



Kitsap County Department of Public Works



Setting Speed Limits

Presentation to the Manchester
Community Advisory Council

August 1, 2023





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Speed Limit Laws

- ◆ **Statutory:**
 - State Highways – 60 mph
 - County Roads – 50 mph
 - City Streets – 25 mph

- ◆ **RCW also allows cities and counties to raise and lower speed limits base on traffic study:**
 - no lower than 20 mph
 - no higher than 60 mph

- ◆ **Kitsap County Code sets local residential roads at 25 mph.**



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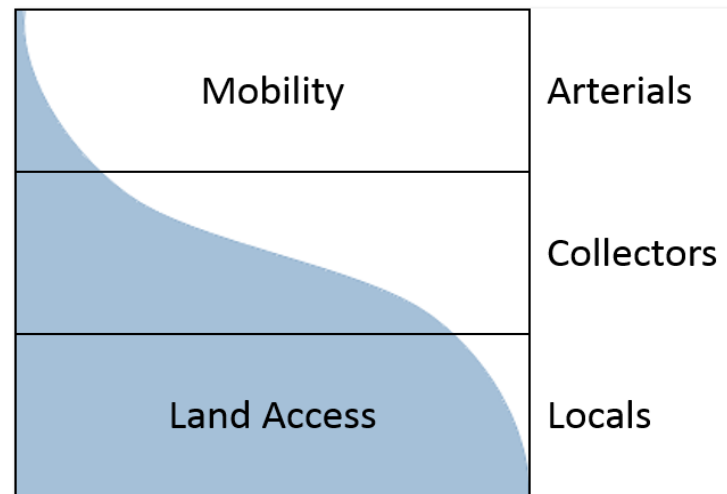
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Performance Measures

◆ Mobility

- Higher Speeds = shorter travel time (good mobility)



◆ Safety

- Properly set speed limits provide a safe, consistent, and reasonable speed to protect drivers, pedestrians, and bicyclists along the roadway



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Reasonable Speed Limits

- ◆ **Promotes consistent traveling speed between drivers, which is shown to reduce road rage, tailgating, and dangerous passing**
- ◆ **Benefits pedestrians and cross traffic when judging breaks in traffic flow and choosing crossing opportunities**
- ◆ **Allows law enforcement to identify violators from reasonable majority**



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How the County Sets Speed Limits

- ◆ **Established by engineering and traffic investigation**
 - **Engineering Method and guidance from MUTCD**
 - ◆ **Based on 85th percentile speed**
 - ◆ **Adjustments for road alignment, shoulders, driveways, pedestrian and bike activity, and collisions**
 - ◆ **Reduction to average speed when appropriate**
 - **Also use Expert System Approaches**
 - ◆ **USLimits2 (FHWA)**
 - ◆ **Speed Limits Setting Tool – NCHRP 966**
- ◆ **PW makes recommendation to BOCC who then determines and approves the posted speed limit**



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Traffic Calming

- ◆ **Kitsap County Road Standards Section 9 – Neighborhood Speed Bump Program**
 - **Does not apply to arterials or collectors**
 - **Applies to 2-lane paved local roads, with posted speed of 30 mph or less and less than 8% slope**
 - **25% of existing traffic must be traveling 10 mph over posted speed**
 - **ADT of 200-3000 vehicles**
 - **Supported by 70% of effected property owners**



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Traffic Calming Measures

- ◆ Non - Physical

- Signing



- Pavement markings



- Law Enforcement



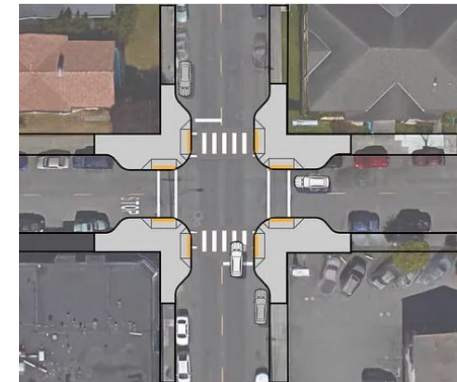


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Traffic Calming Measures

- ◆ **Physical**
 - **Speed humps**
 - **Median islands / Chicanes**
 - **Bulb-outs**
 - **Traffic circles**





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Speed Limit Sign Locations

- ◆ Often get requests for more speed limits signs
 - Frequency of signs does not necessarily influence driver behavior
- ◆ Install speed limit signs at:
 - Locations where the road intersects another major road
 - Where speed limits change
 - Where school zone ends
 - Entrance to neighborhoods
 - County/city borders
 - Frequency of approximately 1.5 miles



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FAQs

- ◆ **Why do we have posted speed limits?**
 - **To inform unfamiliar motorists of appropriate speed**
 - **Used by enforcement to identify excessive speeds and reduce unreasonable behavior**
- ◆ **Will lowering the posted speed limit reduce speeds?**
 - **No**
- ◆ **Will lowering the posted speed limit reduce crash frequency?**
 - **No**



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FAQs

- ◆ **How do we get drivers to slow down?**
 - **3 E's**
 - ◆ **Engineering – needed to modify roadway environment where risk is occurring**
 - ◆ **Enforcement – needed to encourage compliance of the safety initiative**
 - ◆ **Education – needed to inform motorist of the risk and prevention**