

Unposted Speed Limits

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How speed limits are determined

- Engineering approach – 85th percentile travel speed
- Expert system approach – set by a computer program
- Optimization – set to minimize the total societal costs of transit
- Injury minimization/safety system approach – set according to crash types and data

Denver's Unposted Speed Limits

According to DRMC Sec. 54-157 unposted speed limits are:

- Fifteen (15) miles per hour in alleys;
- Twenty (20) miles per hour on park roadways;
- Twenty-five (25) miles per hour on streets and highways

Who has the authority?

- The City Traffic Engineer has the power and authority to determine the basic maximum speed limit §54-43(a). *D.R.M.C.*
- The Colorado Department of Transportation and local authorities may change the speed limit for any road under their respective jurisdictions if the department or local authority determine that the speed limit is unreasonable for safe road or traffic conditions. §42-4-1101 (4), *C.R.S.*

Peer Cities

Seattle

- Non-arterials streets shall not exceed 20 mph
- Arterial streets shall not exceed 25 mph
- Recently lowered speed limit in 2016 as a part of its Vision Zero strategy



Peer Cities

Portland

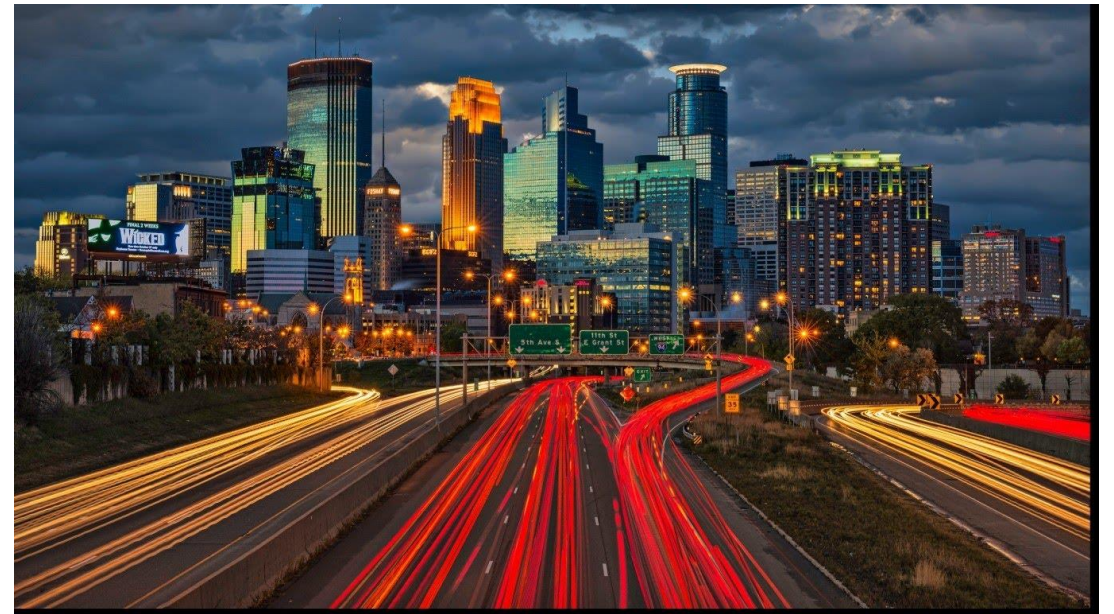
- Residential streets set at 20 mph
- Narrow residential streets are set at 15 mph
- Portland Bureau of Transportation (PBOT) has authority over designating speed limits
- Recently lowered unposted speed limits in alignment with Vision Zero strategy



Peer Cities

Minneapolis

- The state transportation authority determines minimum speed limits
- Local municipalities must request MnDOT perform engineering traffic study
- Local authorities have the authority to reduce speed limits to 25 mph on residential roadways



Peer Cities

San Francisco

- San Francisco's Municipal Transportation Authority determines speed limits
- San Francisco lowered its speed limits in areas that have experienced high pedestrian injury from 30 mph to 25 mph
- The decision to lower speed limits was in alignment with its Vision Zero plan



Arguments For Reducing Unposted Speed Limits



- Significantly reduces pedestrian and cyclist death or injury
- Can reduce or eliminate crashes
- Aligns with Denver's Vision Zero goals to reduce traffic-related injury and deaths

Arguments Against Reducing Unposted Speed Limits



- There is a possibility of accident displacement
- Enforcement of lower speed limits is difficult
- Automatic Speed Enforcement is a contentious enforcement method in communities