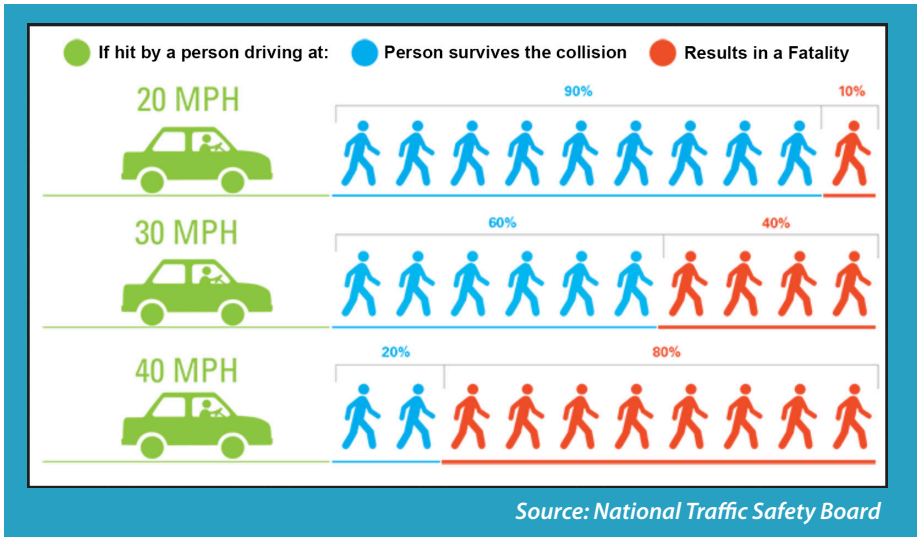


Speeding Concerns in Our Neighborhoods

Cars are driving too fast on my road!

You might not be surprised that this is one of the most frequent concerns reported to the City of St. Peters' Traffic Department. It's true that speeding can be dangerous, increasing both the risk and severity of crashes. A speeding car on a neighborhood road can endanger pedestrians and pets. In St. Peters, our City staff uses traffic studies to investigate and respond to speeding concerns. Education is also very important. We hope that when you learn more about the risks of speeding and reasons why people speed, you will help lead by example on the road and talk with neighbors about slowing down and keeping our roads safer!



The Dangers of Speeding

Drivers often drive the speed that feels most comfortable to them—and not always the speed limit—according to studies by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) and many other organizations. Here are some reasons why driving over the speed limit becomes particularly dangerous in residential areas:

• Increased Risk of Crash:

» ***Speeding increases the distance required to stop a vehicle by increasing both your “perception reaction time” and your braking distance.*** Perception reaction time is the time required for a driver to identify, process, and make a decision about a situation in front of them. When an alert driver expects a situation that could cause a crash, the average perception reaction time is 0.6 seconds. But, that reaction time is delayed to 2.7 seconds on average when you encounter an unexpected situation on the road. If you are speeding, you have even less time to react and you need more distance to avoid hitting something or someone. Increasing your speed just 5 mph can add 90 feet to your braking distance, according to the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials. As you drive down a residential road, you may need to react to pedestrians, stray pets or cars backing out of the driveway. To reduce the chance for crashes and injuries, you need to be both alert and ready to stop. If you drive the speed limit, you have a better chance to stop and avoid a crash.

• Increased Crash Severity:

» ***Speeding increases the severity of a crash not only for a vehicle’s passengers but also for any pedestrians or bicyclists in the roadway.*** A traffic study (see graphic above) determined that the average pedestrian involved in a crash at 20 mph has a 90% chance of survival. At 30 mph the rate decreased to 60%. The study shows that the faster you drive, the more likely it is that a pedestrian would die in a crash. Speeding by just 5 mph over a 25 mph speed limit on a residential road means that if you hit a pedestrian, there's a 2 in 5 chance that the person would die.

Frequent Comments & Questions

The City receives many comments and questions when discussing speeding concerns with residents. Here is some information addressing several frequent topics:

- ***It seems like vehicles are speeding when I’m outside my home.*** That may be true, but also keep in mind that when you’re stationary, vehicles seem to travel faster than they actually are. Your perception can be influenced by a variety of factors.
- ***Can we lower the speed limit to reduce speeding?*** Many studies show that lowering the speed limit has little to no effect on vehicle speeds. Instead, the evidence shows that vehicle speed is influenced by the conditions of the roadway,

Continued on page 2



Speeding Concerns in Our Neighborhoods - Continued from page 1

not by the speed limit. Drivers tend to not change their speed unless the road's physical conditions, such as roadway width or obstacles, make the driver uncomfortable at their increased speed. Our City code sets the speed limit on residential roads at 25 mph, unless a different speed limit is established by the City Traffic Engineer based on engineering studies.

- **Can we install more stop signs to slow traffic on our street?** Stop signs are warranted when they can increase intersection safety, but shouldn't be used to control vehicle speed. Unwarranted stop signs are signs that are installed at locations that do not meet the minimum requirements specified by FHWA. FHWA studies have shown that unwarranted stop signs increase driver noncompliance and can increase the speed between stop signs. Drivers may slow down when approaching unwarranted stop signs, but then speed after the stop sign to make up for lost time.
- **Can we have "Children At Play" signs installed?** The City does not install Children At Play signs, as they are not approved signs in the FHWA Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) standard. Existing Children At Play signs will be removed as each sign reaches the end of its life. Those signs will not be replaced. If City staff finds through its investigation that additional speed limit signs or "Keep Kids Alive Drive 25 mph" signs are warranted, then we may install them as needed. However, we caution that adding more signs has been proven to have little or no effect on reducing vehicle speeds.
- **Can we have speed humps installed on our street?** A speed hump alters the pavement height to slow vehicles and

decrease vehicle volumes. We do not use speed humps in St. Peters due to many potential negative effects: increased maintenance, increased risk of damage to vehicles, increased emergency response time, and potential increased damage to City plow trucks during snow removal. Our staff has other tools outlined in our Traffic Calming Policy that could help decrease vehicle speed on a residential roadway. Physically altering a road, however, must be justified by the City Traffic Engineer due to the potential negative effects and costs associated with traffic calming measures.

What Can I Do to Decrease Speeds on the Road?

- **Drive slower!** Be a leader and drive the speed limit. Drive at lower speeds and give yourself more time to react to the unexpected.
- **Set the pace!** Driving at the speed limit means that all those who follow you also will maintain your safe pace.
- **Talk to your neighbors.** When investigating speeding concerns, the City frequently finds that the people who speed on residential roads are the people who live there. Discuss the importance of everyone following the speed limit and setting a good example.
- **Be specific on concerns.** The more information you are able to provide the City in your concern, the more likely that staff may be able to identify and address problems. Include in your concern the specific days, times and locations you believe speeding is a problem.

www.stpetersmo.net

UPfront

news & information from the City of St. Peters



For monthly news from the City of St. Peters, subscribe to the UpFront e-newsletter at www.stpetersmo.net/Subscribe or scan the QR code:



SPTVNOW.NET

STREAMING/ON-DEMAND

SPTVnow.net is the video channel for *My Hometown!* Watch stories and public meetings that matter to you (streaming live & on demand). Tune in during severe weather for a live traffic camera and weather radar.

Just visit **SPTVnow.net** on any device!