

Establishing Speed Limits

Transportation Agency Board of Directors

May 28, 2025

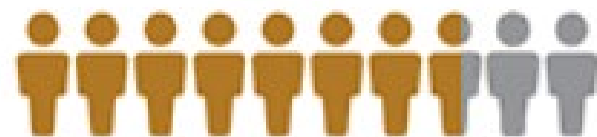


— PEDESTRIAN FATALITY & SERIOUS INJURY RISK +

18%

50%

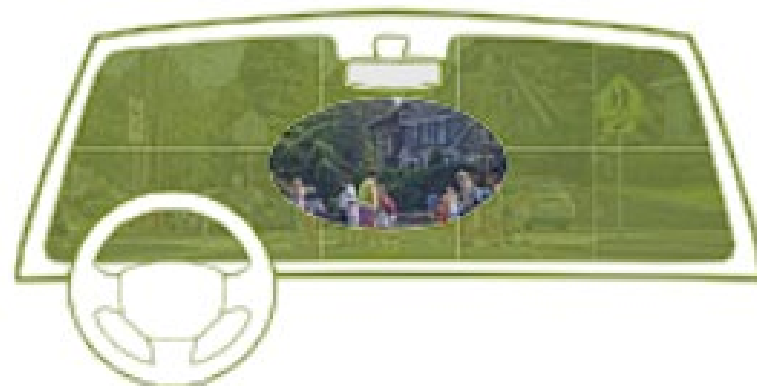
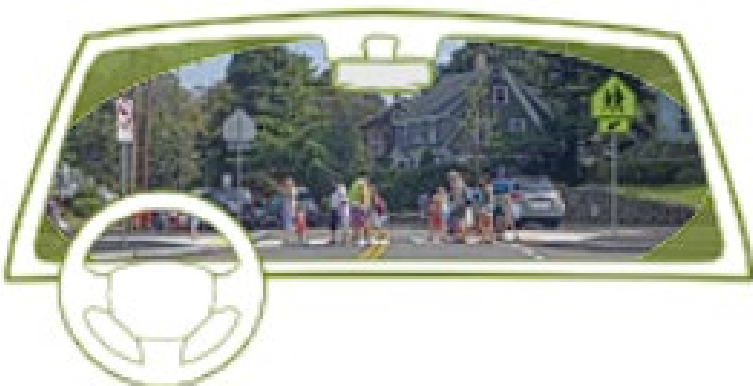
77%



20
MPH

30
MPH

40
MPH



CONE OF VISION

Who Establishes
Safe Limits?



State and local agencies
have jurisdiction over the
road.

California has over 60 acts
governing speed limits

California Vehicle Code
places these into language
used for enforcement

The California Manual on
Traffic Control Devices
provides guidance

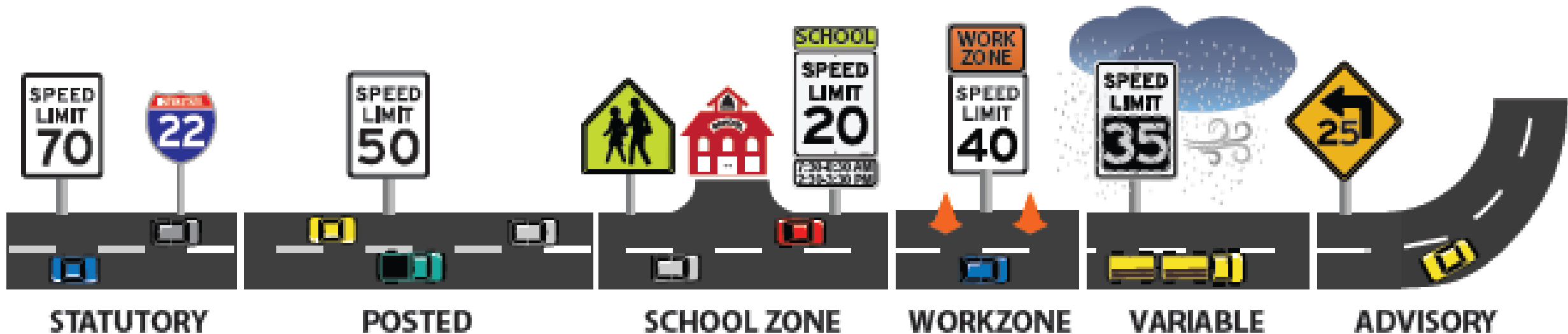
California's Basic Speed Law

(CVC § 22350)

No person shall drive a vehicle upon a highway at a speed greater than is reasonable or prudent having due regard for weather, visibility, the traffic on, and the surface and width of, the highway, and in no event at a speed which endangers the safety of persons or property.

2 Types of Speed Limits

- Statutory/Prima Facie
- Posted/Regulatory Speed Limits



Engineering & Traffic Survey:

3 Things Used to Select a Speed Limit

01

Prevailing
speeds in
normal
conditions

02

Crash History &
Traffic Volume

03

Non-apparent
road conditions

Prevailing Speed =
85th Percentile

Drivers choose reasonable
speeds

85% of drivers travel at a safe
speed

Developed in 1930s as
“conventional wisdom”

Some argued that speed
differential is worse than
higher speeds

Reconsider view that drivers choose reasonable and safe speeds

Safe speed limits should consider:

- crash types
- impact forces
- body's ability to withstand forces

Assembly Bills (AB) 43 & 1938:

Makes it Easier to Establish Lower Speed Limits

New Traffic Study Directives

- Consider Vulnerable users
- Speeds don't need updating as often
- Use an older Traffic Study speed limit

New Prima Facie Speed Limits

- Business Activity District: 20 or 25 mph
- Senior Zone: 25 mph

Adjustments to 85th Percentile Speed

- Easier to round down 5 mph
- Extra 5 mph safety reduction
- 12.4 mph below 85th percentile

A Lower Speed Limit Doesn't Lower Speeds, But Lower Speeds Lower the Speed Limit!



Speed Limits
Require
Enforcement



Complete
Streets Designs



Speed
Management



Slower Driving
leads to Lower
Speed Limits

Complete Street Designs





Questions?

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