

A (non) comprehensive list of ways to reduce speeding

Background: The US Dept. of Transportation reports that in 2022 there were 7,522 pedestrians killed in traffic crashes, a 0.7- percent increase from the 7,470 pedestrian fatalities in 2021. The peak in fatalities was 1981 when 7,837 pedestrians died in traffic crashes. However, fatalities have been rising steadily over recent years, and in 2021 alone, we saw a 12.5% increase in pedestrian deaths!

In Vermont, there are about 60 fatalities a year. Most victims are walkers or cyclists.

Roadwise (UK) reports that if you hit a pedestrian:

- at 40 mph there is a 90 percent chance they will be killed.
- at 35 mph there is a 50 percent chance they will be killed.
- at 30 mph there is a 20 percent chance they will be killed.
- at 20 mph there is a 2.5 percent chance they will be killed.

Because there are no simple fixes and likely no single solution, I've attempted to organize potential measures into three buckets: enforcement, design and traffic calming, and public awareness.

Bucket	What	Why/Pros	Concerns/Cons
Enforcement	Request the Sheriff's Dept. to cover a specific area	We already have a contract for 100 hours	It averages out to only 8.3 hours a month, with no guaranteed minimum per month. There is no capacity to expand coverage.
	Appoint a constable About a dozen towns have done this one time or another	We have a stronger say in how speeds get enforced Sharing resources with another town is a possibility to keep our costs lower The constable could also enforce the parking ordinance	Requires 80 hours of training (the training is covered by the State of Vermont, but they don't compensate for the trainee's time.) MUST be trustworthy and MUST enforce fairly In addition to wages, there are W comp and liability issues, especially if they have to use their own vehicle Can be divisive and controversial
	Appoint a police officer from a neighboring police department for part-time coverage	Rupert and Pawlet are doing this jointly – they've hired a full time officer from Fair Haven	In addition to wages, the town would have to carry w comp
Design/traffic control and calming	Speeding countermeasures – narrow lanes, neighborhood circles, bumpouts, chokepoints, removal of the center line, road diets	Some have already been used in Danville – lateral shift at village gateway; experiment on Peacham Road, median island Some of these measures can be temporary to test out – like speed bumps bolted down, temporary structures/chicanes	Not all measures are MUTCD approved Generally appropriate for transition to denser areas, not for open backroads May not be effective without some engineering and design Some may require some master planning
	Radar feedback signs	Cost effective way to reduce speeds and generate awareness	Lose effectiveness over time without enforcement
	Stop signs	In the right situation they can work...	...but there must be a reason to come to a full stop, otherwise people will eventually ignore it
	Lower speed limits	May be appropriate in limited settings, like the core of the village, navigating around Park Street (can go lower than 25 MPH) May reduce some of acceleration as people leave the village	Generally, people will drive at the speeds they are comfortable with.
Public awareness/ public engagement	Neighborhood campaigns	Relatively inexpensive to communicate awareness and concern for your community Lunenburg is recent positive example!	Efforts tend to get stalled at the yard-sign stage Messaging is really important – it's not effective if it's insulting!

		Tabling at TMD could help	Long-term and ongoing engagement in multiple media is critical
	Walk to School Day	The energy committee sponsored this one year. It could broaden the conversation of maintaining safe walking routes/reducing speeds	
	Walkability audit	AARP has a guidebook – it can help us prioritize areas for improvement Can be self-guided or we might be able to enlist help from AARP Can build public awareness and consensus	If we want to do this with assistance from AARP, we might have to wait on availability
	Master planning	Identify problem areas and work to identify traffic calming solutions. If the public is involved, there is an opportunity to raise awareness for maintaining safe speeds	Usually need guidance from engineers, (but there are grant programs out there to help cover costs).
	Speed studies	Establish a better understanding of speeding patterns in the community. Can be informal, or can be sustained over a longer period to determine average speeds at varying hours. Can ask the regional planning commission to do a speed study.	Need to be strategic with your request for a formal study. Might need to wait a while.

Resources (by no means exhaustive!)

Enabling statute for hiring a constable, 24 VSA 1936a: legislature.vermont.gov/statutes/section/24/055/01936a

Speeding countermeasures: <https://vtrans.vermont.gov/sites/aot/files/Research/20230606%20Toolbox.pdf>

AARP Walkability audit <https://www.aarp.org/content/dam/aarp/livable-communities/getting-around/2022/AARP%20Walk%20Audit%20Tool%20Kit-singles-1302023.pdf>

AARP Vermont Livable Communities Program (Occasionally provides workshops and offers some grants)
<https://states.aarp.org/vermont/livable-communities>

Local Motion, “complete streets” advocacy, safe routes to school <https://www.localmotion.org/>

Here is a master plan from Craftsbury Village that explored traffic calming and pedestrian safety:
<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1JOPp1LMQgB-LHYNAeQWL5K0MIBgOe8Qm/view?pli=1>

We have a master plan for the Route 2 corridor! <https://www.v2v-danvillevt.org/reports-results/>

US DOT, Road safety, annual statistics: <https://crashstats.nhtsa.dot.gov/#!/PublicationList/36>

Here is a query tool on accidents in every Vermont town and county

https://apps.vtrans.vermont.gov/CrashPublicQueryTool/?_gl=1*4q61i3*_ga*NDMxODA1MzQxLjE2OTUwNTcyODk.*_ga_V9WQH77KLW*M_TczMTc5MDc3My4xMDAuMS4xNzNzkwNzk1LjAuMC4w