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CITY OF CHICAGO CITY COUNCIL



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CHICAGO, ILLINOIS 60602

Chair, Committee on Pedestrian and
Traffic Safety

Vice Chair, Committee on Contracting
Oversight and Equity

Ex-Officio, Chicago Plan Commission

Committees

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Standards

MONTHLY REPORT – APRIL 2024 **COMMITTEE ON PEDESTRIAN AND TRAFFIC SAFETY**

Pursuant to the Rule 45 of City of Chicago Rules and Order, the Committee on Pedestrian and Traffic Safety submits the following monthly report for April 2024.

Date, Time, & Location of Meeting:

On Thursday, April 11th, 2024, at 12:00 p.m. the Committee on Pedestrian and Traffic Safety held a meeting at City Hall in Council Chambers. Due to the Committee on Finance's meeting running over schedule, the Committee on Pedestrian and Traffic Safety meeting was called to order at 1:47 p.m.

Members in Attendance:

Chairman La Spata (1st Ward)
Alderman Hopkins (2nd Ward)
Alderman Robinson (4th Ward) - virtual
Alderman Yancy (5th Ward)
Alderman Chico (10th Ward)
Alderman Moore (17th Ward)
Vice Mayor Burnett (27th Ward)
Alderman Ervin (28th Ward)
Vice Chairman Cruz (30th Ward) - virtual
Alderman Knudsen (43rd Ward)
Alderman Lawson (44th Ward)
Alderman Martin (47th Ward)
Alderman Manaa-Hoppenworth (48th Ward)

Absent Members: Alderman Quinn (13th Ward), Alderman Curtis (18th Ward)

Non-Members in Attendance: Alderman Coleman (16th Ward) - virtual

The Chairman accepted a motion from Ald. Knudsen to allow for remote participation by Ald. Cruz, Ald. Robinson, and Ald. Coleman, which was approved by the same role call as was used to establish quorum.

Public Comment:

There were 7 spoken and 32 written public comments for this meeting.

Written comment is included in its entirety on pages 4-20.

Spoken Public Comment was provided by the following individuals (in order of appearance):

- Jessica Jackson: commented on Black Chicagoans' property being taken by the City and the County, discussing the ongoing case regarding her mother's property and will as an example of the issue
- Mari Rodrigues: noted that she gave comment last month as well about the 1500 block of North Kolin - present to oppose the residential permit parking zone 2426 repeal on that block, sharing that majority of neighbors want permit parking and that the repeal is happening due to the Alder's personal vendetta
- Austin Busch: commenting on idea of lowering the speed limit - pointed out that a 2012 CDOT plan named lowering the speed limit in residential areas to 20 miles per hour but there hasn't been much progress in the decade since; opposed the idea that lowering the speed limit is bad because it would mean an increase in enforcement that disproportionately harms Black and brown people, pointing to the fact that traffic deaths disproportionately impact these same groups currently and that other solutions to enforcement can be considered while also lowering the speed limit to create more safety for all people
- Zoe Leigh: comment directed at Ald. Moore regarding his lack of response around the issue that she has been trying to get addressed regarding her mother's property
- George Blakemore: commented on procurement and the lack of contracts going to Black contractors in comparison to Latine and White contractors
- Kyle Lucas: with Better Streets Chicago – CDOT's stated values do not show up in what it actually presents, pointed to Chicago/Halsted designs as an example where the movement of cars is prioritized over bike and pedestrian safety; DuSable Lake Shore Drive as another example where the proposed redesign would continue to facilitate speeding despite the issue of speeding on DuSable Drive being a stated concern; ended comment by stating that traffic stops are dangerous, pointing to the death of Dexter Reed as an example
- Tiwon Sims: speaking on the issue of traffic stops and their harm and danger to Black Americans, shared own experience with getting stopped in Rogers Park; uplifted the Free2Move campaign's work and policy proposals as a way to prevent this issue from continuing – can't take back what happened to Dexter Reed but we can resolve it through Free2Move

Approval of March 2024 Rule 45 Report:

Ald. Hopkins moved to approve, which was approved by the same roll call as was used to establish quorum.

Agenda of Matters Considered:

The Agenda of Matters Considered consisted of 12 pages and included the following matters:

- 139 ordinances related to disabled parking permits,
- 19 ordinances related to traffic warning signs and/or signals,
- 12 ordinances related to parking restrictions, and
- 8 ordinances related to residential parking permit zones.

Direct Introductions on pages 1-2 Passed without Department recommendations. Ald. Martin moved to approve all Direct Introduction ordinances, which was approved by the same roll call as was used to establish quorum.

All matters on pages 5-7 Passed as Recommended by the appropriate Department(s). Ald. Chico moved to approve all Recommended ordinances on pages 5-7, which was approved by the same roll call as was used to establish quorum.

All matters on pages 8-12 Passed with No Recommendation. These items were submitted as aldermanic overrides or received no recommendations from City Departments. Ald. Chico moved to approve all No Recommendation ordinances on pages 8-12, which was approved by the same roll call as was used to establish quorum.

All actions taken at the meeting were by viva voce vote.

Having no further business before the committee, Chairman La Spata requested a motion to adjourn. Ald. Hopkins so moved, and hearing no objections, the meeting was adjourned at 2:14 p.m.

Written Public Comment:

Amy Thompson – Impact for Equity, submitted April 11, 2024:

Dear Chairman LaSpata and Committee Members of the Committee on Pedestrian and Traffic Safety,

My name is Amy Thompson, I'm staff counsel at Impact for Equity and a member of the Free2Move Coalition. Over the last three years, Free2Move has been working to create a more racially equitable traffic safety system by ending CPD's use of pretextual traffic stops. In November, we had the pleasure of presenting at a hearing before your Committee about the scope, impact, and inequities of CPD's traffic stops strategy.

This week, the harm that comes from CPD's traffic stops strategy became even more stark. On Tuesday we learned details about how Dexter Reed was tragically killed by Chicago Police Department officers during a traffic stop in Humboldt Park. This disturbing death highlights the urgent need to reassess how traffic stops are conducted in Chicago, particularly in communities already experiencing the legacy of failed public policy that has led to over-policing, segregation, and divestment.

Impact for Equity and the Free2Move Coalition's [2023 Traffic Stops Data Report](#) reveals alarming realities about traffic stops: in 2023 Chicago Police Department made over 537,000 traffic stops, with the highest number of them concentrated in the 11th Police District, where this incident occurred. For example, in that Police District, CPD conducted 56,301 stops in 2023, even though only 55,746 drivers live there. Citywide, Black drivers are six times more likely to be stopped compared to their white counterparts, and the vast majority of CPD's traffic stops are for minor traffic violations. Such disparities erode trust between law enforcement and communities of color, fail to keep communities safe, and perpetuate systemic injustices.

Despite their widespread use, the vast majority of CPD's traffic stops do not lead to CPD finding any evidence of criminal activity whatsoever. In 2023 there were no arrests made in over 97% of traffic stops. What's clear is that traffic stops are not an effective tool to stop violence. In fact, traffic stops continue to be the most common event type where an officer points their weapon. Unfortunately, the use of force at a traffic stop happens far too often, and almost all uses of force are against people of color. In 2023, 95% of uses of force at traffic stops were against people of color, and 78% were against Black people.

Impact for Equity and the Free2Move Coalition are working to create a safer, more racially equitable system of traffic safety in Chicago. Over the last year, we have called on Mayor Johnson, Superintendent Snelling, and the Community Commission for Public Safety and Accountability to adopt [our policy platform](#) and put an end to CPD's practice of making pretextual traffic stops altogether and to limit traffic stops for low-level offenses. If CPD had adopted this policy, this incident may have been prevented.

This stop should never have happened and there is no justification for the devastating harm that occurred.

We call on you as the members of the Committee of Pedestrian and Traffic Safety to use your power to push Mayor Johnson, Superintendent Snelling, and the Community Commission for Public Safety and Accountability to make transformative policy change within CPD and end the use of pretextual traffic stops. The City of Chicago has the power to end these kinds of traffic stops today. Any delay only continues to put our communities at risk. We deserve swift and transformative policy change now.

*Thank you,
Amy Thompson*

Tim Curry – Fines & Fees Justice Center, submitted April 8, 2024:

Committee Chairperson La Spata, Vice Chairperson Cruz, Members of the Committee, and Committee Staff:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide some information and insight on the process of lowering speed limits and the need for a holistic street safety plan that does not disproportionately impact lower wage earners and communities of color.

My name is Tim Curry, and I am the Policy & Research Director at the Fines and Fees Justice Center (FFJC), based in Washington, DC. FFJC is a national hub for information, advocacy, and collaboration for the reform of fines and fees. Our mission is to eliminate fees in the justice system, ensure that fines are equitably imposed and enforced, and end abusive enforcement practices. Working with directly impacted communities, FFJC builds broad-based coalitions from across the political spectrum including grassroots organizations, judges, public defenders, prosecutors, legislators, law enforcement, and faith-based and advocacy organizations, all of which are focused on ending the harms and inequities inflicted by fines and fees.

As part of my work, I advise communities on the impacts of traffic enforcement through financial sanctions and ways for ensuring greater equity across communities, while also keeping traffic safety as the primary focus. Let me emphasize from the beginning that the safety of pedestrians, cyclists, and drivers is of the utmost importance and it is critical that communities around the country take steps to promote and ensure that safety in meaningful, effective, and tangible ways. Infrastructure and policy changes are a necessary aspect of that work and reductions in speed limits, if done as part of a holistic safety approach, can be a part of that. However, simple changes in speed limits and increased speed enforcement alone is not the solution. Without comprehensive infrastructure and design solutions, communities are likely to see little to no improvement in safety with exponential increases in the legal and financial harms targeting lower-income communities and communities of color.

If history is any indicator, there is a high likelihood that speed enforcement in Chicago under any plan to reduce speed limits will involve automated speed camera systems and the assessment of financial penalties. Such an enforcement-forward regime, particularly without necessary road design adjustments, will hurt Chicagoans in many ways.

Traffic cameras in Chicago are already a multi-million dollar business that has produced demonstrable inequities. When the City decreased the camera triggering threshold from 10 mph to 6 mph, the city issued more than 2 million speed camera tickets—more tickets than there are residents—and brought in more than \$105.9 million in just the first year. ¹ Even before that policy change, research specific to Chicago’s traffic camera programs found that the absolute economic burden associated with camera tickets is disproportionately borne by low-income Black and Latino residents.²

Black, Latinx and low-income residents pay a disproportionate share of both fines and fees relative to income. Fees alone are particularly harmful for low-income residents. Low-income residents incurred fees on 46% of all tickets received compared to just 17% for upper-income residents.³

And when it comes to the regressivity of the fine and fee structures, Black residents are particularly hard hit: “majority Black neighborhoods pay a larger share of fines and fees relative to income than majority Latinx or majority White/Other neighborhoods.”⁴ It is critical to note that this last point is about paid fines and fees; for those unable to afford these costs, the impacts can be even greater as they face further sanctions for nonpayment. Failure to pay or failure to pay quickly enough, can result in anything from additional fees, driver’s license suspension, and court supervision to bench warrants and incarceration.⁵

Some proponents of camera-based enforcement argue that camera placement is based on crash and safety data, which they claim is race-neutral. However, the historical disinvestment in communities of color coupled with racially-driven infrastructure and design policies cannot be overlooked, particularly when Chicago’s own data belies such neutrality claims in practice. Whatever safety benefits the camera systems might provide come with well-documented harms that every policymaker must acknowledge. The choice confronting any legislators considering new traffic enforcement measures is to either do something about those inequities or to tell constituents they believe the inequities are an acceptable cost.

So, what can be done? FFJC recently released guidance on automatic traffic enforcement, a copy of which was submitted along with this testimony.⁶ This guidance provides real-world examples of alternatives to enforcement, a few of which I will highlight and expand upon here:

- **Holistic safety plans that include infrastructure and design changes are far more effective than enforcement of lower speed limits alone.** The U.S. Department of Transportation acknowledges camera enforcement is never the full solution to safer streets and must be used “appropriately as part of a broader strategy” for road safety.⁷ “Care should be taken to avoid burdensome and excessive fines, late fees, license suspension, or vehicle immobilization (e.g., by booting or impounding a vehicle) as these raise significant equity concerns for underserved communities and may contribute to a cycle of poverty.”⁸ There is documented success in jurisdictions where enforcement power is limited or where its use comes second to other major infrastructure and policy changes. Hoboken, New Jersey is one of the most densely populated cities in the United States. Yet, through comprehensive systems and infrastructure policies, the city recorded zero traffic-related fatalities for the past seven years⁹ in a state where automatic traffic cameras are prohibited by law. Similarly, cities like Oslo, Norway and Helsinki, Finland—although they use traffic camera enforcement to some extent—cut pedestrian deaths to zero by also leveraging significant infrastructure and design changes, implementing traffic-free zones, and investing in significant traffic safety education.¹⁰
- **Design and infrastructure changes have a more immediate effect on driving behavior.** When traffic citations are issued, it can be several weeks before a driver is ever even alerted to the infraction, and it does nothing in terms of deterrence in the interim. However, researchers have found that speed humps had a dramatic effect on maximum speeds immediately. One study found that the number of vehicles moving at more than 10 mph over the speed limit dropped from 14% to just 1% after speed humps were installed.¹¹ Another showed that speed humps are estimated to lead to 50% fewer pedestrian-involved accidents.¹² Simple street painting projects that gave the illusion of busier or narrower streets have also been found to decrease the rate of crashes involving pedestrians or other vulnerable road users by 50% and decrease the rate of crashes leading to injuries by 37% across 17 jurisdictions studied.¹³ Even the best speed camera study results come nowhere near these success rates.¹⁴
- **Changes to design and infrastructure can be cheaper than automatic enforcement systems.** Proponents of enforcement-first approaches to street safety often argue that it is a cheaper alternative than infrastructure redesign. But this need not be true. According to the Federal Highway Administration, the installation of a single speed hump can run from \$1000 to \$8000, depending on the conditions of the existing road. Even higher-end changes, such as traffic circles or lane chokers rarely exceed \$25,000 each.¹⁵ Road painting projects are exponentially less expensive. Compare these with the cost associated with camera enforcement. Chicago has committed to at least \$67 million dollars in speed camera contracts and \$86.1 million in redlight camera contracts since 2013.¹⁶ These figures do not account for the personnel costs necessary for maintaining the cameras, confirming violation images, and enforcing citations.
- **The use of automated technology does not need to include financial sanctions to produce results.** Non-monetary interventions, like driver feedback signs, are more likely to result in immediate behavioral change that impacts safety, without the inequity concerns mentioned earlier. Data from Australia in 2023 showed that feedback signs alerting drivers to their speeds before they entered a camera enforcement zone resulted in a reduction of ticketing by more than 80%. Most drivers who were put on notice of their offending behavior before enforcement was used, engaged in significant and immediate self-regulating behaviors. If the goal is truly to stop these behaviors, rather than profit from them, such notifications are a more effective approach.

Ultimately, any traffic enforcement must be accompanied by equity-informed policy changes around fines and fees. FFJC believes in six core points related to fine-based traffic enforcement:

1. **Prioritize non-financial sanctions.** Providing notice, information, education, training or other accessible alternatives to a fine will more effectively result in improved driving behavior, without the financial harms and inequities.

2. ***In extreme cases, develop graduated responses based on the frequency and severity of the behavior.*** Less severe offenses, offenses unrelated to actual safety concerns, or one-time offenses, do not need the same level of punishment.
3. ***If fines are assessed, ensure they are proportionate to the individual's ability to pay.*** Meaningful ability-to-pay assessments are critical to establishing equity in sanctions. These are possible, even in camera-based systems.¹⁷
4. ***Do not use ATE with a goal of raising revenue.*** If fines are assessed, designate any revenue generated by camera programs for discretionary, one-time expenses. Even if the money is directed toward worthy projects, governments that create an ongoing revenue dependency on traffic citations are placing profit-making over safety. If ATE is truly about improving safety, the revenue generated by any enforcement should be an ancillary benefit rather than a relied-upon, ongoing line item in the budget. Government should not be funded on the backs of select residents.
5. ***Do not impose sanctions for failure to pay fines.*** If an initial ability to pay determination is conducted and a person is still unable to pay the amount imposed, systems should not punish people for that poverty. Instead, systems should institute fine waivers, reasonable no-cost payment plans, or other supportive services.
6. ***End the practice of adding fees, surcharges, penalties or interest to fines.*** Fees are hidden taxes designed to generate revenue, not improve safety. They are abusive practices that engender distrust in government.

I thank this Committee for holding this public forum seeking information on the impacts of lowering default speed limits city-wide and for the opportunity to share our experiences and expertise regarding potential systemic harms. If I or FFJC can provide any further information or assistance to the Committee, please let me know.

Respectfully submitted,

Tim Curry

Policy & Research Director, Fines and Fees Justice Center

[Driving the Wrong Way on Automated Traffic Enforcement](#)

Dany Roble – Illinois Environmental Council, Submitted April 2, 2024:

To the Members of the Committee on Pedestrian and Traffic Safety,

I write to you as the Climate Policy Director of the Illinois Environmental Council to implore you to consider advancing the ordinance to lower the citywide speed limit from 30mph to 25mph [R2024-008391]. At IEC, we are committed to advancing and supporting policies that help protect our state's natural resources, animals, plants, and people. The outcomes of this policy align with our mission to ensure that we have a safe environment for Chicagoans to live in. This ordinance is an essential piece of legislation that can help save countless lives from car accidents, help promote healthier well-being for Chicagoans, and would be a key lever to help reduce carbon emissions in the city's transportation sector.

Across the City, we have seen a rising number of deadly vehicle incidents due to reckless drivers on the streets meant to be shared with pedestrians and cyclists. With lower speeds, drivers in the city will be forced to drive a speed that allows them to make decisions and adjustments to share the road with active modes of transportation safely. This has additional benefits for drivers seeking to shift their vehicles toward electric or hybrid models that perform better at lower city speeds. Newer Battery Electric Vehicles or Hybrid EVs are quieter and heavier than conventional internal combustion engine vehicles, which poses a danger to many, especially community members with ADA needs. The lower speed limit allows all people to react to slower vehicles and keeps everyone safe on the roads.

These safer street models will also benefit Chicagoans' well-being, as they can make choices on the types of transportation trips they take across the city. We've heard from residents and advocates alike that feeling safer

on the street would encourage them to select biking or walking options for shorter community trips. This has tremendous health benefits, as selecting these active modes of transportation allows folks to get exercise and be out in the community.

Finally, the shifting of transportation modes will have tremendous benefits to carbon emissions attributed to the transportation sector, which is needed now more than ever. In the Greenhouse Gas inventory performed by the Energy Information Administration in 2023, Illinois Transportation Sector was the largest source of carbon emission. This is why we need to consider every policy solution that can help us reduce this number. This policy has the potential to bring countless shifts from car trips to bike and walking trips, which can help reduce carbon emissions by millions of metric tons per year. This solution is an important catalyst for Chicago to become a national leader in climate solutions.

You can help us be that national leader in saving lives, creating vibrant communities, and bringing a healthy city for all of us to live in by voting yes on this ordinance.

Dany Roble

Climate Policy Director, Illinois Environmental Council

Trevor Grant, Submitted April 2, 2024:

I am writing to express my strong support for the proposal to lower the citywide speed limit to 20 mph. This initiative is not only critical for enhancing the safety of all road users but also pivotal in encouraging the adoption of more sustainable modes of transportation, thereby contributing significantly to Chicago's climate action goals. Evidence from around the world underscores the efficacy of lower speed limits in saving lives and improving urban mobility. Notably, Wales has embarked on a transformative journey by implementing a 20 mph speed limit across numerous residential and urban areas. This bold move is expected to reduce accidents and fatalities, fostering a safer environment for pedestrians and cyclists. Research consistently shows that the risk of fatal accidents decreases significantly when speeds are reduced; vehicles traveling at lower speeds afford drivers more time to react to unforeseen events, substantially mitigating the severity of collisions.

Moreover, cities that have adopted lower speed limits report not only safety benefits but also a noticeable shift towards more sustainable and active forms of transportation. By making streets safer, more people are encouraged to opt for walking, cycling, and using micromobility devices. This shift is crucial for urban areas like Chicago, aiming to reduce carbon emissions and combat climate change. Encouraging the use of micromobility not only aligns with our climate pledges but also addresses traffic congestion, reduces air and noise pollution, and promotes healthier lifestyles among city residents.

Implementing a citywide speed limit of 20 mph in Chicago could serve as a cornerstone policy to protect our communities, enhance the livability of our city, and move towards a more sustainable and resilient future. Such a policy signals a commitment to prioritizing human life and well-being over speed, setting a precedent for other cities to follow in our footsteps towards safer, greener, and more inclusive urban environments.

I urge the Committee to consider the successful outcomes observed in Wales and other areas as a compelling argument for adopting this life-saving and environmentally responsible measure. Let us seize this opportunity to lead by example, demonstrating that Chicago values the safety and well-being of its citizens, as well as its environmental commitments.

Thank you for considering this vital initiative. Together, we can make Chicago a safer, more sustainable, and more inviting city for all.

Sincerely,

Trevor Grant

Merry Kruschke, Submitted April 9, 2024:

Hi,

I understand we are to contact you, the committee on pedestrian and traffic safety. This is to let you know, I am another tax paying Chicago **citizen AGAINST this idea!!!!**

This is the type of thing or item that **should go on a referendum for us all to vote on and not decided by a minority of leaders and pressure groups.**

1. Reminder and/or question: Didn't you all alderman (against the Lightfoot recommendation) in June of 2022 vote to increase a/c too many tickets.

2. Isn't this just really a way to increase city finances to pay for "migrants" and other debts the City has accumulated

Why isn't crime on your agenda? Why aren't you increasing bail, keeping criminals in jail? Let's see some action on that front instead of putting more burden on the majority of the citizens and making our lives more difficult?

Merry Kruschke

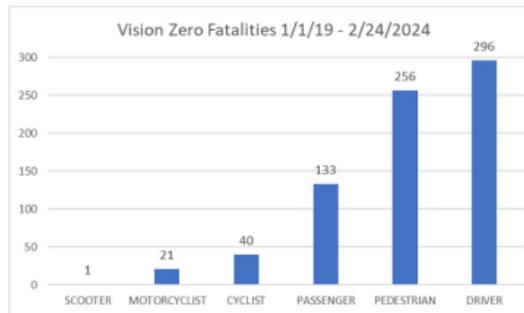
Carsten Lohan, Submitted April 9, 2024:

To the Committee on Pedestrian and Traffic Safety,

I wish to express my enthusiastic support for a lowering of the citywide default speed limit from 30 to 25 miles per hour. A reduction of Chicago's default speed limit would increase safety for all road users; pedestrians, transit riders, cyclists, automobile drivers and their passengers.

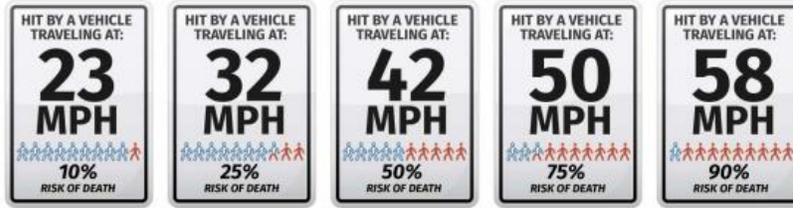
According to the data set Traffic Crashes - Vision Zero Chicago Traffic Fatalities posted on the Chicago Data Portal, there have been 747 fatalities on Chicago's roads from the beginning of recording on January 1st 2019, through February 24th 2024. A summary of the fatalities is below:

Victim	Count
PEDESTRIAN	256
PASSENGER	133
DRIVER	296
CYCLIST	40
MOTORCYCLIST	21
SCOOTER	1
TOTAL	747



747 lives have ended on Chicago's streets due to traffic violence in a little over 5 years. I will note that for this same time period there have been 3,142 Fatal Shooting Victimization in Chicago, according to the City's Violence Reduction Dashboard. Both of these figures are unacceptable, but today we have the opportunity for a discussion about good legislation that can reduce the number of traffic fatalities in Chicago. Chicago can join other cities like New York, Boston, D.C., Seattle, and Atlanta and lower the default speed limit to 25 MPH.

As a Chicagoan who is often a pedestrian, I anecdotally note the recent post pandemic trend of Chicago drivers failing to yield to pedestrians in crosswalks is getting worse. I have had several 'close calls' with vehicles in the past year when I have crossed in a marked crosswalk with the right of way. I don't care to think what would happen to me or another pedestrian if struck by a vehicle, but the data shows that reduction in speed is directly correlated to pedestrian survival. I share the graphic below from the U.S. Department of Transportations National Roadway Safety Strategy report. This graphic draws on data published in 2011 from the AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety.



Sources: Fatality Analysis Reporting System; Early Estimates of Motor Vehicle Traffic Fatalities and Fatality Rate by Sub-Categories in 2020, DOT HS 813 118, June 2021; AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety, Impact Speed and a Pedestrian's Risk of Severe Injury or Death; National Traffic Speeds Survey III: 2015, DOT HS 812 485, March 2018.

I thank Alders La Spata and Martin for the introduction of this resolution, and look forward to working with my city to create safer streets for all roadway users.

*Sincerely,
Carsten Lohan, 2nd Ward Resident*

Fraeda J. Ramirez, Submitted April 8, 2024:

*I support a 20mph speed limit on all two lane major streets such as Damen
I support a 30mph speed limit on all four lane major street such as Western
I support a 15mph speed limit on all one lane and two lane residential streets such as Oakley*

*I support speed cameras on all streets throughout the city
I support cameras or speed bumps at all stop signs. Sounds ridiculous, well, be the person who has to jump back on the curb because a driver is obviously not going to stop.*

Yes, cameras would cost a lot of money, but the city has become such a dangerous place for pedestrians and we don't have the police force needed to enforce traffic laws.

I was almost hit at Rockwell and Logan Blvd service drive when a woman ran the stop sign because she either not paying attention or was determined to make the green light at Rockwell and Logan Blvd.

Thank you for listening.

*Sincerely,
Freda Ramirez*

Beverly DeBlase, Submitted April 9, 2024:

I don't want this speed limit. It should remain what it is now. No 20MPH

Kaitlyn Higgins, Submitted April 9, 2024:

Please don't lower the speed limit. This is just a ruse to be able to make more money off of speed cameras and it's getting ridiculous. How about focusing energy on things that are actually hazardous to citizens — cracking down on actual criminals... Like the car jackers. If safety is truly the concern, put in more bike lanes.

*Thanks,
Kaitlyn*

Laura Nelson, Submitted April 9, 2024:

Please do not lower the default speed limit below 30 mph. The added bike lanes all over the city have already reduced parking and forced drivers to merge creating longer commute times. Reducing the speed limit will

further increase traffic and commute times. I currently live 5 miles from my job and it takes me 45 min to get to work by driving or taking the train and bus. Why not build another raised bike path similar to the 606 and get the bikers off the already crowded streets instead? Please don't make the problem worse by reducing the speed limit.

*Thanks,
Laura Nelson
Chicago Resident*

M. Hahn Wade, Submitted April 9, 2024:

I urge the committee to not make the streets of Chicago speed limit 20mph. This makes sense near schools and parks, but a 29 miles speed limit on LaSalle or Ashland would create heavier traffic, especially during rush hours.

I appreciate your consideration,

*M Hahn Wade
Chicago, IL 60614*

Michael K LaRue, Submitted April 8, 2024:

I understand that the city council is considering a law that would make the default speed limit in Chicago 20 MPH. While I fully agree that pedestrian safety should be prioritized, I also feel strongly that drivers are more likely to pay attention to limits they deem as reasonable, and many are likely to ignore those they deem unreasonable. A 20 MPH limit in school zone feels (to most) as awfully slow, but many (maybe even most) will slow their driving in recognition of the special circumstances (children in a school zone). On the other hand, a blanket (or default) speed limit that feels unreasonable will quite often be ignored because (as you might guess) it is simply deemed unreasonable. That dynamic was well established when national speed limits were reduced several decades ago and then, after the bulk of auto drivers increasingly ignored those limits, the limits were raised – often significantly. Let's learn from our shared experience: recognized that an overly restrictive default limit typically leads to drivers' resentment and the growing tendency to ignore those regulations deemed unreasonable. Simply put: set reasonable limits on a case-by-case basis.

*Michael K. LaRue - LaRue Associates
Chicago, IL 60618*

Sean MacMullan, Submitted April 8, 2024:

Hello,

I'm writing to voice my support of lowering the citywide default speed limit.

I'm a resident of Avondale, and one of the recommendations in the [neighborhood plan](#) that CMAP helped us create is to "Implement measures that can reduce traffic speeds" (Goal 4, Recommendation 2, Strategy 2). Lowering the speed limit at the city level would be a huge step in improving our neighborhood!

*Sincerely,
Sean MacMullan*

Faisal Akbari, Submitted April 8, 2024:

I'm writing to inform you of my opposition to lowering the City of Chicago default speed limit. This would impose an unnecessary hardship on people of color, minorities, lower income and essential workers.

Faisal

Phyllis Volk, Submitted April 8, 2024:

I'm opposed to a reduction in the speed limits to 20 mph in the City of Chicago. There are many 30 mph zones by parks and other reduced speed areas by schools but I think it is better to enforce the existing speed limits instead of lowering the limit further. I think if the City enforced existing speed limits it would make roads safer.

Phyllis Volk

Allen Villanueva, Submitted April 8, 2024:

I would vote AGAINST a 20 mph speed limit. Keep the speed limits just the way they are.

Allen Villanueva, AIA

STUDIO

Villanueva

Architecture, LLC

Avis Crasko, Submitted April 5, 2024:

As someone who walks 2+ miles through the 1st Ward on a daily basis, I put my life on the line every time I step out of my house. I can count on one hand how many cars actually stop at the posted signs. Most roll through them at a somewhat decreased speed, and maybe 25% don't even attempt to slow down. In addition, bicyclists are no better, as they fail to yield to people crossing the street or follow the rules of the road, constantly riding opposite the traffic flow. The installed speed bumps are useless, so that's not the answer. And my alderperson was simply dismissive when approached with the ongoing problem.

There's absolutely no reason to make laws and not enforce them, especially when pedestrians' safety is concerned.

It's time to make our neighborhood streets safer and install cameras/issue tickets, especially near the numerous area schools. It's extremely effective by Near North Montessori and Lane Tech High School. How do we make that happen in Wicker Park?

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Avis Crasko

Lisa Janoschka, Submitted April 7, 2024:

I drive a small car and have a perfect driving record. Plus I ride a bicycle, plus I ride a scooter. Most people in the city are totally against lowering the speed limit, especially to 20 mph. This is ridiculous for delivery drivers and essential workers who drive throughout the day. 30 mph is very reasonable. Enforce the 30 mph. This rule would affect essential workers more than anyone and is very discriminatory, literally adding hours to some people's commutes. It's a tax on low income people, higher income people are working from home and having everything delivered. Lower income people tend to live farther from their jobs, and the train and bus system in Chicago generally takes twice as long as driving.

The author of this bill wants to dictate his vision of no cars in the city, which is ridiculous. If you want to enact a law this sweeping, you need to put it to an actual vote, not rely on bicycle activist lobbyists who are obviously

running the first ward and much of the city. Repaint the street lanes and markers. Fix the potholes. That would make it safer for drivers and thus for everyone else. I often am driving children around, and elderly people. I can't take them on my bicycle! Also my partner is disabled.

The only reason pedestrian injuries might be going up, I don't know if they are but this is what people are implying, is the obvious one of people staring at their phones while they're crossing the street! So maybe make phones illegal. That would make more sense. This city will cease to run efficiently if we are all hindered by a ridiculous 20 mph speed limit. Even 25 mph is totally unnecessary. 30 mph is a great sweet spot. Just make the streets actually drivable, so many of them now are twisting and turning in random ways to accommodate all the new protected bike lanes for very few bikes, and they make driving a car like riding an obstacle course. Already parking spaces are disappearing at an astounding rate. Many businesses can't stay open because of the lack of parking, I personally know of two that closed in Logan Square in the last year due to parking being taken away.

*Thank you,
Lisa Janoschka
First Ward resident who is not wealthy*

Alec Schwengler, Submitted April 7, 2024:

Hi Committee on Pedestrian and Traffic Safety,

I want to provide the following comment for the upcoming meeting regarding the city default speed limit:

"As the committee is well aware, speed is the primary factor in survival rates for pedestrians hit by drivers. Lowering the default speed limit would be a step in the right direction to lowering the pedestrian fatality crisis our city is experiencing. 20 is plenty, especially for our residential streets where families are most likely to be walking and biking. I wholeheartedly support this move, and look forward to it being implemented."

*Regards,
Alec Schwengler*

Jack Richards, Submitted April 6, 2024:

Hello -

I strongly support lowering the citywide default speed limit to 15 or 20mph, and then forcing CDOT to design and enforce roads that encourage driving at these lower speeds.

Car drivers have increased the rates at which they speed through our neighborhood streets, and the incidence rates of pedestrian, cyclist, passenger, and driver injuries has risen accordingly. Chicago needs safer streets now.

Jack R

Neil Marklund, Submitted April 4, 2024:

Hello,

I am writing today to express my support for Alderman La Spata's ordinance to lower default speed limits to 25 mph in the city of Chicago. Slowing down vehicle speeds is a key first step in reducing the number of traffic violence incidents that occur on our streets. Every 1mph faster a car is travelling exponentially increases the chance of death if they strike a pedestrian or cyclist. Over the past 4 years, Chicago, like many cities across the country have seen an alarming increase in pedestrian fatalities. Our roads are dangerous and designed to signal to drivers that it is ok to speed at the expense of residents. While we wait for CDOT to implement more traffic

calming and design our streets so it is not comfortable for people to drive on them, this is the most immediate thing we can do now.

Other cities across the country have already adopted similar ordinances and there has not been any noticeable decrease in travel times for motorists. Chicago is behind. Cities like Boston, DC, Seattle, San Francisco, New York City, Atlanta, Minneapolis, St Louis, Charleston, Salt Lake City, Portland, and Detroit were some of the cities that have 25mph or lower default speed limits. To people who think this will increase traffic, it will simply not. Motorists average speed is already less than 25mph since a lot of the car journey is spent waiting in queues at traffic lights and stop signs. They are simply speeding just to wait at the next stoplight. I have seen this on my bike where a car will aggressively speed around me since they think I am in their way and I usually see them at the next stoplight queue. Additionally, research has shown that slower traffic speeds improve flow for everyone as drivers can be closer together as the braking distance is shorter. Also it is easier for cars to turn at an intersection if traffic is flowing slower on the road they are trying to turn on which reduces queue length.

Please implement this life-saving ordinance as soon as possible!

*Best,
Neil Marklund*

Erik Wotring, Submitted April 4, 2024:

Hello,

I am writing in favor of a proposed ordinance. As I understand it, Alders LaSpata and Martin are proposing an ordinance to reduce the citywide speed limit to 25 mph. I support this change.

Thanks,

*Erik Wotring
1800 West Roscoe Street*

Scott Wilson, Submitted April 3, 2024:

Love to see you guys get the speed limit lowered.

While we're at it, build the bike grid, add curb bump-outs to every intersection, make speed bumps mandatory on all residential streets, install traffic enforcement cameras everywhere, and fix the parking deal.

That's all you have to do.

*Thanks,
Scott*

Rich Frye, Submitted April 8, 2024:

Hello,

I drive a small car as well as a bicycle, skateboard, and electric unicycle. I am in favor of bicycle lanes. However, I think the idea to lower the standard speed limit in Chicago from 30 mph is ridiculous and unneeded.

This is a major city, the second or third biggest in the country depending on the week. Many have to drive long distances to commute, also to deliver food and deliver people. These tend to be lower income and essential workers. Now with the highway under construction for years, more people are commuting on streets like Ashland and Western. I can't imagine how badly traffic would be snarled with 20 mph speed limit. It just seems like insanity to suggest it.

The other day while on my bike I had to swerve to avoid a pedestrian walking into the street against the red light with a baby carriage. She didn't even look to the side. If I had been a car I might have hit her, even if I had been going 20 mph! This is happening more and more. People are on their phones and not paying attention to traffic. Pedestrians are actually endangering the lives of bikers and car drivers by walking around with their noses in their phones.

Instead of penalizing law abiding drivers, why not enforce the laws that are actually out there? Cars don't tend to stop at stop signs, so put cameras at stop signs. Put public service posters all over to remind people to look both ways before they cross the street! Give pedestrians and bike riders tickets if they flagrantly disobey the law.

This is a money grab for the city, to put speed cameras everywhere and reduce the quality of life for most people, while making a small but overly loud bike lobby happy. I've seen a lot of streets torn up and re-designed to accommodate 10 bicyclists per day. Although I ride a bike, this bike lobby will not be happy until every car is gone from the city.

All of my friends and I are definitely against this measure. I live in the First Ward and do not appreciate my Alderman sponsoring this without asking me or anyone I know.

*Thank you
Rich Frye
First Ward*

Robert Moranetz, Submitted April 2, 2024:

As a driver, a cyclist, and a pedestrian, I think it's important to lower the speed limit citywide. Non motorists are under increasing risk from distracted and reckless drivers. And for every 5 miles per hour reduced, the risk of death decreases significantly.

While enforcement is another aspect and excellent first step is to recognize the danger of high speed limits in a high density city like Chicago.

And street design is even more important than enforcement. But hopefully reducing speeds will lead to slower street design from CDOT and IDOT.

Thank you for your work on this.

Rony Islam, Submitted April 11, 2024:

The Committee on Traffic and Pedestrian Safety ,

As a constituent, I am reaching out to urge your backing for the reduction of the citywide default speed limit from 30 mph to 25 mph. Changing speed limits alone is shown to make streets safer in cities like Toronto and Seattle. <https://nacto.org/publication/city-limits/the-need/speed-limit-changes-have-bigimpacts/>

Chicago is currently grappling with a severe traffic safety issue. Over the last five years, there has been a concerning increase in both serious injuries and fatalities on our roads.

One of the primary contributing factors to these tragic accidents is speeding. This reckless behavior is frequently the leading cause of fatal crashes and severe injuries on our streets.

Those walking or cycling, particularly outside of vehicles, are particularly vulnerable to the dangers of traffic incidents, as are our most fragile community members, including children, seniors, and individuals with disabilities.

Moreover, in Chicago, where Black and Brown residents are disproportionately affected by traffic-related incidents, addressing dangerous speeding becomes not just a matter of safety but also one of public health equity.

Studies have demonstrated that lowering the speed limit has an immediate impact on driver behavior, effectively reducing speeds and ultimately saving lives. Numerous peer cities, including New York, Boston, San Francisco, Minneapolis, Milwaukee, and Indianapolis, have already taken proactive measures to lower speed limits, reaping the benefits of enhanced safety and livability. Importantly, this adjustment can be made without resorting to expanded enforcement methods that may be harmful or inequitable.

Any reduction in the speed limit should be accompanied by a clear commitment from the City of Chicago to invest in neighborhood improvements, prioritizing the redesign of our streets to promote safety and slower speeds.

I implore you to support initiatives aimed at making our streets safer for all Chicagoans by endorsing the reduction of the speed limit to 25 mph.

Colin McCarthy, Submitted April 11, 2024:

The Committee on Traffic and Pedestrian Safety ,

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I implore you to support initiatives aimed at making our streets safer for all Chicagoans by endorsing the reduction of the speed limit to 25 mph.

*Colin McCarthy
Chicago, Illinois 60657*

Wyatt Johnston, Submitted April 11, 2024:

The Committee on Traffic and Pedestrian Safety ,

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I implore you to support initiatives aimed at making our streets safer for all Chicagoans by endorsing the reduction of the speed limit to 25 mph.

*Wyatt Johnston
Chicago, Illinois 60657*

Anna Harris, Submitted April 11, 2024:

The Committee on Traffic and Pedestrian Safety ,

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One of the primary contributing factors to these tragic accidents is speeding. This reckless behavior is frequently the leading cause of fatal crashes and severe injuries on our streets.

Do you think it is reasonable that someone driving the speed limit is creating an unsafe situation on the road because someone behind me is reckless enough to weave around me into oncoming traffic to get around me? Do you think a speeding driver passing me in a bike lane is concerned about looking for cyclists or pedestrians waiting to cross before choosing to drive recklessly? Do you think the priorities of selfish, reckless, speeding drivers are put ahead of kids walking to school? Or elderly people crossing the street? These are behaviors I

witness EVERY SINGLE TIME I am commuting by car. It is disgusting, and it continues to be allowed.

Those walking or cycling, particularly outside of vehicles, are particularly vulnerable to the dangers of traffic incidents, as are our most fragile community members, including children, seniors, and individuals with disabilities.

Moreover, in Chicago, where Black and Brown residents are disproportionately affected by traffic-related incidents, addressing dangerous speeding becomes not just a matter of safety but also one of public health equity.

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Any reduction in the speed limit should be accompanied by a clear commitment from the City of Chicago to invest in neighborhood improvements, prioritizing the redesign of our streets to promote safety and slower speeds.

I implore you to support initiatives aimed at making our streets safer for all Chicagoans by endorsing the reduction of the speed limit to 25 mph.

*Anna Harris
Chicago, Illinois 60623*

Jordyn Schreiber, Submitted April 11, 2024:

The Committee on Traffic and Pedestrian Safety ,

As a daily bike-commuter in our beautiful city, Chicago, I am asking that you please back the reduction of the citywide default speed limit from 30 mph to 25 mph. We know from research that changing speed limits has been shown to make streets safer in cities like Toronto and Seattle. <https://nacto.org/publication/city-limits/the-need/speed-limit-changes-have-big-impacts/>

Sadly, bikers of Chicago, like myself, know all-too-well about traffic safety issues. Over the last five years, there's been a concerning increase in both serious injuries and fatalities on the streets of Chicago. One of the primary contributing factors to these tragic accidents is speeding. This reckless behavior is frequently the leading cause of fatal crashes and severe injuries on the road.

Those of us walking or cycling, particularly outside of vehicles, are particularly vulnerable to the dangers of traffic incidents, as are our most fragile community members, including children, seniors, and individuals with disabilities.

Moreover, in Chicago, where Black and Brown residents are disproportionately affected by traffic-related incidents, addressing dangerous speeding becomes not just a matter of safety but also one of public health equity.

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Any reduction in the speed limit should be accompanied by a clear commitment from the City of Chicago to invest in neighborhood improvements, prioritizing the redesign of our streets to promote safety and slower speeds.

I implore you to support initiatives aimed at making our streets safer for all Chicagoans by endorsing the reduction of the speed limit to 25 mph.

*Sincerely,
Jordyn Schreiber
A proud biker, walker, and constituent
Chicago, Illinois 60618-7651*

Mark Knapp, Submitted April 11, 2024:

The Committee on Traffic and Pedestrian Safety ,

As a constituent who loves how bikeable the city can be but hates how close to dying I come every time I have to share the road with careless drivers. I am reaching out to urge your backing for the reduction of the citywide default speed limit from 30 mph to 25 mph. Changing speed limits alone is shown to make streets safer in cities like Toronto and Seattle. <https://nacto.org/publication/city-limits/the-need/speed-limit-changes-have-big-impacts/>

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I implore you to support initiatives aimed at making our streets safer for all Chicagoans by endorsing the reduction of the speed limit to 25 mph.

*Mark Knapp
Chicago, Illinois 60647*

Doug vanderHoof, Submitted April 11, 2024:

The Committee on Traffic and Pedestrian Safety ,

Join the civilized cities that have made safety the goal of traffic laws and road design.

As a constituent, I am reaching out to urge your backing for the reduction of the citywide default speed limit from 30 mph to 25 mph. Changing speed limits alone is shown to make streets safer in cities like Toronto and Seattle. <https://nacto.org/publication/city-limits/the-need/speed-limit-changes-have-big-impacts/>

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I implore you to support initiatives aimed at making our streets safer for all Chicagoans by endorsing the reduction of the speed limit to 25 mph.

*Doug vanderHoof
Chicago, Illinois 60647*