



Illinois Department of Transportation

Office of Highways Project Implementation / Bureau of Local Roads & Streets
2300 South Dirksen Parkway / Room 205 / Springfield, Illinois / 62764

June 13, 2025

CIRCULAR LETTER 2025-09

CATEGORY: POLICY AND PRACTICES NOTIFICATION

POLICY RELATED TO SETTING SPEED LIMITS

COUNTY ENGINEERS / SUPERINTENDENTS OF HIGHWAYS / MUNICIPAL ENGINEERS / DIRECTORS OF PUBLIC WORKS / MAYORS / METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATIONS - DIRECTORS / TOWNSHIP HIGHWAY COMMISSIONERS / CONSULTING ENGINEERS / TRANSIT AGENCIES

IDOT has revised our policy on how speed limits are set. The new policy is included with this circular letter. The revisions are based on FHWA's 11th Edition of the Manual on Uniform Control Devices (MUTCD) and best practices in the industry.

Local agencies have some latitude with respect to the type of engineering study methodology they prefer. Section 11-1604 of the Illinois Vehicle Code provides specific regulations regarding the alteration of local speed limits which local agencies must follow. For consistency, and to ensure compliance with federal regulations and state statutes, IDOT recommends following this policy.

IDOT's new policy aligns with the requirements in the MUTCD which provides options other than use of the 85th percentile speed and it includes information on different roadway types and contexts.

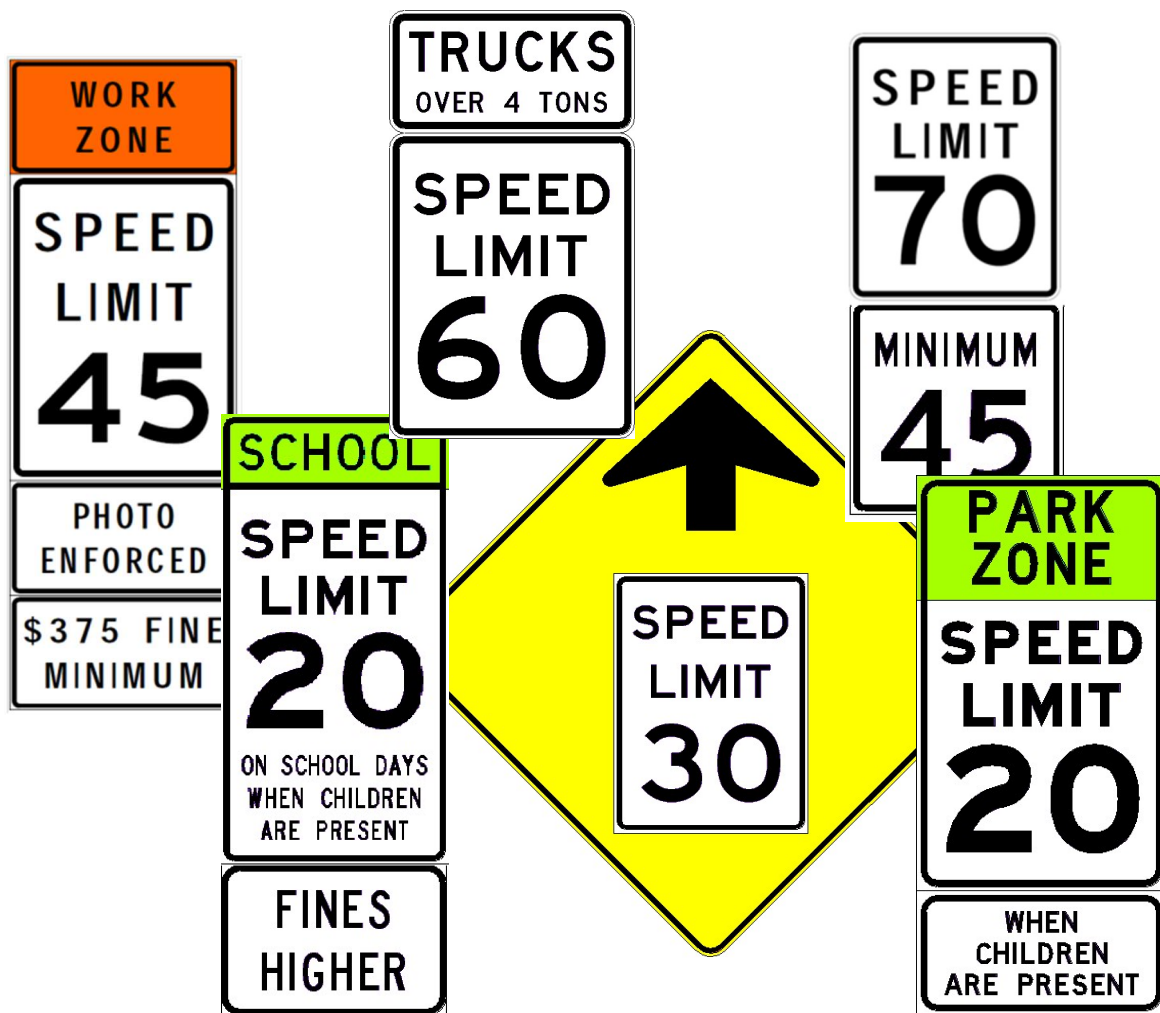
Inquiries and questions regarding this Circular Letter may be directed to Tim Peters, Local Policy and Technology Engineer, at tim.peters@illinois.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Gregory S. Lupton".

Gregory S. Lupton, P.E.
Acting Engineer of Local Roads and Streets

cc: Lora Rensing, Office of Highway Project Implementation
Mark Mathon, Illinois Association of County Engineers
Molly Rockford, Illinois Association of County Engineers
Brad Cole, Illinois Municipal League
Jerry Crabtree, Township Officials of Illinois
Craig Smith, Township Highway Commissioners of Illinois



Policy on Establishing and Posting Speed Limits on the State Highway System

Effective June 2025



Illinois Department of Transportation

POLICY ON ESTABLISHING AND POSTING SPEED LIMITS ON THE STATE HIGHWAY SYSTEM

ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION – BUREAU OF OPERATIONS

APPLICATION OF POLICY TO CITIES, COUNTIES AND OTHER LOCAL AGENCIES

The Illinois Vehicle Code does not require local agencies to obtain department approval for speed zones on roads under their respective jurisdictions. While the procedures contained in this policy may be used for altering speed limits on any public highway, use of such procedures by local agencies is not required by statute. If a local agency wishes to ask a district for review of a speed zone, the district may, of course, do so. However, when responding back to the agency, a statement should be included indicating that the comments are not to be considered as either approval or disapproval. Local Agencies should refer to Section 11-604 of the Illinois Vehicle Code for additional information and specific regulations regarding the alteration of speed limits on local roads.

GENERAL SPEED LIMITS

Speed limits on highways under the jurisdiction of the department shall be established on the basis of the latest revisions/editions to Chapter 11, Article VI of the Illinois Vehicle Code (IVC), the Illinois Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (IMUTCD), the Standard Specifications for Road and Bridge Construction, the Highway Standards and this policy. Night speed limits shall not be used.

A. Statutory Speed Limits

Section 11-601 of the IVC spells out the statutory speed limits in effect in Illinois. These limits may be enforced without any signing.

Outside Urban Districts

Freeways/Expressways

This category is defined as highways designated by the department which have at least 4 lanes of traffic where the traffic moving in opposite directions is separated by a strip of ground which is not surfaced or suitable for vehicle traffic. For the purposes of this policy, this includes all full freeways (Interstate and interstate-type freeways).

Interstate Highways

All vehicles except buses and trucks with gross weights of over 4 tons	70 mph
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Buses

(Outside of Cook, Dupage, Kane, Lake, McHenry, and Will Counties)	70 mph
(Within Cook, Dupage, Kane, Lake, McHenry, and Will Counties)	65 mph

Trucks with gross weights of over 4 tons

(Outside of Cook, Dupage, Kane, Lake, McHenry, and Will Counties)	70 mph
(Within Cook, Dupage, Kane, Lake, McHenry, and Will Counties)	60 mph

Non-Interstate Highways

All vehicles except trucks with gross weights of 4 tons or less	65 mph
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Trucks with gross weights of over 4 tons	
(Outside of Cook, Dupage, Kane, Lake, McHenry, and Will Counties)	65 mph
(Within Cook, Dupage, Kane, Lake, McHenry, and Will Counties)	55 mph

This also allows the department to apply these limits to designated sections of rural expressways with full control of access and at-grade intersections rather than interchanges. In general, this should only be done where engineering judgment indicates such limits may be safely accommodated. Short sections should be avoided.

Conventional Highways

All vehicle types	55 mph
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Inside Urban Districts (All vehicle types)

All streets and highways	30 mph
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Alleys	15 mph
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“Urban District” is defined in Section 1-214 of the IVC as “The territory contiguous to and including any street which is built up with structures devoted to business, industry or dwelling houses situated at intervals of less than 100 feet for a distance of a quarter of a mile or more.” Note that whether the street or highway in question is inside or outside of the corporate limits of a community is not included in this definition and therefore, is not applicable to the determination of where such statutory speed applies. This means that the statutory speed on an unposted street within the corporate limits of a community but outside an urban district would be 55 miles per hour. Also note that the structures referred to in the definition include only those that have direct vehicular access to the highway. Structures on both sides of the highway should be counted together in determining the interval. In addition, Section 11-601 of the IVC states that Interstate highways are not included in urban districts.

B. Altered Speed Limits

State statutes allow the department to alter certain of the statutory speeds either up or down (statutory speeds of 55, 65, or 70 miles per hour may only be altered downward). State statutes require that such altered speed limits be based on “... an engineering and traffic investigation”. Furthermore, the Illinois Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices requires roadway context and recommends the speed distribution of free-flowing vehicles including the median (50th-percentile), and 85th-percentile speeds be considered as part of an engineering study to establish an altered speed limit.

Recent national research (NCHRP 17-76) was conducted and completed in 2021 to develop recommendations for setting posted speed limits. This research introduced recommendations for implementing different percentile speeds and safety factors based on road type and roadway context/environment. This research was used to help determine the below procedures for altering statutory speeds.

The following investigation and selection criteria shall be used to determine altered speed limits on streets and highways under the jurisdiction of the department. While it is not mandatory that local agencies use this format and criteria, it is recommended. Regardless of the form the engineering and traffic investigation takes, it should be based on valid traffic engineering principals, an analysis of the speed distribution of free-flowing vehicles, and be well documented.

Perceived speed enforcement tolerances shall not be taken into account in the setting of speed limits.

Roadway Type and Context

The determination of which prevailing speed to use shall be based on the roadway type and roadway context of the speed study segment. Guidance for determining the proper roadway type and context to use is detailed below. Ultimately, engineering judgment should be used to make the final determination on selection of roadway types and contexts.

Roadway Types

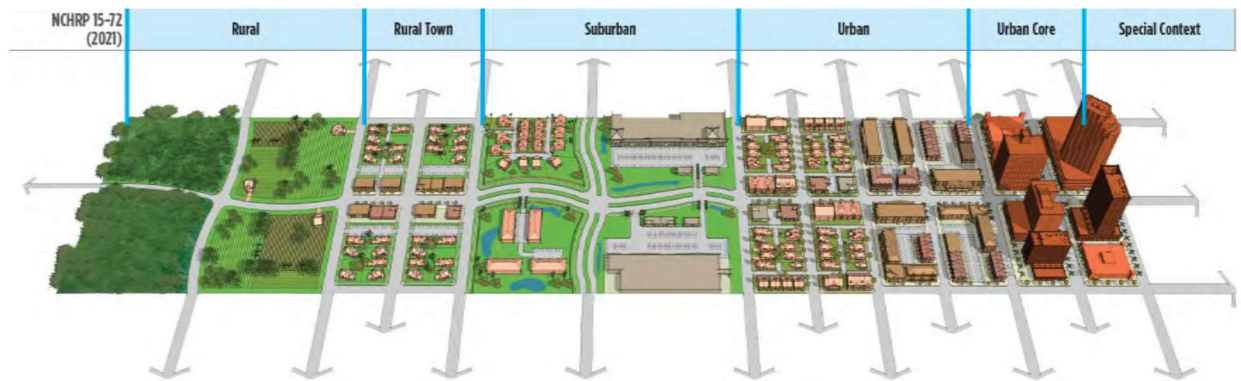
- Interstates/Freeways/Expressways: Corridors of national or regional importance with full or limited access control connecting large centers of activity.
- Principal Arterials: Corridors of regional importance connecting large centers of activity with little to no access control.
- Minor Arterials: Corridors of regional or local importance connecting centers of activity with little to no access control.
- Collectors: Roadways of lower local importance providing connections between arterials and local roads.
- Locals: Roads for local circulation and access only.

The IDOT IRoads Application contains roadway type information in a map format which may be used to help determine the proper roadway type classification for speed studies.

Roadway Contexts

- Rural: Roadways with little development that include land uses such as outdoor recreation, agriculture, and farms. Common building types are residential units and farm buildings. Population and building densities are low. The dominant mode of transportation is vehicles with few pedestrians and bicyclists and with transit that is limited or non-existent.
- Rural Town: Roadways with blended development concentrated along a short length with residential and commercial buildings. Vehicles predominate, although pedestrian and bicyclist activity is more common than in rural contexts. Transit is typically non-existent. Building setbacks are small while parking is usually available on or off street.
- Suburban: Roadways with low to medium development and residential, commercial, or office land uses. Along with vehicles, some bicyclists and pedestrians are present, and sometimes transit. Driveway access is medium to high; and parking is often available off street and in dedicated lots.
- Urban: Roadways that are highly developed with mainly residential, commercial, institutional, or office land uses. Building and population densities are high. Medium to high numbers of bicyclists and pedestrians mixed with vehicles. Transit is common. Intersection frequency is medium to high; and parking may be found on street and in dedicated lots.

- Urban Core: Roadways with the highest levels of development, with mainly residential, commercial, or institutional land uses. Building and populations densities are high. Block sizes are small. Higher volumes of bicyclists, pedestrians, and transit are present. Intersection frequency is high; and parking is available on street and in dedicated parking garage facilities.



Prevailing Speed

The determination of the prevailing speed of free-flowing traffic is the basic step in establishing an altered speed limit either lower or higher than the statutory limit (statutory speeds of 55, 65, or 70 miles per hour may only be altered downward). The prevailing speed is based on either the 50th percentile speed or 85th percentile speed measured during free-flowing traffic conditions and based on roadway type and context.

50th PERCENTILE SPEED: The 50th percentile or average speed is defined as the speed at or below which half or 50% of the vehicles are travelling.

85th PERCENTILE SPEED: The 85th percentile speed is defined as the speed at or below which 85 percent of the vehicles are traveling.

The selection of 50th or 85th Percentile Speed shall be based on the Table below:

Roadway Type	Roadway Context				
	Rural	Rural Town	Suburban	Urban	Urban core
Interstates/Freeways/Expressway	85th	85th	85th	85th	85th
Principal/Minor Arterial	85th	85th	85th	50th	50th
Collector/Local	85th	50th	50th	50th	50th

85th percentile speeds may be utilized rather than 50th percentile speeds for study zones consisting of urban principal arterials or urban minor arterials if all the following conditions exist:

- The zone being studied does not contain a portion of a safety tier - high segment or contain a safety tier - high intersection as shown on the most recent safety tier report as distributed by the Bureau of Safety Programs and Engineering.
- The number of access conflicts per mile within the zone being studied is 60 or less.
- There is little to no bicycle or pedestrian activity within the zone being studied.
- There is no parking permitted adjacent to travel lanes within the zone being studied.

These percentile speeds are determined on the basis of spot speed studies, normally made with a concealed radar or laser speed meter, or through continuously gathered traffic speed data.

Spot speed studies should be made as close as practical to the center of the zone which is being studied. If the zone is in excess of one mile in length in rural areas or 1/2 mile in urban areas, studies should be made at two or more locations. Care must be exercised to be sure that the data are collected in such manner and at such times that they are a true indication of normal conditions. Such conditions normally prevail under good weather conditions, on dry pavement, during daylight hours, outside of rush periods, and on any day except weekends or holidays. Observations should not be made immediately following a crash, when traffic is influenced by construction or maintenance operations, or during a period of greater than normal enforcement. Every effort should be made to conceal the fact that speeds are being recorded.

For spot speed studies, speeds should be observed for at least 100 passenger cars/vans and pickup trucks in each lane in each direction. Speeds of vehicles over four tons in size should not be used in determining altered speed zones. On lower-volume roads where it would be difficult to sample 100 vehicles in each direction, the study may be terminated after three hours. When traffic is travelling in platoons, the speed of the lead vehicle(s) should be used. Following vehicles tend to base their speeds on the lead vehicle. Use of following vehicles will tend to bias the recorded speeds downward.

AVERAGE TEST RUN SPEED: For speed study locations where objective speed measurements cannot be obtained, or where a speed data collection vehicle cannot be sufficiently inconspicuous to have no effect on speed measurements, average test run speeds may be used to determine a prevailing speed on the basis of five vehicle runs in each direction over the length of the proposed zone. It is not necessary to use an unmarked vehicle, however the use of any vehicle which might be mistaken for a law enforcement vehicle should be avoided. Observations should be made under the same general conditions noted above for spot speed studies. The prime consideration in use of test runs is to approximate the median speed. To accomplish this, the driver should try to "float" in the traffic stream. On multi-lane roads, the driver should pass as many vehicles as pass the test car. Test run speeds should not be used on lower-volume roads or when using continuously gathered traffic speed data and should not be included when determining the prevailing speed for very short zones or for any specific type of vehicle other than passenger cars/vans.

Supplementary Investigations

Non-Interstate Highways

The selected Altered Speed Limit should differ from the established prevailing speed (not the proposed posted speed) when justified by further investigation which includes the following conditions:

1. **SAFETY FACTOR:** If the zone being studied contains a portion of a safety tier - high segment or contains a safety tier - high intersection as shown on the most recent safety tier report as distributed by the Bureau of Safety Programs and Engineering, the prevailing speed should be reduced by 10%. Engineering judgment may also be used to apply this reduction factor if there are known concerns with a high volume of speed-related crashes within the study segment.

2. **ACCESS CONTROL:** The effect of driveways and other entrances is determined by using an "access conflict number." For this purpose, field entrances or driveways to single-family dwellings shall have a conflict number of 1. Minor commercial entrances and driveways serving multi-family residential units and minor street intersections shall have a conflict number of 5. Major commercial entrances, driveways serving large multi-family developments and major street intersections shall have a conflict number of 10. If the total access conflict number within a proposed zone exceeds those shown in the following table, the prevailing speed should be reduced by the percentages indicated.

<u>Access Conflicts Per Mile</u>	<u>Percent Reduction in Speed</u>
40 or less	0
41 - 60	5
61 or more	10

3. **PEDESTRIAN ACTIVITY:** Where pedestrian activity is high and no sidewalks are provided or where sidewalks are located immediately behind the curb, the prevailing speed should be reduced by 5 percent. Pedestrians crossing at intersections or established crossing points may be considered if the point of crossing is uncontrolled.

4. **BICYCLE ACTIVITY:** Where bicycle activity is high and where no bike lanes or no separated bike lanes are present, the prevailing speed should be reduced by 5 percent.

5. **PARKING:** The prevailing speed should be reduced by 5 percent where parking is permitted adjacent to the traffic lanes.

6. **MISCELLANEOUS:** Other factors such as roadway characteristics may be included in the investigation based on engineering judgment. These factors may include lane widths, shoulder condition, grade, alignment, median type, and sight distance. Normally, isolated curves/turns and no-passing zones should not be considered as the basis for alteration of speed limits. A review of any past speed studies should also be conducted to help identify any trends in operating speeds.

To determine the proposed altered speed limit, apply the percentage corrections resulting from the above supplementary factors to the prevailing speed and select the closest 5 mile per hour increment. For speed studies where the 50th percentile speed is used to determine the prevailing

speed, the proposed altered speed limit should not differ either upward or downward from the prevailing speed by more than 5 mph. This will likely result in simply rounding down the prevailing speed to the nearest 5 mile per hour increment to establish the altered speed limit if any supplementary factors are applied. This is based on findings from NCHRP 17-76 research that crashes on city streets were lowest when operating speed was within 5 miles per hour of the 50th percentile speed. For speed studies where the 85th percentile speed is used to determine the prevailing speed, the proposed altered limit should not differ either upward or downward from the prevailing speed by more than 9 mph or 20% whichever is less. Next, compare the proposed altered speed limit to the speeds collected in the spot speed study or from continuously gathered traffic speed data and determine the anticipated violation rate. If the anticipated violation rate exceeds 50 percent, the appropriate police agency(ies) should be notified that extra enforcement efforts may be necessary and the district office should consider future implementation of other speed management strategies and geometric design features including but not limited to:

- Narrowed lanes
- Chicanes
- Gateways and corner extensions
- Median islands

In no case should the posted speed limit be greater than the design speed of the roadway.

Differences in posted speeds between adjacent altered speed zones should not be more than 10 miles per hour.

Interstate Highways

The selected Altered Speed Limit may differ from the established prevailing speed (not the proposed posted speed) by up to 15 miles per hour or 25 percent whichever is less when justified by further investigation. The length of an Interstate highway segment to be studied should be between 2 and 10 miles long. Segments which are marked with multiple Interstate designations should be studied separately from adjacent single-marked sections. Such investigations shall be limited to studying any or all of the following conditions:

1. The zone being studied contains a safety tier – high segment as shown on the most recent safety tier report as distributed by the Bureau of Safety Programs and Engineering.

2. Access point density greater than 3 points/mile. The study segment must include a minimum of 2 interchanges for this requirement to be met. Access points include all ramp exits and entrances for both directions. A standard diamond interchange would consist of 4 access points. A standard cloverleaf interchange would consist of 8 access points. Rest area and weigh station exits and entrances should also be included in this calculation. Median crossovers should not be included. Entrances and exits for collector/distributor roads should also be included when calculating access point density.

3. Total ADT is above the following minimum values for the entire length of the study segment (“# of lanes” includes lanes for both directions). (Collector/distributor roads should be included when calculating ADT.)

4-lane:	50,000
6-lane:	75,000
8-lane:	100,000

10-lane:	125,000
12-lane:	150,000
14-lane:	175,000

4. The study segment includes exit ramps with an advisory speed of 30 mph or less and where traffic routinely slows down on the mainline Interstate while approaching the exit.

5. The study segment includes exit ramps where traffic routinely queues back onto the Interstate mainline and other methods of reducing these queues have been implemented without success.

6. The study segment includes areas where traffic routinely travels at less than 45 mph for at least 4 hours a day.

These conditions do not apply to transition zones where the speed limit is decreased because an Interstate highway is ending and transitioning to a conventional highway or where necessary to provide an orderly transition to an adjacent Tollway or neighboring state's speed limit. Speed limits for these transition zones may be decreased based upon engineering judgment. Altered speed limits of 50 or 45 mph based on the conditions above may be transitioned in increments of 10 to 15 mph from a statutory 70 mph speed limit. Any transition zone should be at least 1/2 mile in length.

To determine the proposed altered speed limit, either use the calculated prevailing speed, or apply adjustment factors resulting from any or all of the above conditions to the prevailing speed, and select the closest 5 mile per hour increment. In no case, however, should the proposed altered speed limit differ either upward or downward from the prevailing speed by more than 15 miles per hour or by more than 25 percent, whichever is less. Interstate speed limits shall not be altered above the maximum statutory speed limit and should not be altered below 45 mph.

Adjustment factors for Interstate Highways

- If conditions 1 or 2 are met, a **0.95** adjustment factor may be applied
- If conditions 1 and 2 are met, a **0.90** adjustment factor may be applied
- A **0.975** adjustment factor may be applied for each of conditions 3 through 6 that are met

Example:

Prevailing speed = 68 mph

Conditions 1 and 2 are met: (0.90) adjustment factor

Conditions 3, 5, and 6 are met: (0.975)*(0.975)*(0.975) adjustment factor

$$68 * (0.90) * (0.975) * (0.975) * (0.975) = 56.7$$

Round to **55 mph** (within 15 mph and 25% of 68 mph)

C. Posting of General Speed Limits

Speed Reduction Signs

A Speed Reduction sign (W3-5) shall be erected in advance of any non-work zone speed zone that is 10 miles per hour or more under the passenger car limit in a preceding statutory or altered limit of 45 miles per hour or more and should be erected at other locations where engineering judgment indicates the need. It shall be placed approximately 500 to 600 feet in advance of the lower speed zone and shall always be followed by a basic speed limit sign erected at the beginning of the zone.

On divided and one-way facilities having two or more lanes in one direction, the Speed Reduction signs, where used, and the first basic speed limit sign for the altered speed zone, shall be installed on both sides of the roadway except in situations where insufficient room exists in a median. Red 18-inch metal retroreflectorized "flags" shall be installed on the Speed Reduction signs, if used, preceding any transition from a 65 or 70 miles per hour zone to a lower speed zone. These red "flags" shall also be installed on the first speed limit signs for a lowered speed zone from a preceding 65 or 70 miles per hour zone.

When speed zones on rural highways extend only through signalized intersections, speed limit signs for the altered zones shall be installed at least 1,000 feet prior to the intersections on both sides of the roadway except in situations where insufficient room exists in a median. Normally, such altered zones should be terminated approximately 500 feet beyond the intersection.

Speed Limit Signs

Speed limit signs shall be posted at points of entry to the state even where the preceding speed limit in the adjacent state is the same. The signs should be placed as close to the state line as possible. On conventional rural highways, speed limit signs should also be posted after major highway intersections, and at such other locations as necessary to ensure that there is at least one sign every 10 miles. On Interstate highways and other full freeways, speed limit signs should be placed following the entrance ramps from all except very closely spaced interchanges, and at such other locations as necessary to ensure that there is at least one sign every 10 miles.

The prohibition on the use of electronic speed detection devices within 500 feet beyond certain speed limit signs in the direction of travel (Section 11-602 of the IVC) shall not be taken into account in the placement of speed limit signs.

The following spacings for speed limit signs are recommended in altered speed zones and for 30 mph zones in urban areas. All speed zones, either altered or statutory, shall be posted on state highways.

<u>Posted Speed</u>	<u>Sign Spacing</u>
30 mph or less	660 ft to 1,320 ft (2 to 4 blocks)
35 or 40 mph	990 ft to 1,980 ft (3 to 6 blocks)
45 or 50 mph	1,320 ft to 2,640 ft (4 to 8 blocks)
55 mph or above	2 to 10 miles

Some speed limit signs for freeways/expressways where the speed limit differs between trucks over 4 tons and all other vehicles shall include an additional 'Trucks Over 4 Tons' R2-1109 plaque. This plaque shall be installed above the first 55 mph speed limit sign entering the dual speed zone and the first speed limit sign exiting the dual speed zone. Red 18-inch metal retroreflectorized flags shall also be installed on the first 55 mph speed limit sign entering a dual speed zone.

Minimum Speed Limit Signs

A MINIMUM 45 mph speed plaque (R2-I101) shall be placed below each basic 60, 65, or 70 mph speed limit sign (R2-1) for fully access-controlled freeways only. It may be omitted where closely spaced interchanges or volume/capacity restraints make compliance with a 45 mph minimum speed limit impractical. A minimum speed shall not be used with 55 mph or lower speed limits.

SCHOOL SPEED LIMITS

School speed limits on highways under the jurisdiction of the department shall be established on the basis of Article VI of the Illinois Vehicle Code (IVC), Part 7 of the Illinois Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (IMUTCD) and this policy.

Section 11-605 of the IVC allows establishment of 20 miles-per-hour speed limits on streets and highways passing schools or upon any street or highway where children pass going to and from school. Such established limit is to be in effect "On a school day when school children are present and so close thereto that a potential hazard exists because of the close proximity of the motorized traffic..." It further defines school days as beginning at 6:30 a.m. and ending at 4 p.m. Such a zone may be established for public, private and religious nursery, primary or secondary schools.

An engineering and traffic investigation shall be conducted to determine whether or not a school speed zone is warranted. The investigation shall consider such factors as the existing traffic control, whether school crosswalks are present or not, the type, character, volume and crash history of vehicular traffic, and the ages and numbers of schoolchildren likely to be present. It shall also consider where the children would be located in relation to the traffic.

Speed zones should be limited to those locations where school buildings or grounds devoted primarily to normal school day activities are adjacent to the highway or where groups of children cross or walk adjacent to the highway on their way to and from a school. Areas devoted primarily to athletic or other extracurricular activities should not be zoned.

The limits of school speed zones should be determined based upon where children are likely to be present and not based upon the limits of the school property. There are situations, primarily in rural areas, where the school-owned property line is some distance from the actual portion of the property occupied by the school and there are no children walking or present along that portion of the property. Establishing a 20 mile-per-hour school speed limit based solely on the location of the property line would be inappropriate. Conversely, it might be appropriate to impose a 20 mile-per-hour school speed limit some distance ahead of the property line where children walk close to the highway on their way to and from school and such path is part of a planned school walk route.

Speed zones should not be established for crossings where schoolchildren are protected by devices such as stop signs or traffic signals. An exception may be made when the speed zone serves to protect children walking on or immediately adjacent to the roadway in the school area.

Speed zones should not be established when the school or school grounds are completely isolated from the highway by means of a fence or other barrier, and no access to the highway is provided. They should also not be established for crossing where an underpass or overpass is provided or for school entrances used for buses or private vehicles carrying children to and from school.

The beginning of a school speed zone should be marked with a school speed limit 20 mph sign (S4-I100 or S4-I101) with a FINES HIGHER sign (R2-6P) mounted underneath. The end of a school speed zone should be marked with the appropriate standard speed limit sign (R2-1) and an END SCHOOL ZONE sign (S5-2) mounted underneath.

WORK ZONE SPEED LIMITS

A. Altered Speed Limits

- All roadway types with no lane closure.

The existing speed limit should not be lowered when there is no lane closure. A work zone speed limit which matches the existing regulatory speed limit may be established except for intermittent/moving operations and work along ramps.

If a justification from Section C below is met and cannot be immediately corrected, a reduction of up to 10 mph should be considered for roadways with a speed limit of 65 mph or less. A reduction of 15 mph should be considered for roadways with a speed limit of 70 mph. This reduction shall be based on engineering judgment and shall be approved by the District Operations Engineer.

- Existing 70, 65, or 60 mph - Multilane: Speed Limit Reduction to 55 mph

55 mph Work Zone Speed Limit signs (see Art. 701.14(b) of the Standard Specifications for Road and Bridge Construction) shall be used to reduce posted speed limits from 70, 65, or 60 mph to 55 mph in construction work zones with lane closures or crossovers as shown on the Highway Standards or as noted in the traffic control plans. Reduced Speed Zone Ahead Signs (W3-5) shall be posted 500 ft. in advance of the first work zone speed limit signs for roadways with posted speed limits of 70 mph. For this requirement to be added to an ongoing contract, it must be approved by the District Operations Engineer. Work Zone Speed Limit signs may also be used to reduce the existing speed limit to 55 mph if engineering judgment indicates the reduced speeds are necessary (See Section C). Approval of the District Operations Engineer is required. These signs shall be removed or covered when the reduced speed limit is not applicable.

- Existing 70, 65, or 60 mph - Multilane: Speed Limit Reduction to 45 mph When Workers are Present

45 mph Work Zone Speed Limit signs (see Art. 701.14(b) of the Standard Specifications for Road and Bridge Construction) within the lane closure shall be used when workers are present in the closed lane adjacent to traffic and are not protected by temporary concrete barrier. This sign may be used in conjunction with other Work Zone Speed signs to drop the 55 mph Work Zone Speed Limit to 45 mph.

If conditions that warrant these signs develop during construction, the signs may be added to the contract upon approval of the District Operations Engineer (See Section C). These signs shall be utilized as indicated in the Highway Standards and as noted by the designer in the traffic control plans. The signs shall be covered, turned or removed when workers are no longer present.

- Existing 45 - 55 mph – Multilane: Work Zone Speed Limit 45 established

Work Zone Speed Limit signs for existing multilane 45 to 55 mph speed limits shall be as shown on the Highway Standards and as noted in the traffic control plans. The signing changes an existing 45 mph speed limit to a 45 mph work zone speed limit. A reduction in the speed limit beyond 10 mph is not recommended and design changes should be considered that will allow traffic to safely move at 45 mph.

- No Speed Limit Reduction – Multilane with speed limit below 45 mph and lane closure

The existing speed limit should not be lowered. A work zone speed limit which matches the existing regulatory speed limit may be established except for intermittent/moving operations with a moving lane closure.

If a justification from Section C is met and cannot be immediately corrected, a reduction of up to 10 mph should be considered. This reduction shall be based on engineering judgment and shall be approved by the District Operations Engineer.

- No Speed Limit Reduction – All 2-Lane roadways with lane closure

The existing speed limit should not be lowered and a work zone speed limit should not be established.

If a justification from Section C is met and cannot be immediately corrected, a reduction of up to 10 mph should be considered. This reduction shall be based on engineering judgment and shall be approved by the District Operations Engineer.

B. Increased Fines in Work Zones

The applicable highway construction or maintenance speed limit fines are specified in Section 11-605.1 of the IVC.

The work zone must be posted according to the requirements for Work Zone Speed Limit signs. For the increased fines to be enforceable, the Minimum Fine Sign, and the WORK ZONE Sign must be present as shown in the applicable Highway Standards.

C. Justifications for Work Zone Speed Limit Reductions

The following may be additional reasons for reducing an existing speed limit in a work zone or for establishing a work zone speed limit in excess of 10 mph below the existing speed limit. This reduction should be based on engineering judgment, documented, and approved by the District Operations Engineer.

- Narrow lane width of 10 feet or less
- Drop-offs
- Temporary road alignment where a design for higher speed operation is not feasible due to space requirements or other factors
- Inadequate sight distance

D. Posting of Work Zone Speed Limit Signs

Work Zone Speed Limit Signs shall be posted according to Article 701.14(b) of the Standard Specifications for Road and Bridge Construction, the applicable Highway Standards, and as shown on the design plans. When Work Zone Speed Limit Signs are installed, the permanent speed limit signs within the limits of the work zone shall be removed or covered. The following reasons should be considered when determining whether to install **optional** work zone speed limit signs where the work zone speed limit matches the existing regulatory speed limit,

- Duration of work
- Ease of installation of work zone speed limit signs and removal or covering of existing speed limit signs
- If there is adequate space to install signs
- If there is adequate sight distance
- If installing optional work zone speed limit signs may put workers in undue danger from traffic

MISCELLANEOUS SPEED POLICIES

A. Blanket Speed Limit Signs

Posting of signs indicating general municipal speed limits, such as "SPEED LIMIT 25 ON VILLAGE STREETS," shall not be used on state highways. Section 11-604 of the IVC requires that speed limit signs be placed "...at the proper place or along the proper part or zone of the highway or street." The Office of Chief Counsel has determined that this requires each individual altered speed zone be signed.

B. Radar Warning Signs

SPEED RADAR TIMED, or other similar signs, shall not be used on state highways. An Illinois Attorney General's Opinion (1966-196) stated that such signs were not necessary for enforcement.

C. Aerial Speed Check Markings

Where requested by the Illinois State Police, aerial speed check markings on state highways may be placed in accordance with the guidelines contained in Section 7-401.21 of the Bureau of Operations Traffic Policies and Procedures Manual.

D. Design, Posted, and Operating Speeds

To prevent potential safety issues, the design speed selected to determine the design features of a roadway should approximately equal the target speed or anticipated posted speed after construction as determined by the requirements of this policy. Target speed is defined as the highest operating speed at which vehicles should ideally operate on a roadway in a specific context. The designer should coordinate the design speed selection with the District Bureau of Operations anticipated posted speed limit selection. In no case should the posted speed limit be greater than the design speed of the roadway. See Chapter 31 of the Bureau of Design and Environment Manual for further information.

E. Curbed Sections

Sections with continuous barrier curbs at or near the edge of pavement should be avoided in areas where operating speeds can be expected to be greater than 45 mph. However, where a speed study justifies a speed limit of 50 mph or greater, the posted limit may be reduced to 45 mph upon the written approval of the District Operations Engineer. If the curbed section is short, such as with channelizing in conjunction with a freeway interchange, the operating speed should be used.

F. Two-Way Left Turn Lanes

Two-way left turn lanes should be avoided in areas where operating speeds can be expected to be greater than 45 mph. However, where a speed study justifies a speed limit of 50 mph or greater, the posted limit may be reduced to 45 mph upon the written approval of the District Operations Engineer.

G. Park Zone Speed Limits

Park Zone speed limits on roads under the jurisdiction of local agencies may be established on the basis of Section 11-605.3 of the IVC and part 2 of the Illinois Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (IMUTCD).

Section 11-605.3 of the IVC allows local agencies to establish Park Zones and Park Zone Speed Limits by ordinance or resolution on streets and highways under their jurisdictions which abut parks. It does not allow the posting of a 20 mph Park Zone Speed Limit along streets or roads under the jurisdiction of the Illinois Department of Transportation.

A reduction in the speed limit along an abutting street under the jurisdiction of the department could be established in accordance with Section 11-602 of the IVC where warranted by a speed study. However, such a reduction in the speed limit would be signed as a normal speed limit and not as a “park zone speed.”

If requested by local agencies, districts may post Illinois Standard W15-I100 PARK ZONE signs on abutting streets and highways under the jurisdiction of the department if the local agency has established and signed a park zone. These signs may be installed regardless of whether a “park zone speed limit” has been established or not.

SPOT SPEED STUDY

DIST: _____ CITY/LOCATION: _____ ROUTE: _____ DATE: _____ DAY: _____

CHECK NO.	RECORDER	HOURS FM: _____ M TO: _____ M	WEATHER	SURFACE WET DAMP DRY	_____ FT. MI. E W N S OF	METER ON E W N S SIDE	TRAFFIC CHECKED: EB WB NB SB	85TH PERCNTLE	UPPER LIMIT 10 MPH PACE	POSTED LIMIT MPH	VIOLATION RATE
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NUMBER OF VEHICLES										
MPH	5	10	15	20	25	30	35	40	45	
20										
21										
22										
23										
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ABOVE 85 MPH, LIST INDIVIDUALLY: _____

**ESTABLISHMENT OF SPEED ZONE
DISTRICT _____**

ROUTE: _____ **FROM:** _____

TO: _____ **LENGTH:** _____

CITY: _____ **COUNTY:** _____

I SPOT SPEED STUDIES (Attached)

CHECK NO.	50 th %	85 th %

II TEST RUNS

RUN NO.	AVG. SPEED	DIRECTION
1		
2		
3		
4		
5		

III PREVAILING SPEED

85 TH %:	_____	MPH
50 th %:	_____	MPH
PREVAILING SPEED:	_____	MPH

IV EXISTING SPEED LIMIT

ZONE BEING STUDIED:	_____	MPH
VIOLATION RATE:	_____	%
ADJACENT ZONE N or W:	_____	MPH
LENGTH:	_____	MILES
ADJACENT ZONE S or E:	_____	MPH
LENGTH:	_____	MILES

V ACCESS CONFLICTS

RESIDENTIAL DRIVES:	_____	X 1 =	_____
SMALL BUSINESS DRIVES:	_____	X 5 =	_____
LARGE BUSINESS DRIVES:	_____	X10 =	_____
ACCESS CONFLICT NO. TOTAL: _____			
STUDY LENGTH: _____ = _____			
(MILES)		CONFLICTS / MILE	

VI SUPPLEMENTARY INVESTIGATIONS

PEDESTRIAN ACTIVITY: _____			
BICYCLE ACTIVITY: _____			
SAFETY TIER-HIGH:	_____	YES	_____ NO
PARKING PERMITTED:	_____	YES	_____ NO

VII PREVAILING SPEED ADJUSTMENT

ACCESS CONTROL ADJUSTMENT:	_____	%
PEDESTRIAN ADJUSTMENT:	_____	%
BICYCLE ADJUSTMENT:	_____	%
CRASH ADJUSTMENT:	_____	%
TOTAL:	_____	%
_____ MPH X _____ % = _____		
(Prevailing Speed) (adjust.)		
ADJUSTED PREVAILING SPEED: _____		

VIII REVISED SPEED LIMIT

RECOMMENDED SPEED LIMIT:	_____	MPH
ANTICIPATED VIOLATION RATE:	_____	%
RECOMMENDED BY: _____		
DATE: _____		
APPROVED BY: _____		
DATE: _____		