

Article 23: Accept State Legislation Allowing Lower Speed Limits

Select Board & Transportation Advisory Committee

Article 23

To see if the Town will vote to accept Section 17C of Chapter 90 of the General Laws to allow the Select Board to establish lower speed limits of 25 miles per hour on town-owned roadways within a thickly settled or business district, and/or to accept Section 18B of Chapter 90 of the General Laws to allow the Select Board to establish safety zones with speed limits of 20 miles per hour, or otherwise act thereon.

Motion A

Move to accept Section 17C of Chapter 90 of the General Laws to allow the Select Board to establish lower speed limits of 25 miles per hour on town-owned roadways within a thickly settled or business district.

Motion B

Move to accept Section 18B of Chapter 90 of the General Laws to allow the Select Board to establish safety zones with speed limits of 20 miles per hour.

Changing Speed Limits on Municipal Streets

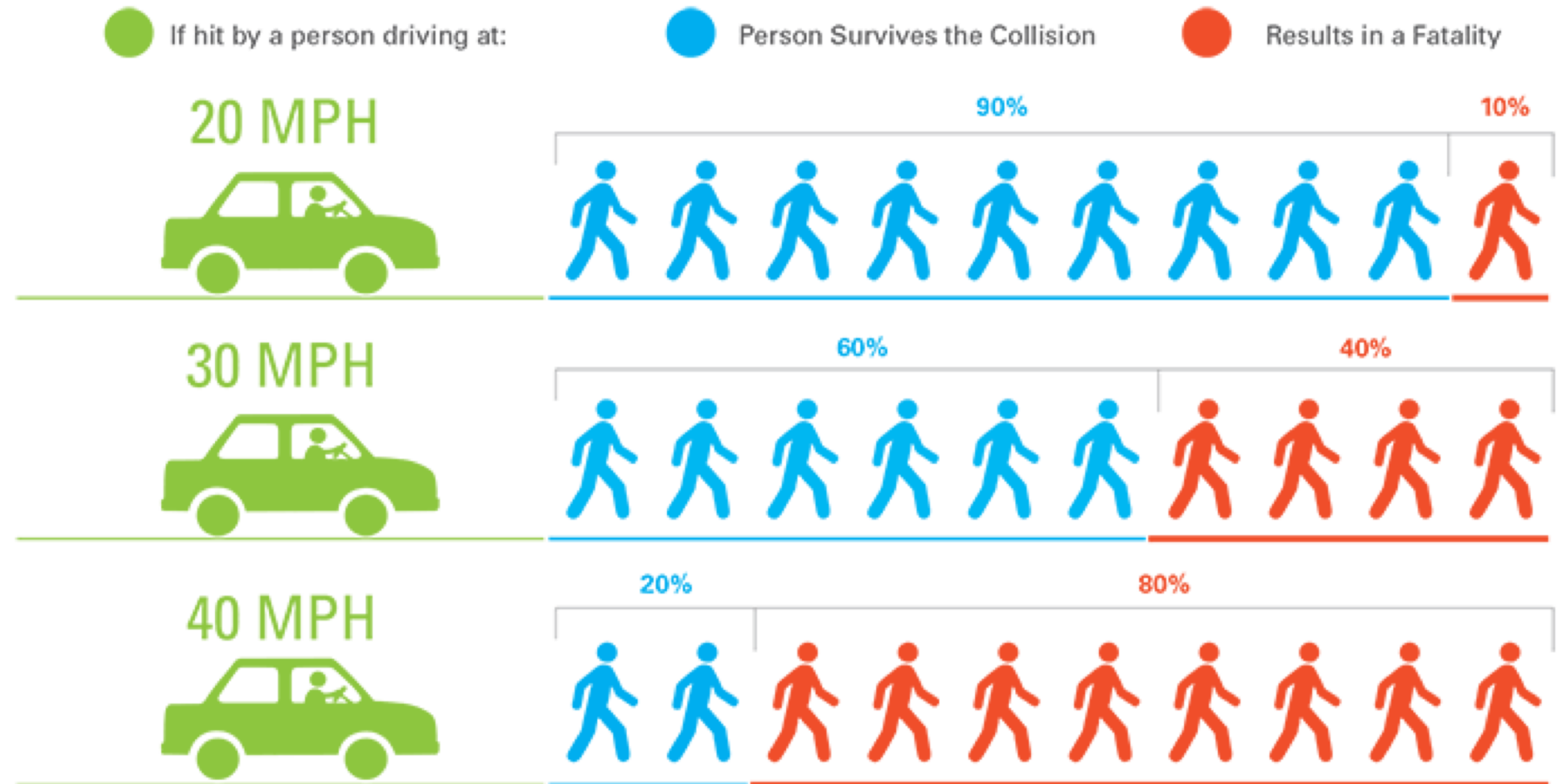
Previously

- Street-by-street; state approval needed with a speed study

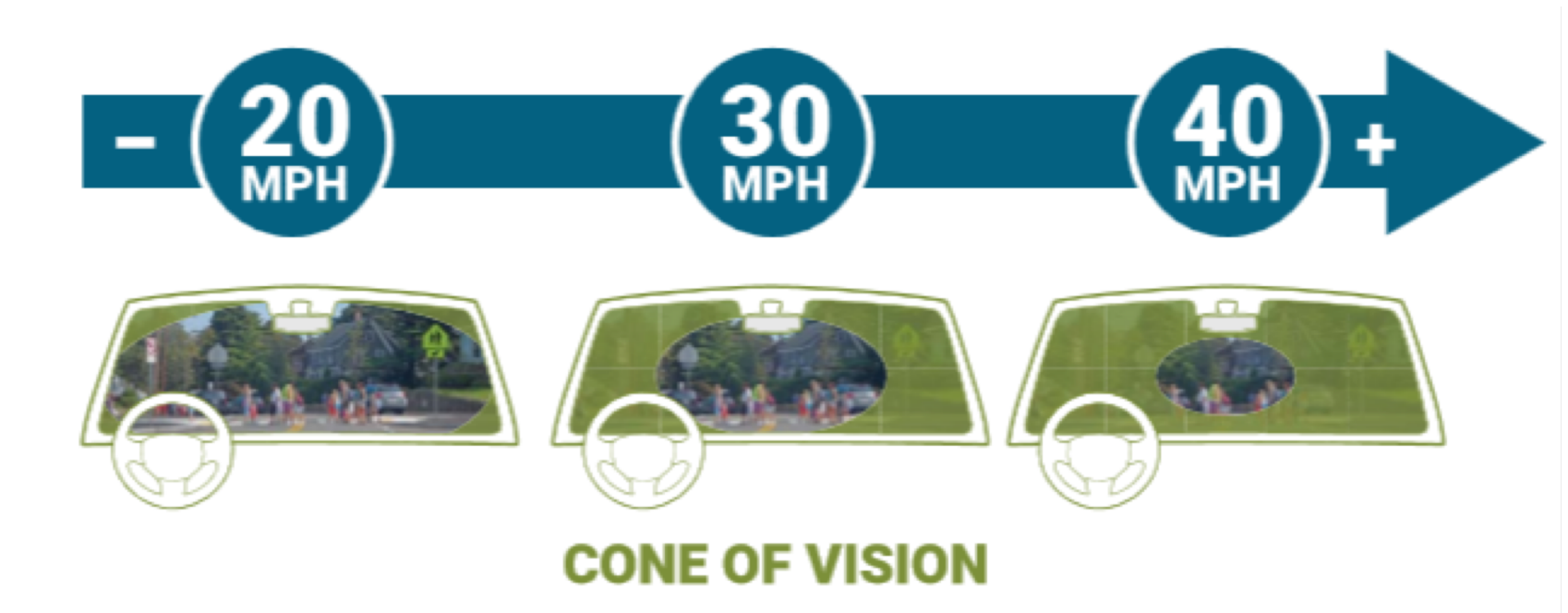
Now

- Legislation enacted in 2016; accepted by 51 cities and towns to date
- MGL c. 90 § 17C allows cities and towns to reduce the statutory speed limit from 30 mph to 25 mph in thickly settled or business districts
- MGL c. 90 § 18B allows cities and towns to establish designated safety zones with a speed limit of 20 mph

Why reduce vehicle speeds? Safety.



Higher speed = lower driver reaction time and longer stopping distances

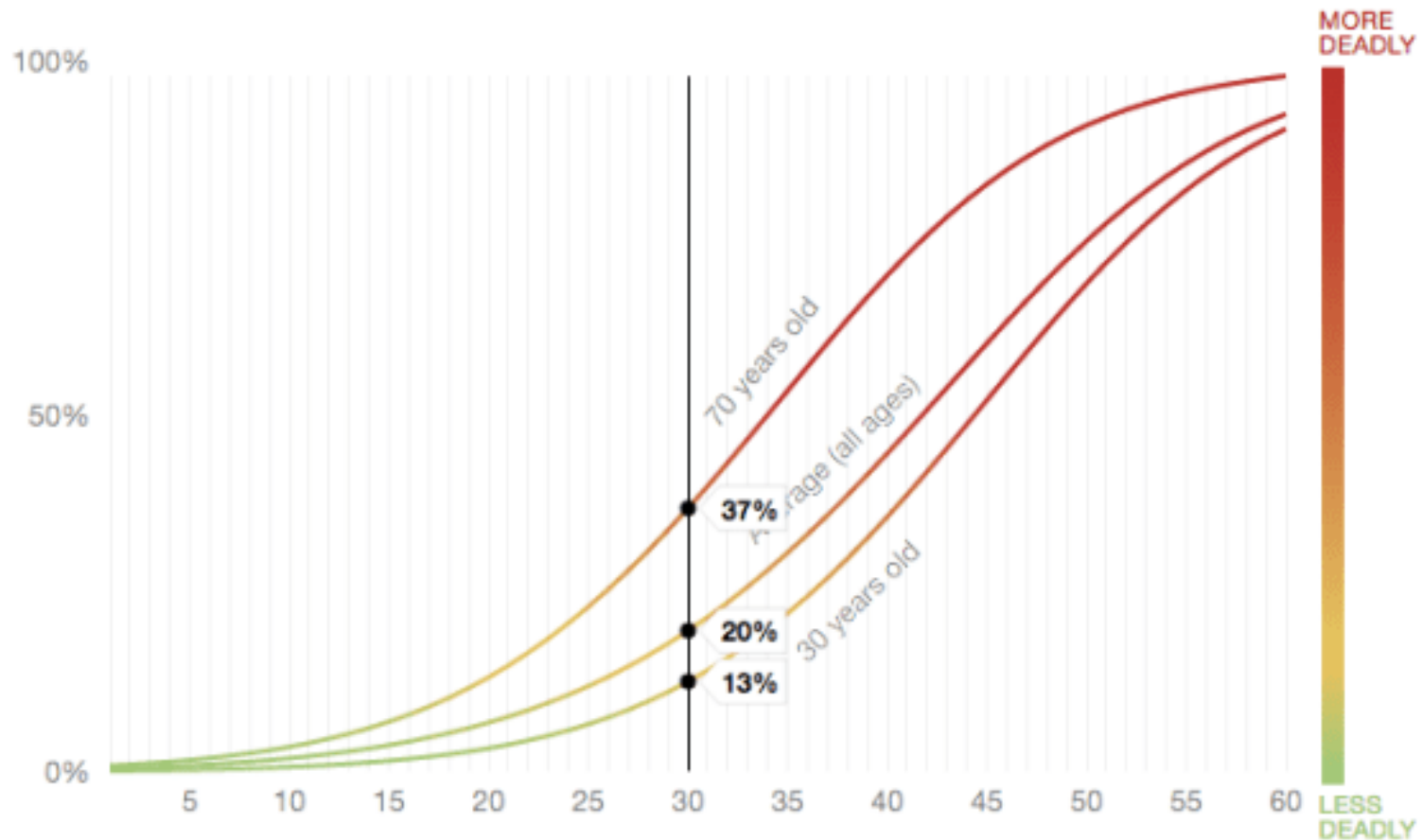


Fairfax County, VA

Older adults are at highest risk

The Chance of Being Killed by a Car Going 30 mph

Roll over the curved lines to see the risk at any speed



51 Cities/Towns opting in to Ch. 90 § 17B/18C

Municipality	Opt-In Date	Area(s) Covered		Municipality	Opt-In Date	Area(s) Covered		Municipality	Opt-In Date	Area(s) Covered
Arlington	5/1/17	Townwide		Framingham	3/21/19	Citywide		Milton	4/5/18	Townwide
Bedford	4/20/18	Townwide		Georgetown	5/16/19	Townwide		Nantucket	6/21/17	Townwide
Belmont	10/11/17	Townwide		Greenfield	5/15/19	Citywide		Newton	3/13/17	Citywide
Beverly	3/17/17	Citywide		Halifax	10/12/17	Selected streets		Norwell	2/19/20	Townwide
Billerica	8/23/17	Selected streets		Hanover	2/7/19	Townwide		Pittsfield	9/5/17	Citywide
Boston	1/9/17	Citywide		Holliston	5/7/20	Townwide		Plainfield	8/13/19	Townwide
Boxborough	5/16/19	Townwide		Holyoke	10/10/18	Citywide		Randolph	3/27/17	Townwide
Braintree	10/7/17	Townwide		Ipswich	6/12/18	Townwide		Revere	6/1/17	Citywide
Brookline	4/18/18	Townwide		Leominster	4/17/17	Selected streets		Salem	3/22/17	Citywide
Cambridge	11/7/16	Citywide		Lexington	5/12/17	Townwide		Scituate	4/5/17	Townwide
Chelsea	1/4/17	Citywide		Ludlow	10/5/20	Townwide		Somerville	10/25/16	Citywide
Chicopee	10/10/17	Citywide		Lunenburg	1/17/18	Townwide		Springfield	10/15/17	Citywide
Concord	1/2/19	Townwide		Lynn	5/22/17	Citywide		Stoneham	11/9/17	Townwide
Danvers	3/8/18	Selected streets		Malden	4/23/18	Citywide		Sudbury	10/15/18	Townwide
Dedham	2/16/17	Townwide		Mattapoissett	9/10/19	Townwide		Swampscott	11/2/17	Townwide
Duxbury	2/10/20	Selected streets		Medford	5/30/17	Citywide		Weston	9/10/18	Townwide
East Bridgewater	7/6/20	Townwide		Melrose	6/21/17	Citywide		Winchester	9/23/19	Townwide

Article 23 is part of a broader, ongoing effort

Engineering

- Designing streets to reduce speeds and increase safety, and provide safe, convenient alternatives to driving.
- Complete Streets, improved biking/walking/transit choices

Education

- Ensure that roadway users are aware, alert and observe traffic laws

Enforcement

- Police resources are limited, and traffic is just one of many duties

Reduced default speed limit: implementation

-- *25 mph may be Town-wide or on specific streets*

1. Town Meeting acceptance of Ch. 90 § 17B
2. Select Board decision with Safety/public input:
 - 25 mph Town-wide, or
 - 25 mph only on specified streets, or
 - 25 mph on all but specified streets
3. MassDOT Notification
4. Amend existing special speed regulations, if needed
 - Some streets are not affected by accepting Ch. 90 § 17B

Existing Limits Set by Special Speed Regulation

Bacon Street	25/20/35 mph	1975
Cochituate Street	25 mph	1996
East/West Central	30/35/40/45 mph	1976
Elliot Street	25/35/40 mph	1974
Oak Street	25/20/35 mph	1975
Pleasant Street	25/30/35 mph	1974
Speen Street	25/35/40 mph	1995
Walnut Street	25/35 mph	1996
Washington Avenue	20/30 mph	1969

State-controlled roads are excluded (Routes 9 and 90)

THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT
TOWN OF NATICK
SPECIAL SPEED REGULATION #7678

Highway Location:

NATICK

Authority In Control:

TOWN OF NATICK

Name of Highway (s):

WALNUT STREET

In accordance with the provisions of Chapter 90, Section 18, of the General Laws (Ter. Ed.) as amended, the following Special Speed Regulation is

Hereby Adopted
by the Board of Selectmen
of the Town of Natick

That the following speed limits are established at which motor vehicles may be operated in the areas described:

WALNUT STREET - NORTHBOUND

Beginning at the junction of North Avenue, thence northerly on Walnut Street;
0.80 miles at 35 miles per hour
0.31 miles at 25 miles per hour ending at the junction of Route 9; the total distance being 1.11 miles.

WALNUT STREET - SOUTHBOUND

Beginning 495 feet South of the junction of Route 9, thence southerly on Walnut Street;
0.22 miles at 25 miles per hour
0.80 miles at 35 miles per hour ending at the junction of North Avenue; the total distance being 1.02 miles.

Operation of a motor vehicle at a rate of speed in excess of these limits shall be prima facie evidence that such speed is greater than is reasonable and proper.

The provisions of this regulation shall not, however, abrogate in any sense Chapter 90, Section 14, of the General Laws (Ter. Ed.).

Date of Passage _____

November 4, 1996

Attest _____

TOWN CLERK

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT

SPECIAL SPEED REGULATION NO. 7678

The Highway Department and the Registry of Motor Vehicles, acting jointly, do hereby certify that this regulation is consistent with the public interest.

Standard signs must be erected at the beginning of each zone.

DATE: 12/18/96

FOR THE HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT

BY: _____
Traffic Engineer

FOR THE REGISTRY OF MOTOR VEHICLES

BY: _____
Chief Deputy Registrar

Process for establishing special slow zones

1. Town Meeting acceptance of Ch. 90 § 18C
2. Select Board designation of specific zones for 20 mph limits with Safety Committee and public input
3. MassDOT notification

Existing slow zones would not be effected