



## Evaluation of Traffic Sign Petition

Speed Limit Signage on Pitt St.

April 19, 2023

---

Petition:	David Porter request installation of speed limit signage on Pitt St. from Cambridge St. to Sherman St.
Scheduled Committee Hearing:	April 26, 2023 Traffic & Parking Committee, Item 9e
Prepared by:	Todd M. Kirrane., Assistant Director

---

The petitioner has requested the installation of a a speed limit sign to slow customer vehicles traveling down Pitt Street to Superior Waste.

Pitt Street is classified by the Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT) as a Local Roadway under City Jurisdiction. The roadway generally runs in a north-south direction and provides a residential connection between Cambridge Street and Sherman Street. Pitt Street pavement width is approximately 25' curb to curb and provides one travel lane in each direction, on street parking is unregulated in the study area except for an ordained NO PARKING ANYTIME zone near Cambridge Street. The statutory (unposted) speed limit along Seattle Street is 30 miles per hour (mph) within the study area. Land use along Seattle Street is a mix of multi-family residential and commercial. There are sidewalks along the street though they are not ADA compliant and often blocked by parked motor vehicles.

As stated previously, Pitt Street is under the statutory (unposted) speed limit of 30 mph for a thickly settled and business district. This statutory speed limit is established under Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 90, Section 17 and per the Massachusetts Department of Transportation's "Procedures for Speed Zoning on State Highways and Municipal Roads" this statutory speed limit is not allowed to be posted except for yellow warning signs when there is evidence of violations and there is a need to remind motorists of the statutory speed limit in the immediate area.



In reviewing whether this warning signage was needed, staff collected traffic speed for Pitt Street using the Streetlight Insight software platform. The Average Speed is 18 mph and the 85<sup>th</sup> Percentile Speed (the speed that 85% of all vehicles traveling at or below) is 37 mph. The

Average Speed is below the statutory speed limit, though the 85<sup>th</sup> Percentile Speed is 7 mph higher than the statutory speed limit. Furthermore the 85<sup>th</sup> percentile speed limit during the weekends reaches 42 mph and 5% of traffic was reported to exceed 50 mph. Therefore this is an indication that the supplemental warning sign is justified in this location.

Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 90, Section 18 governs the approval of and posting of special speed regulations by a municipality. This action requires approval by the Secretary of MassDOT and the Registrar of Motor Vehicles following a study conducted in accordance with the Procedures for Speed Zoning on State Highways and Municipal Roads. This posted, regulatory speed limit is generally in line with the 85<sup>th</sup> percentile speed and done at increments of 5 rounded up. Given that the collected data may lead to a posted speed limit of 40 mph there would be no benefit for the city to going through the time intensive process to conduct the necessary counts and develop the report that may lead to a higher speed limit given the fact that higher motor vehicle speeds are known to result in exponentially higher degrees of injury and death when involving pedestrians, cyclists, and other vulnerable roadway users.

## Recommendation

**DTM recommends a vote to Install a THICKLY SETTLED DISTRICT 30 MPH advisory sign (MA-W13-4) on Pitt Street.**

