

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

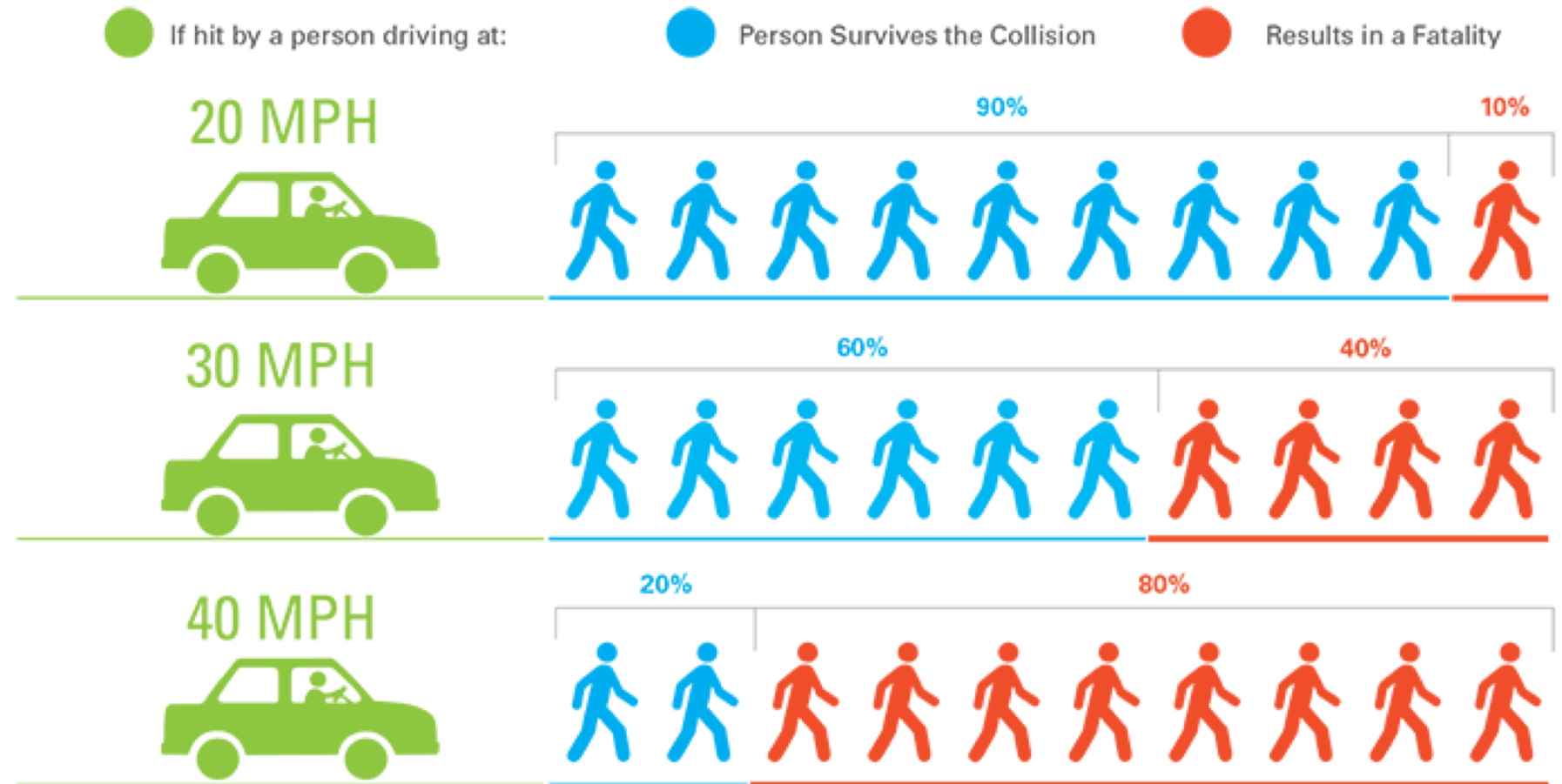
Previously

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

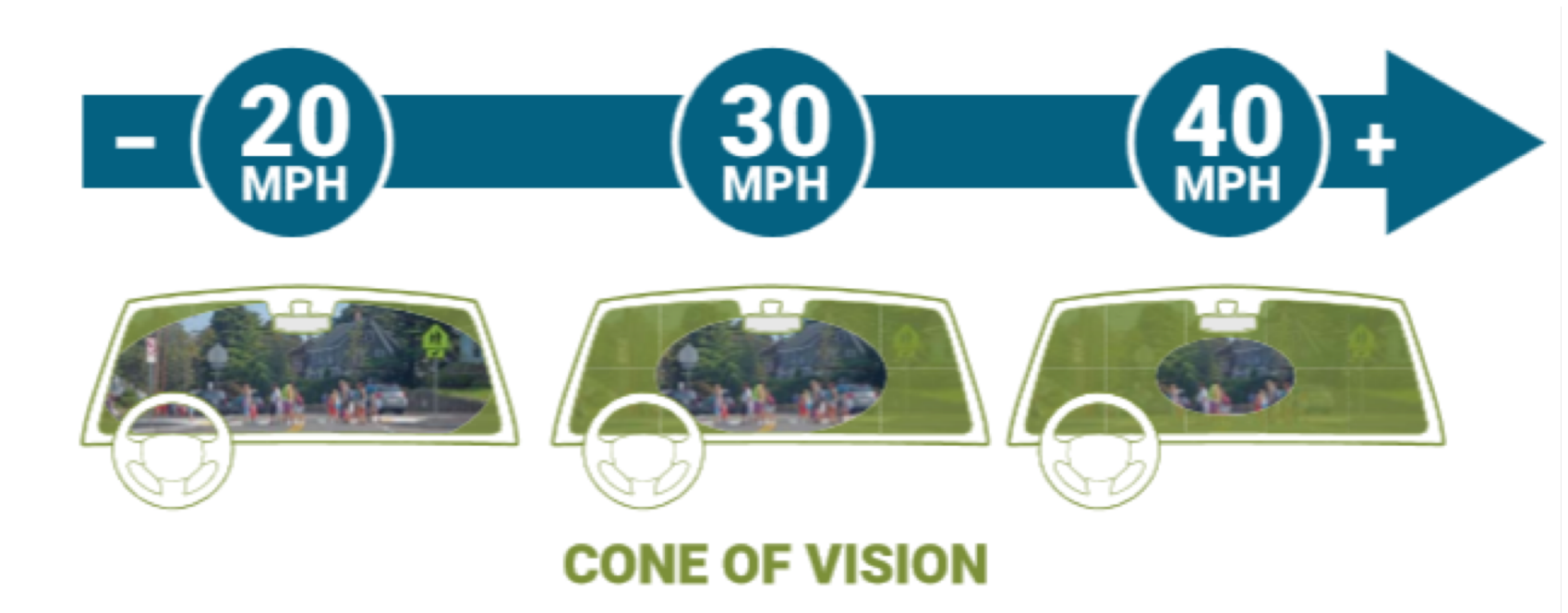
Now

- Legislation enacted in 2016; accepted by 52 cities and towns to date
- MGL Ch. 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 Ch. 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

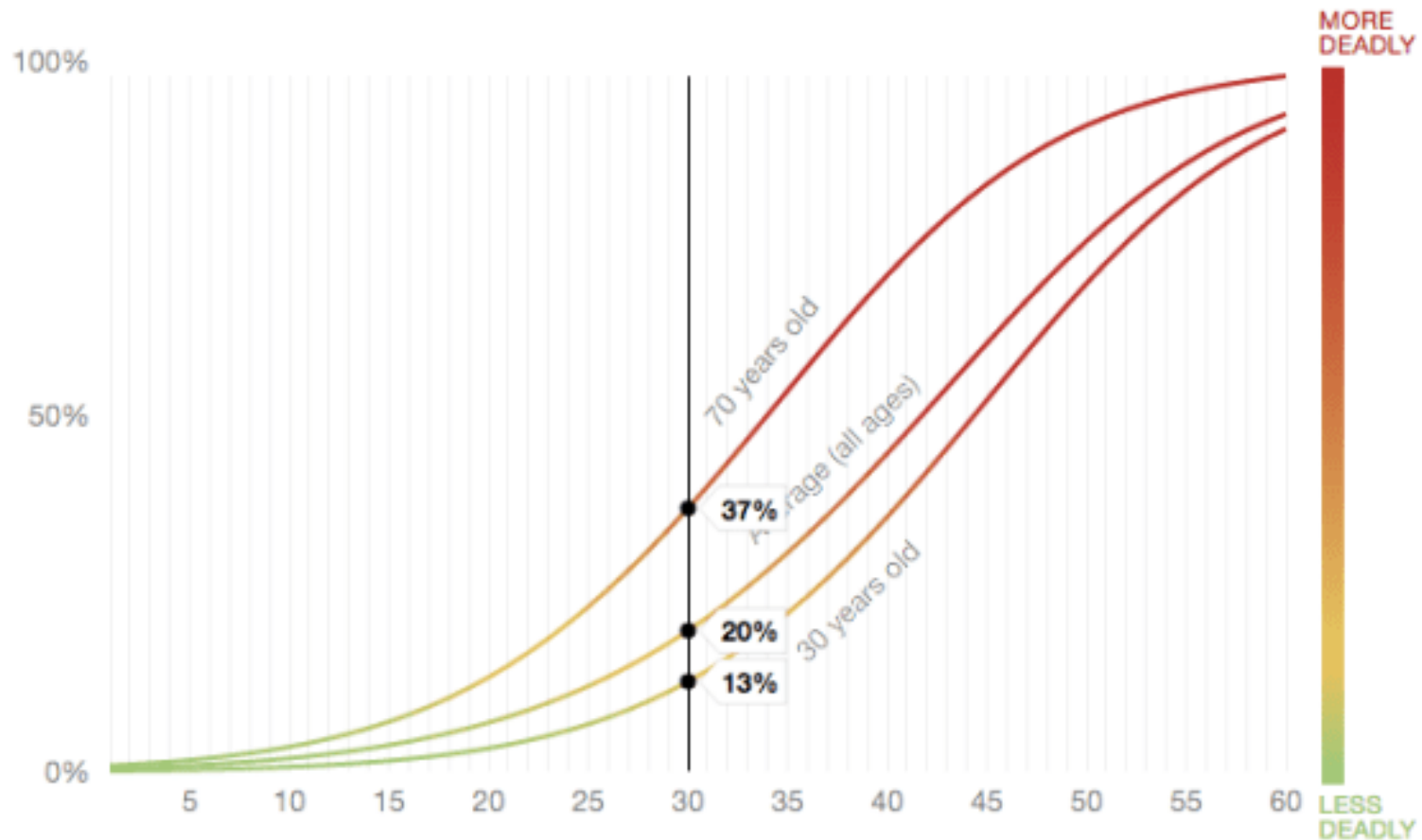


Fairfax County, VA

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



52 Cities/Towns opting in to Ch. 90 § 17C

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

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
- 5 year roadway plan uses Complete Streets principles

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 § 17C
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 Special Speed Regulations (SB/MassDOT approval)
 - Some streets are unaffected by accepting Ch. 90 § 17C

Existing Limits Set by Special Speed Regulation

Street	Limits	Year	Regulation
Bacon Street	25/20/35 mph	1975	Reg. 997
Cochituate Street	25 mph	1996	7671
East/West Central	30/35/40/45 mph	1976	539-B
Elliot Street	25/35/40 mph	1974	881
Oak Street	25/20/35 mph	1975	997
Pleasant Street	25/30/35 mph	1974	923
Speen Street	25/35/40 mph	1995	179-B
Walnut Street	25/35 mph	1996	7678
Washington Avenue	20/30 mph	1969	497

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

[Signature]
[Signature]
[Signature]
BOARD OF SELECTMEN

Attest *[Signature]*
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: *[Signature]*
Traffic Engineer

FOR THE REGISTRY OF MOTOR VEHICLES
BY: *[Signature]*
Chief Deputy Registrar

Process for establishing special slow zones

1. Town Meeting acceptance of Ch. 90 § 18B
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