

SPEED LIMITS

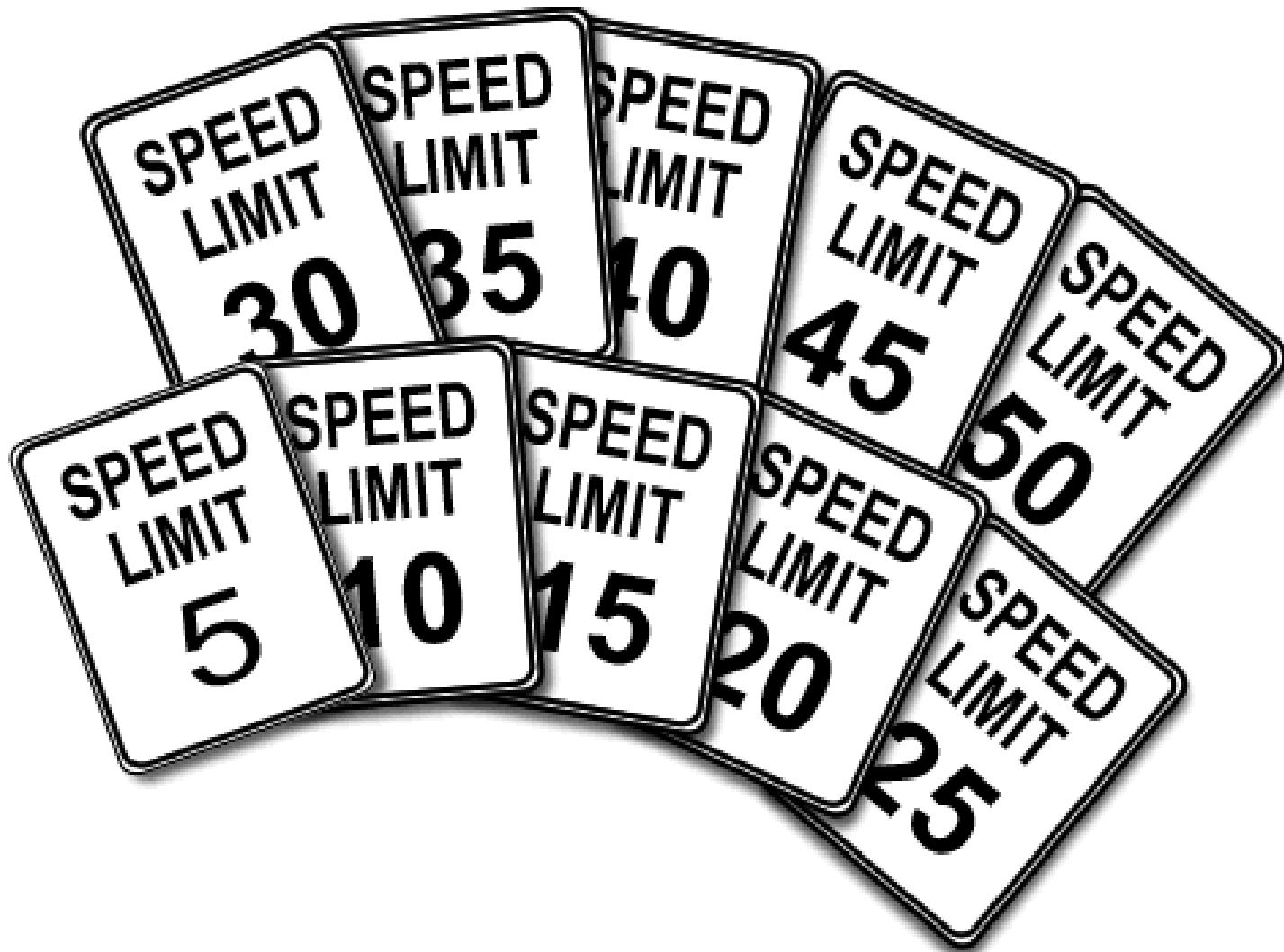
2011

Statewide Traffic Engineers Meeting

Jody Colvin



How Do I Pick?



Some want:



Others want:



While still others want:



What's an Engineer to do?



2003 MUTCD

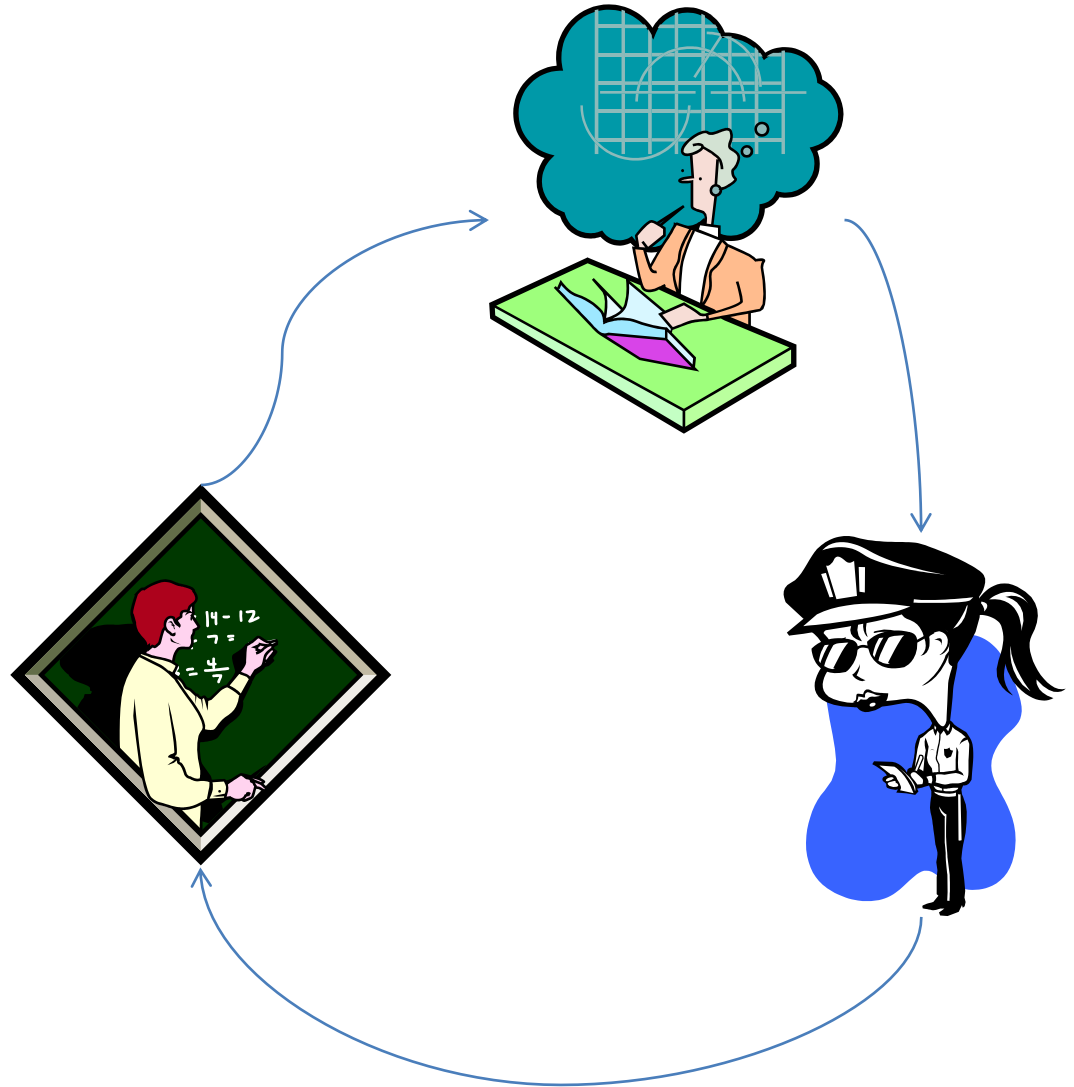
- **Standard:** After an engineering study has been made in accordance with established traffic engineering practices...
- *Guidance:* When a speed limit is posted, it should be within 5 mph of the 85th percentile speed of free flowing traffic.

2009 MUTCD

- **Standard:** Speed zones (other than statutory) shall only be established on the basis of an engineering study that has been performed in accordance with traffic engineering practices. The engineering study shall include an analysis of the current speed distribution of free flowing vehicles.
- *Guidance:* When a speed limit is posted, it should be within 5 mph of the 85th percentile speed of free flowing traffic.

3 E's

- Engineering
- Enforcement
- Education



Reasonable Speed Limits

- Respect
- Realistic
- Enforceable
- Safe

UN

Reasonable Speed Limits

How many people must die!

- Respect

The drunks are driving way too fast

- Realistic

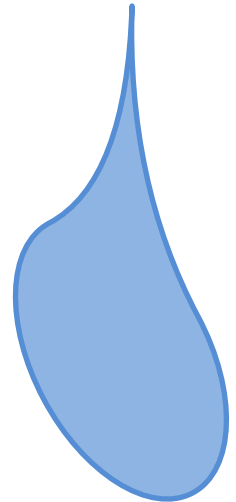
“Feelings”

- Enforceable

Protect my children!

People speed thru here

- Safe



National

- Engineering a reasonable speed limit at or near the 85th %
- Enforcing at the 95th %
- Educating the public with public information spots, newspaper ads, etc

Engineering a Speed Limit

- Data needed:
 - Speed data (50th%, 85th%, and 95th%)
 - Crash reports (not summary)
 - Roadway characteristics
 - Driveway density
 - Pedestrian and Bicycle information

Speed Data

- 100 free flow vehicles
 - Non-peak time
 - Not near curves or intersections
- Radar, loops, video...

Crashes=Posted Speed?

- How is safety related to the posted speed?
- Have you seen a crash report where it stated that the vehicle was going the speed limit which was too fast and so they crashed?
- What is more important a speed limit that is enforceable, safer, and realistic or a slower speed to make people “feel” better?
- What about speed differential?

Crash Reports

- Perceived Danger or Real
- Determine crash patterns
- Site visits with State Police and local law enforcement
- Develop solutions

High 85th %

- Figure out why are people going this speed
- Develop Traffic Calming
- Restudy area to determine if the 85th% decreased

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REALISTIC
ENFORCEABLE

DO NOT Just Lower Speed Limit

- Enforcement can only do so much!
- If speeding then no respect for sign
- So try:
 - “Your Speed Is” signs



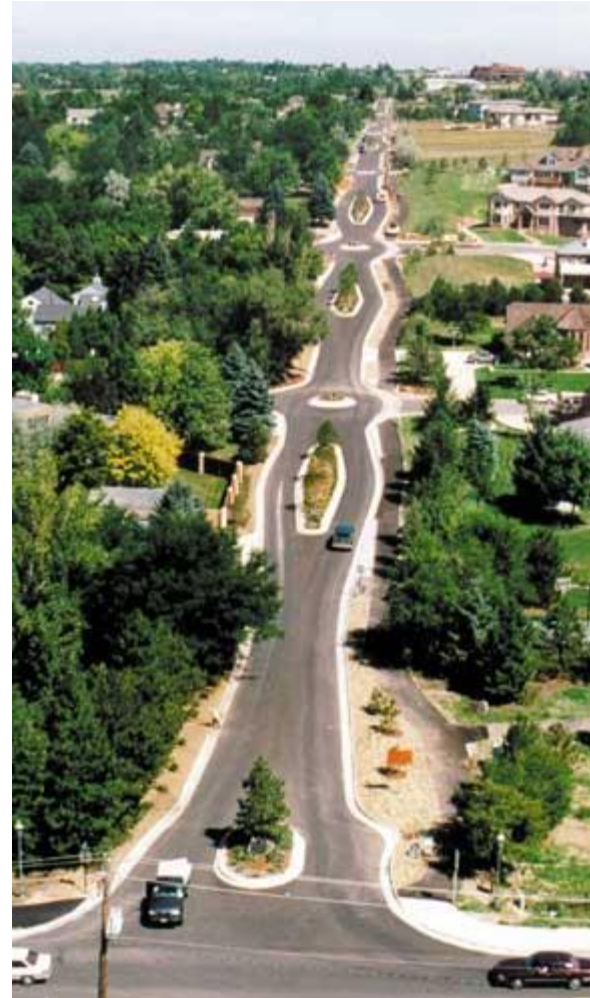
DO NOT Just Lower Speed Limit

– or Traffic Calming



DO NOT Just Lower Speed Limit

– Traffic Calming



DOTD Proposed Policy

- Require speed limits to be set at the nearest 5mph interval of the 85th% speed
- Committee to review the proposed speeds to ensure a consistent setting of speed limits for similar conditions
- Working with State Police on developing realistic speed limits that are enforceable
- Public Information to do press releases on speed limit changes
- Reviewing speed limits every 5 years

Speed Study

- Retainer contract
- Speed data collection
 - 24 hour
 - 100 vehicles
- Roadside inventory
 - Number of driveways
 - Pedestrians
 - Commercial vs Residential
 - Shoulders, width.....
- Database

SUMMARY

- Need to do better job at educating
- Need to set more consistent speed limits
- Need to review speed limits

QUESTIONS?



Thanks
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