

Dear Mayor Jones, President Green and Alders,

Thank you for your dedication and vigilance in supporting the funding of traffic calming measures in the past year, particularly in the passage of BB120. We commend this legislation and look forward to seeing the implementation of this historic bill through planning, design and construction. We strongly believe the proposed traffic calming measures will help facilitate safer walking, biking and multimodal modes of transportation in St. Louis. As we wait for those life-saving infrastructure updates to be executed, we propose a measure that could help us rethink street safety in the interim.

A city-wide speed limit reduction for safer streets

Vehicular speed and safety are inextricably linked. The average speed of vehicles and the corresponding rates of fatality and serious injury are [well-documented](#). For vulnerable road users in particular, every 5-10 mph of speed can mean the difference between life or death. Some [peer cities](#) are proposing dropping speed limits across their grids in order to save lives. St. Louis should join them.

According to [Trailnet's Crash Report](#), 72% of fatal crashes occurred on roads marked 30 mph or more. As we begin to explore designs that better center the needs of St. Louisans traveling in every mode of transportation, we should also reconsider what speeds are safe for our communities where people and children walk, bike, play, drive, travel and live.

Small, incremental changes, such as our proposed city-wide 5 mph reduction on speed limits, could provide a big impact on St. Louis City streets. Many of the City's most dangerous arterials are currently set at 35 mph, making them incompatible with life-saving traffic calming strategies, according to St. Louis City's own official [Traffic Calming Guide](#). While illegal speeding and [enforcement](#) are ongoing considerations for the City, a small reduction in speed has the power to change behavior and facilitate long-term designs to create safer communities.

Passing laws alone will not make someone obey it, but it will change the toolbox with which our leaders can respond to unsafe street design. Meanwhile, for those who do abide posted signage, a 5 mph reduction can make the difference between seeing someone in a crosswalk, and changing what could have been a fatal outcome.

Other community benefits of calmer streets include reduced communal noise pollution. A 5 mph speed reduction could result in [3 decibels less noise](#) for every car traveling on St. Louis City streets, making it easier for communities to sleep, relax and enjoy nature.

Through a modest reduction in speed limits, St. Louis City can save lives while having little-to-no effect on commuter times and congestion. Please consider not only reducing the number of fatal vehicular crashes, but creating a city where walking and biking are not only safe, but comfortable and encouraged.

Thank you,

The Voting Members of the Community Mobility Committee

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