

MassDOT Speed Limit Signage Program

*Informational Session
May 20 & 21, 2026*

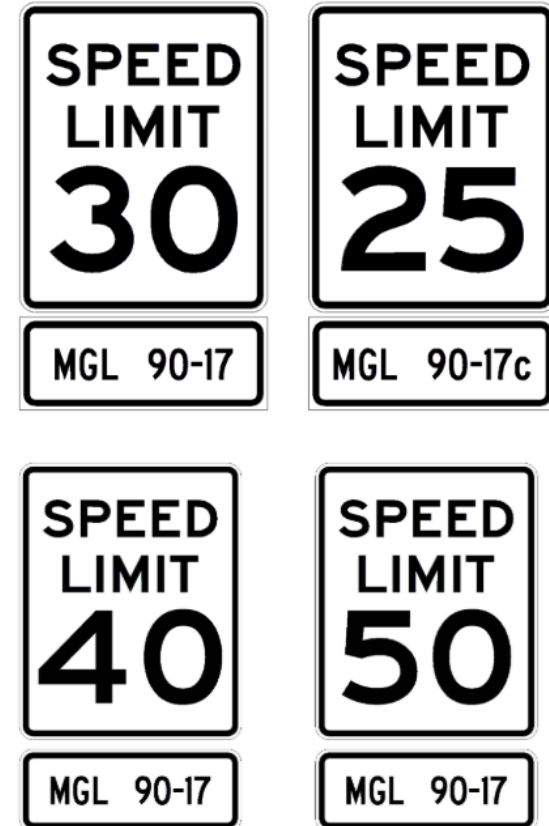


Presentation Overview

- Program Overview
- Municipal Responsibilities
- Regulatory vs. Statutory Speed Limits
- Speed Limit Signage Types
- How to Apply
- FAQs and Discussion

Program Overview

- The Speed Limit Signage Program is designed to help municipalities **manage speeds** and **improve roadway safety** by posting **existing speed limits**.
- This program will supply **speed limit signs**, statutory **placards**, and **posts** for mounting the signage.
- This program reflects recent changes to **Mass Amendments** to the MUTCD.
- **\$1 million** in funding for this FFY.
- MassDOT will review requests and approve requests based on **funding availability/demand**.



Municipal Responsibilities

- Identify **highest-priority locations** and request signage for those locations.
- Sign **MOA** confirming that municipality owns signage and commits to install and maintain signage in accordance with vendor specifications and MUTCD guidance.
 - MOA period = 2 years.
- Provide a **forklift** for sign delivery.
- Install signs within **90 days** of delivery.
- Within **7 days** of sign installation, transmit a photo to MassDOT depicting installed sign within roadway context.
 - MassDOT will establish a form for submitting this information.

Understanding Speed Limit Types

Regulatory Speed Limits

- Based on **speed studies** and governed by MassDOT's Speed Zoning Procedures.
- Adoption of regulatory speed limits is **optional**.
- **Enforcement:** Can be ticketed for exceeding speed limit at a point in time.

Statutory Speed Limits (focus of this program)

- Established by **legislation** where there are no regulatory speeds.
- Mass General Law (MGL) Statutory Speed Limits:
 - **50** mph on a divided highway outside of a thickly settled or business district
 - **40** mph on any way outside of a thickly settled or business district
 - **30** mph in a thickly settled or business district
 - **25** mph if municipality has opted into Section 17C
 - **20** mph at any point in a school or safety zone (not providing through this program)
- **Enforcement:** Can only be ticketed if exceed speed limit over a specific distance.

How Speed Limits Shape Behavior

- To effectively reduce vehicle speeds, speed limits should be part of a **broader strategy** that includes design changes + education.
- **Changing posted speed limits alone does not typically change the way people drive.** Speed limit reductions on high speed and high crash streets most effective when coupled with physical engineering interventions.
 - See the [Roadway Treatment Toolkit](#)
- MassDOT's end goal is that roadways are **self-enforcing**: based on the roadway design and speed management tools implemented, drivers will not go faster than the appropriate speed.

Example Design Features from Roadway Treatment Toolkit

Type of roadway treatment	Description
Vertical deflection countermeasures	Speed humps, raised pedestrian crossings, or raised intersections that raise roadways for various lengths to slow drivers.
Horizontal countermeasures	Median islands, chicanes or curves, or curb extensions that change the horizontal cross-section of a roadway. Chicanes are a series of curb extensions that alternate from one side of the street to the other, forming S-shaped curves that essentially narrow the roadway width and create an environment that slows down drivers.
Mini roundabouts and neighborhood traffic circles	Small-scale circular islands that act as a kind of intersection, offering yield-controlled entries and counterclockwise circulation in order to improve safety and reduce delays.
Road diets and marking measures	Strategies such as perceptual speed markings, road diets, and lane narrowing. A road diet is a roadway configuration that involves narrowing or eliminating travel lanes to calm traffic speeds and increase safety of all roadway users. Road diets do not automatically impact throughput or cause congestion, and when it does safety is the preferred tradeoff.
Speed transition zones, advisory, and feedback signage	Strategies to slow drivers traveling from a rural to an urban environment and signs that communicate recommended speed information and feedback to drivers.

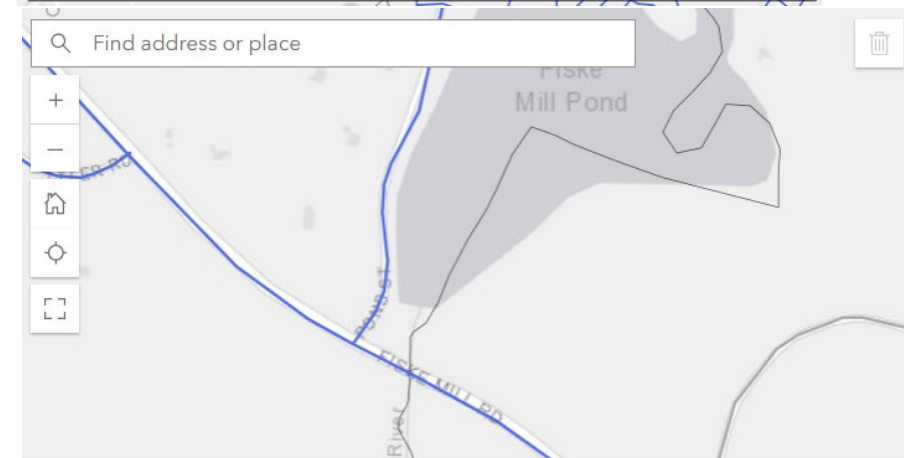
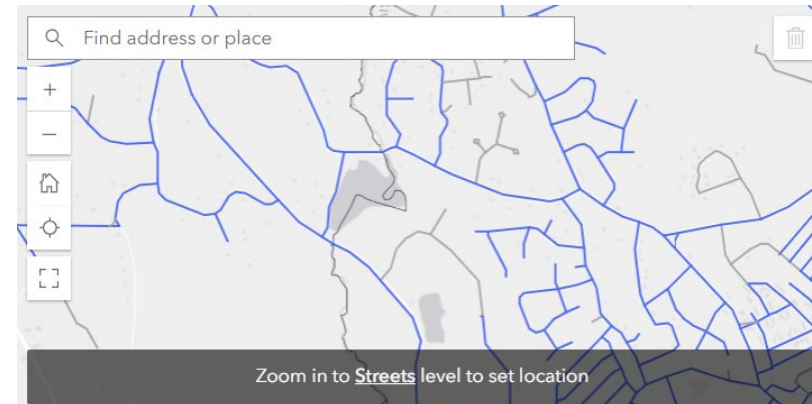
Application Survey Demo

Submitting Your Request – Form Overview

Requested information:

- Contact information
- Sign Address + Map Location
 - Note that the map is the ground truth
- Speed Limit to be Displayed
- Sign Direction
- Statutory Sign Type (90-17 or 90-17c)
- Sign mount type

Submission form map. You must zoom in to set a location. Only choose from blue roads.



Resources for Submitting Your Application

- You can find the Speed Limit Signage submission form [here](#).
- To determine whether there is a **speed regulation** on a roadway, please view the map embedded in the submission form. Roads marked in blue are municipally owned and governed by statutory speed limits.
- Another way to determine whether a roadway is **municipally or state owned** is through MassDOT's [Road Inventory Viewer](#). Roads in green are state owned.
- To determine if your municipality has **opted into 17c**, view the list of municipalities that have notified MassDOT of opt-in [here](#).
- Read more about speed limits in Massachusetts [here](#).

Key Dates and Next Steps



Frequently Asked Questions

How many signs can I request?

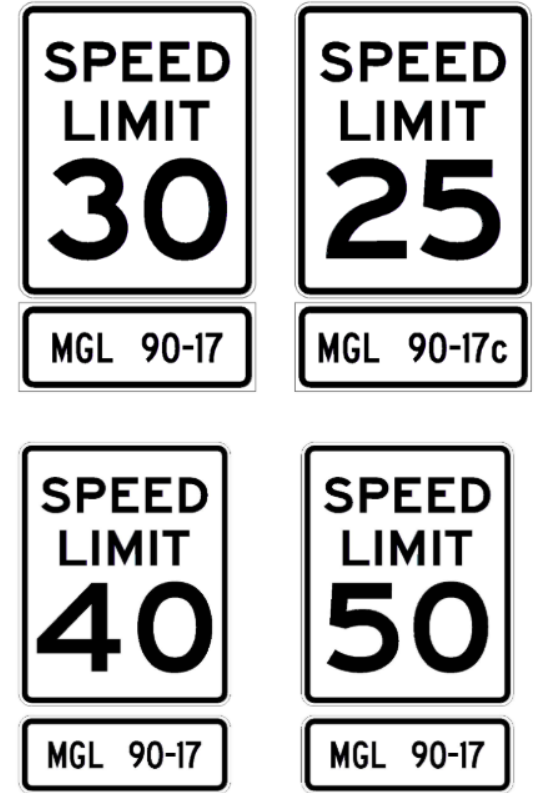
We recommend requesting no more than 10 signs as the first 10 will be prioritized. Signs allocated per municipality will depend on overall demand.

How do I know whether a roadway is designated as “thickly settled”?

You are responsible for determining whether your roadway qualifies as “thickly settled.” This is a qualitative assessment based on context. Some RPAs have data layers that define areas that are thickly settled. Reach out to [your RPA](#) to learn more.

Is MassDOT offering other types of signage beyond speed limits/placards?

No. This program is for statutory speed limit signage with placards only.



Contact

Evelyn.S.Densmore@dot.state.ma.us

Thank You

