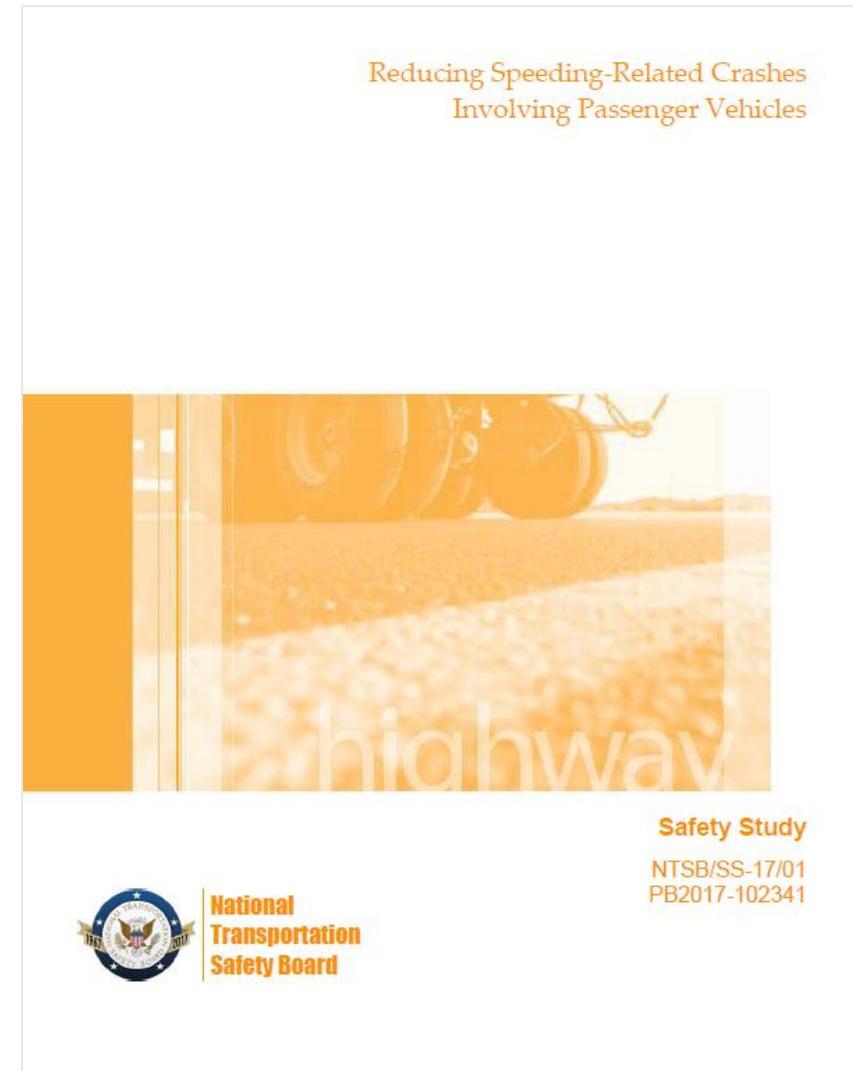
## New legislative authority to set speeds

**A city may establish speed limits for city streets under the city's jurisdiction** other than the limits provided in subdivision 2 without conducting an engineering and traffic investigation. This subdivision **does not apply to town roads, county highways, or trunk highways** in the city. A city that establishes speed limits pursuant to this section must implement speed limit changes in a consistent and understandable manner. The city must erect appropriate signs to display the speed limit. A city that uses the authority under this subdivision must develop procedures to **set speed limits based on the city's safety, engineering, and traffic analysis**. At a minimum, the safety, engineering, and traffic analysis must consider national urban speed limit guidance and studies, local traffic crashes, and methods to effectively communicate the change to the public.

- Minnesota Statutes 169.14, Subdivision 5h

# The Evidence: Slower is Safer

- Speed-related crashes account for 31% of traffic fatalities... the same percentage as alcohol-impaired driving (NTSB)
- NTSB recommends new standards to set speed limits based on crash history and presence of pedestrians and bicyclists; not typical driving speeds



# The Evidence: Slower is Safer

Risk to pedestrians increases  
as driver speed increases



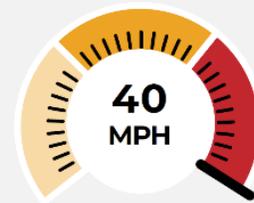
**13%**

of pedestrians *will die or suffer* a severe injury if hit by a vehicle at 20 mph



**40%**

of pedestrians *will die or suffer* a severe injury if hit by a vehicle at 30 mph



**73%**

of pedestrians *will die or suffer* a severe injury if hit by a vehicle at 40 mph

# How does reducing speeds make streets safer?

- Increases drivers' **reaction time** to see another road user and respond
- Reduces **distance** a driver needs to brake
- Reduces **impact energy**: if a crash occurs, each 1 mph decrease in speed reduces the energy transferred in that crash



# National shifts in speed limit guidance

- National Committee on Uniform Traffic Control Devices recommended changes to the Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices to set speeds based on context of a street, not just current driving speeds.
- The National Association of City Transportation Officials is preparing guidance to help cities identify appropriate speeds.
- Boston, Seattle, New York and Portland have recently lowered speed limits.

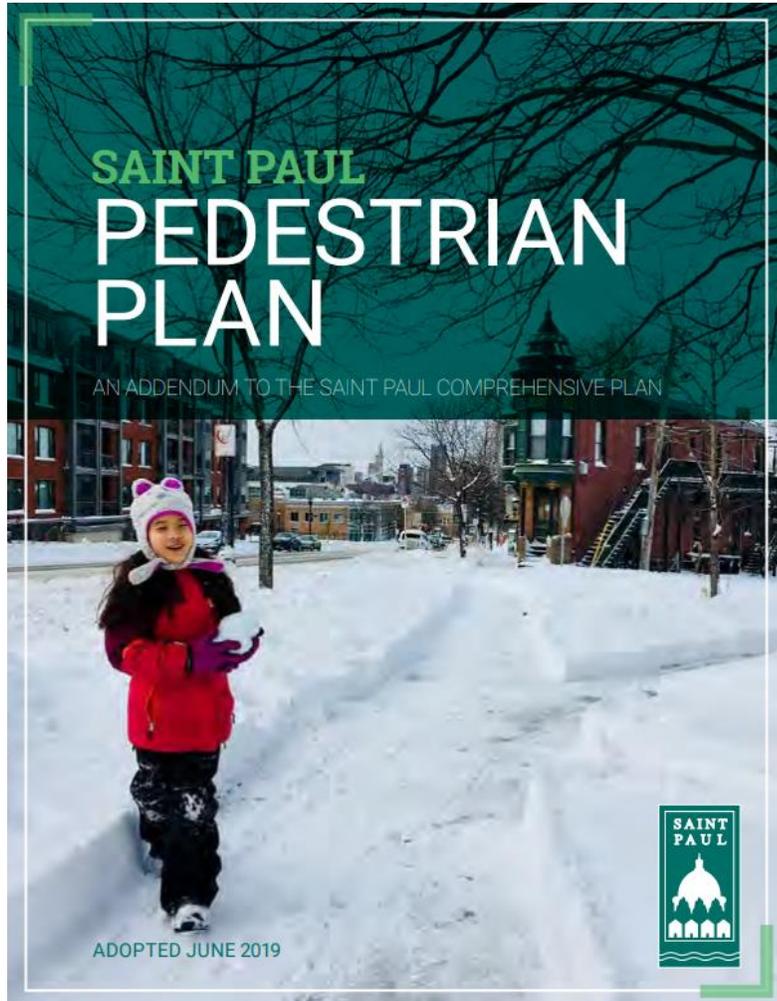


# Saint Paul Crashes



- A pedestrian is struck in Saint Paul approximately every 3 days. A bicyclist is struck approximately every 5 days.
- Non-motorized users are involved in about 5% of total crashes, but almost 50% of crashes that are serious or fatal.
- The number of crashes involving pedestrians is on the rise- consistent with national trends.

# Saint Paul Policies



## **Saint Paul Pedestrian Plan**

1-2. Advocate for a statewide reduction in urban speed limits as part of the city's legislative agenda.

1-6. Reduce pedestrians' exposure to motor vehicles and lower street design speeds. Pursue changes in street designs that lower design speeds and reduce roadway crossing widths.

## **Saint Paul Comprehensive Plan**

Policy T-5. Adopt and implement a "Vision Zero" program with the long-term goal of achieving zero traffic fatalities and severe injuries. Components of the program should include street design improvements and behavioral safety improvements, such as reducing driver impairment, inattentiveness and speed through education and enforcement.

Policy T-8. Reduce speed limits where it will improve safety, and work with State and Ramsey County governments to overcome obstacles to implementing this policy.

# Saint Paul Stop for Me and Safe Routes to School



## New legislative authority to set speeds

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- Minnesota Statutes 169.14, Subdivision 5h

## Saint Paul Ordinance Change: Process and Timeline

City Council acknowledges legislative authority and tasks City Engineer with determining new city speed limits based on an engineering study

- First reading: October 2, 2019
- Second reading: October 9, 2019
- Public hearing: October 16, 2019
- Final reading: October 23, 2019

## Goals

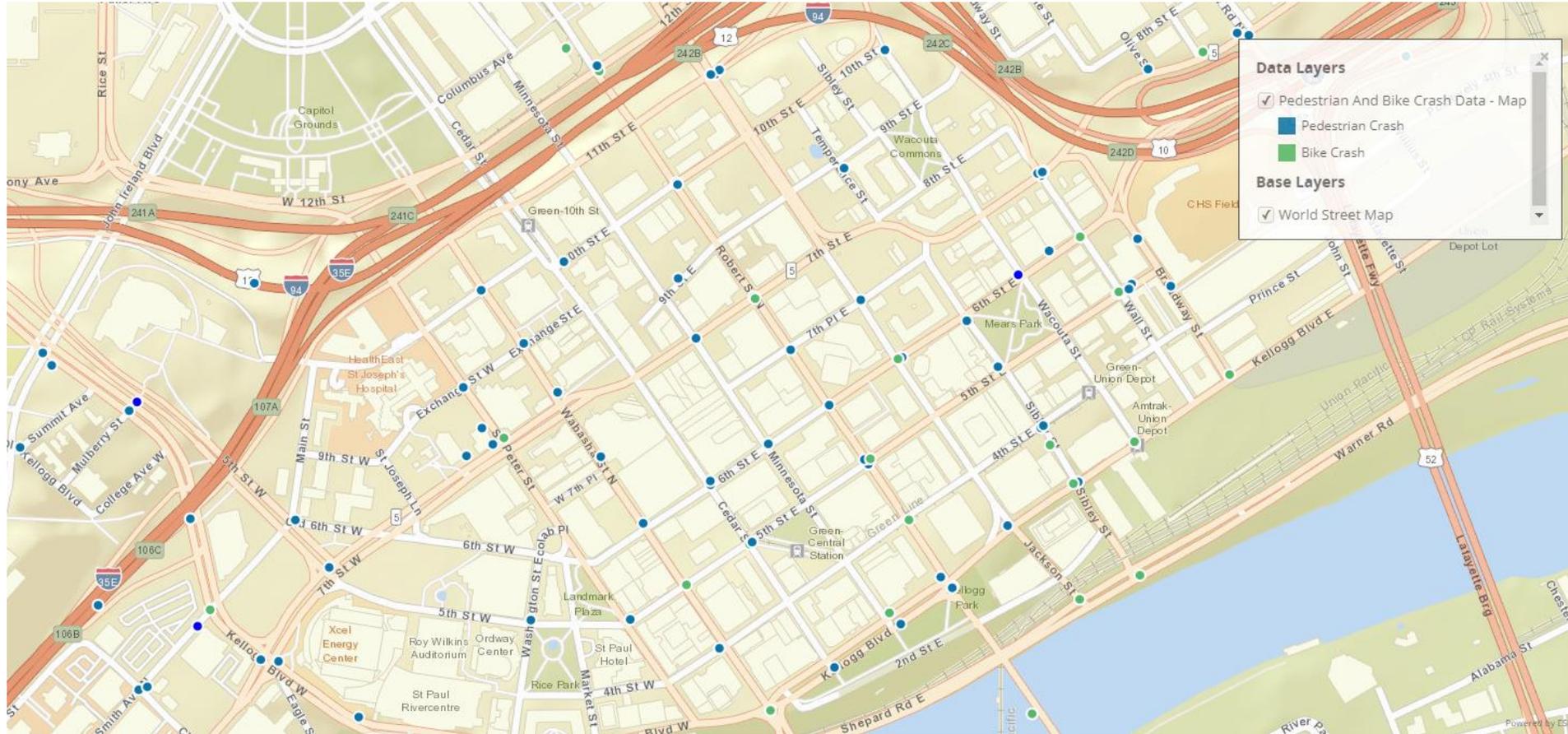
The City holds streets in trust for the public and manages them for the public good. The City is undertaking a technical and data-driven review process of speed limits on City streets. The City intends this process to be defensible and replicable in creating guidance for speed limits that achieve the following goals:

- Support the city's traffic safety goal of zero traffic deaths and severe injuries
- Improve safety and comfort for people of all abilities walking, bicycling, and taking transit
- Support the movement of people and goods
- Are consistent, understandable, reasonable, and appropriate for an urban context

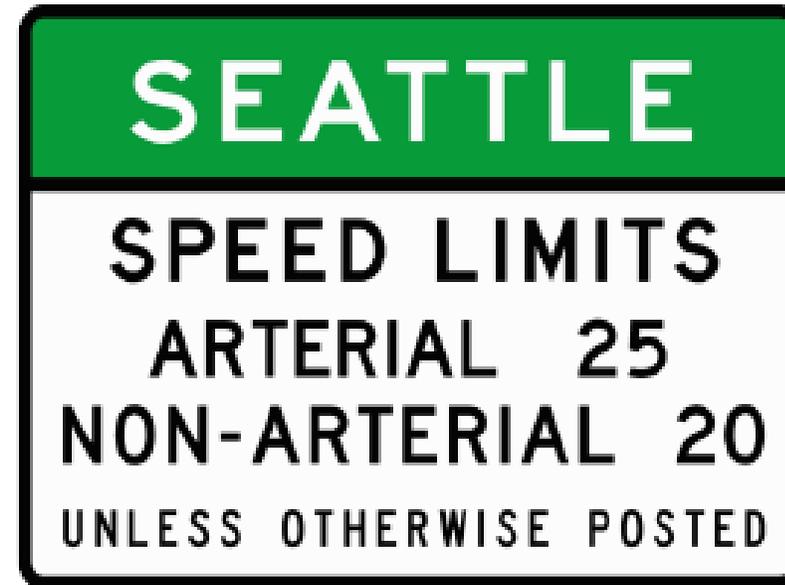
# Saint Paul Speed Limit Evaluation Process

- Review guiding local laws and policy that relates to speed limits
- Evaluate crashes on streets, including locations and trends
- Analyze existing speeds across different street types
- Review national guidance for urban speed limits and gather lessons from cities with local authority or recently changed speed limits
- Share information and coordinate with agency partners throughout the process
- Determine appropriate speed limits for different classes of streets
- Identify street segments that should be considered individually rather than as part of larger class of streets and identify methodology to evaluate speed limits for these streets
- Review best practices for signage and create a signage plan
- Review best practices and create a communications and education plan
- Identify opportunities for collaboration with law enforcement
- Review needed signal timing changes to support new speed limits
- Review related policies

# Evaluate crashes on streets, including locations and trends



# Review national guidance for urban speed limits and gather lessons from cities with local authority or recently changed speed limits



**20**  
IS PLENTY

**VISION ZERO  
PORTLAND**

**20 MPH IS PORTLAND'S NEW SPEED  
LIMIT ON RESIDENTIAL STREETS**

- The new speed limit takes effect April 1, 2018 and PBOT will be installing signs to reflect the change.
- Slower driving speeds help prevent crashes and, when crashes occur, reduce the harm that results.

**SPEED  
LIMIT  
20**

561 x 285

# Share information and coordinate with agency partners throughout the process

Minneapolis

Ramsey County

Metro Transit

MnDOT

Neighboring cities

## Minneapolis and Saint Paul Evaluating Speed Limit Changes



To increase public safety on local streets, Minneapolis and Saint Paul Public Works are collaborating to analyze appropriate local speed limits. Both cities anticipate lowering limits on many local streets. This will not include county and state roads. Most city-owned streets currently have a 30-mph speed limit.

**Determine appropriate speed limits for different classes of streets**  
**Identify street segments that should be considered individually rather than as part of larger class of streets and identify methodology to evaluate speed limits for these streets**



# Create a communications and education plan



# Timeline

- First reading October 2, 2019
- Public hearing October 16, 2019
- Final reading October 23, 2019

## Early 2020

Complete engineering analysis outlining changes to speed limits on city-owned streets.

## Mid 2020

Begin implementation of speed limit signage changes on most city streets.

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