

Citywide speed limit evaluation

Council study session

8/24/20

Policy consideration

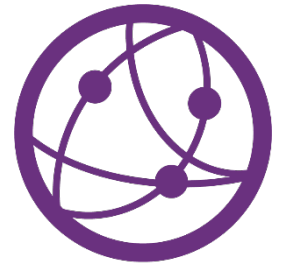
- Does the council wish to implement speed limit changes on city streets based on a safety, engineering, and traffic analysis?

May 2019 MN Statute (169.14)

- A city must:
 - Implement speed limit changes in a consistent and understandable manner
 - Erect appropriate signs to display the speed limit
 - Develop procedures to set speed limits based on the city's safety, engineering, and traffic analysis.
- At a minimum, the analysis must consider:
 - National urban speed limit guidance and studies
 - Local traffic crashes
 - Methods to effectively communicate the change to the public

Relevant city policies

- Active Living: Sidewalks & Trails Plan (2008)
- Complete Streets policy (2013)
- Healthy Eating and Active Living policy (2013)
- Vision 3.0 (2017)
- Council strategic priorities (2018)
- Climate Action Plan (2018)
- Comprehensive Plan 2040 (2019)
- Living Streets Policy (2019)



Speed limit goals

- To support the city's goal to **eliminate fatalities and serious injuries** that are a result of crashes on city streets.
- To reflect the city's goal in creating a mobility system that **prioritizes walking first**, then bicycling and transit, and then motor vehicle use.
- To ensure the quality and function of the transportation system contributes to **equitable outcomes for all people**.
- To support the **movement of people** and goods.
- To be **understandable, consistent**, replicable, reasonable, and contextually appropriate.
- To clearly communicate and educate the new speed limits and their connection to safety, **especially as people enter the city**.

National guidance

- Speed limits shall be in multiples of 5 mph.
- A safe system approach has emerged as an alternative to using 85th percentile speed in setting speed limits for urban streets.
- Two common options to set speed limits:
 - Default citywide speed limit
 - Category speed limits

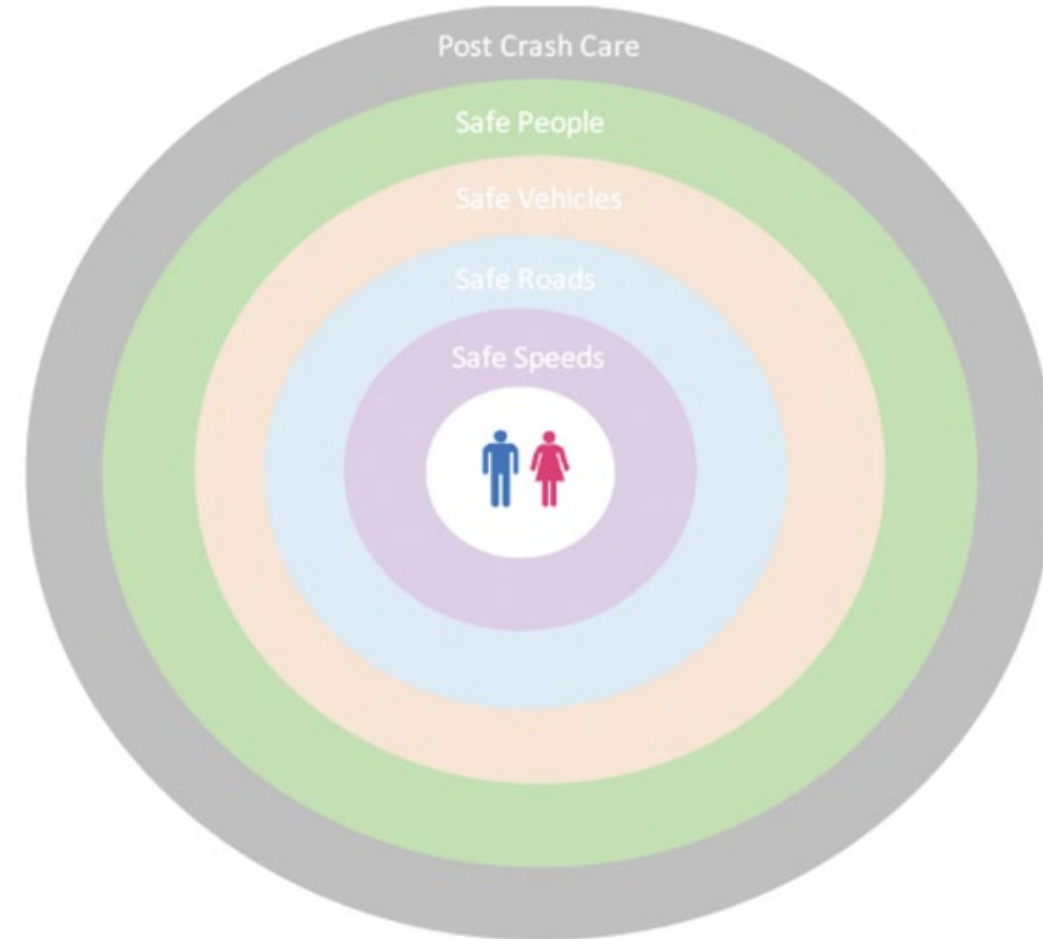
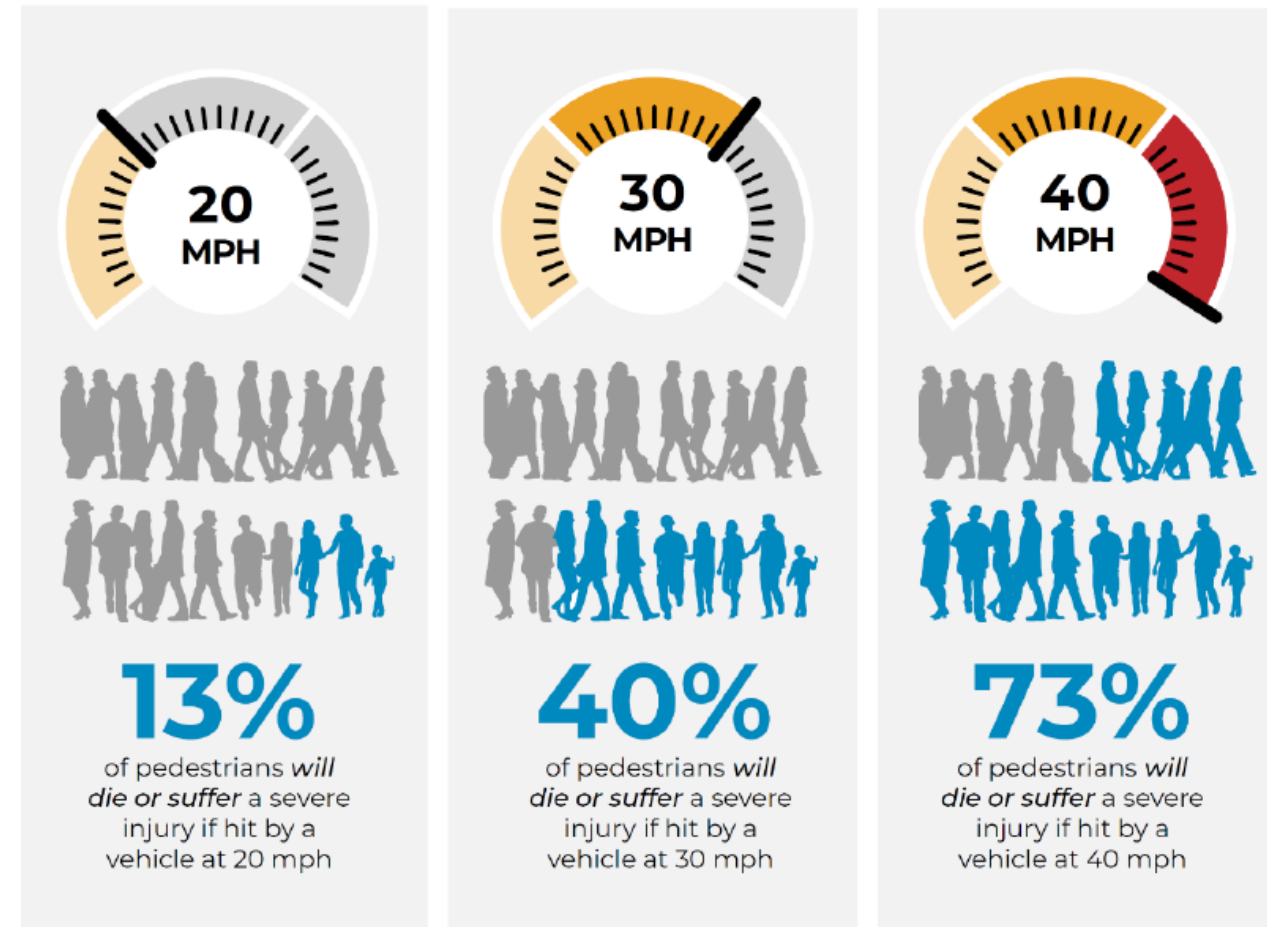


Figure 1 – The Safe System Approach to Road Safety

Safety research

- Higher speeds increase the likelihood of a crash and the chance that it will be severe or fatal.
- In Boston, lowering speed limits produced a 29% reduction in drivers traveling faster than 35 mph.
- In Seattle, lowering speed limits produced a 22% reduction in crashes and 54% reduction of drivers over 40 mph.



Source : Brian C. Tefft, 2013. AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety. Impact speed and a pedestrian's risk of severe injury or death.

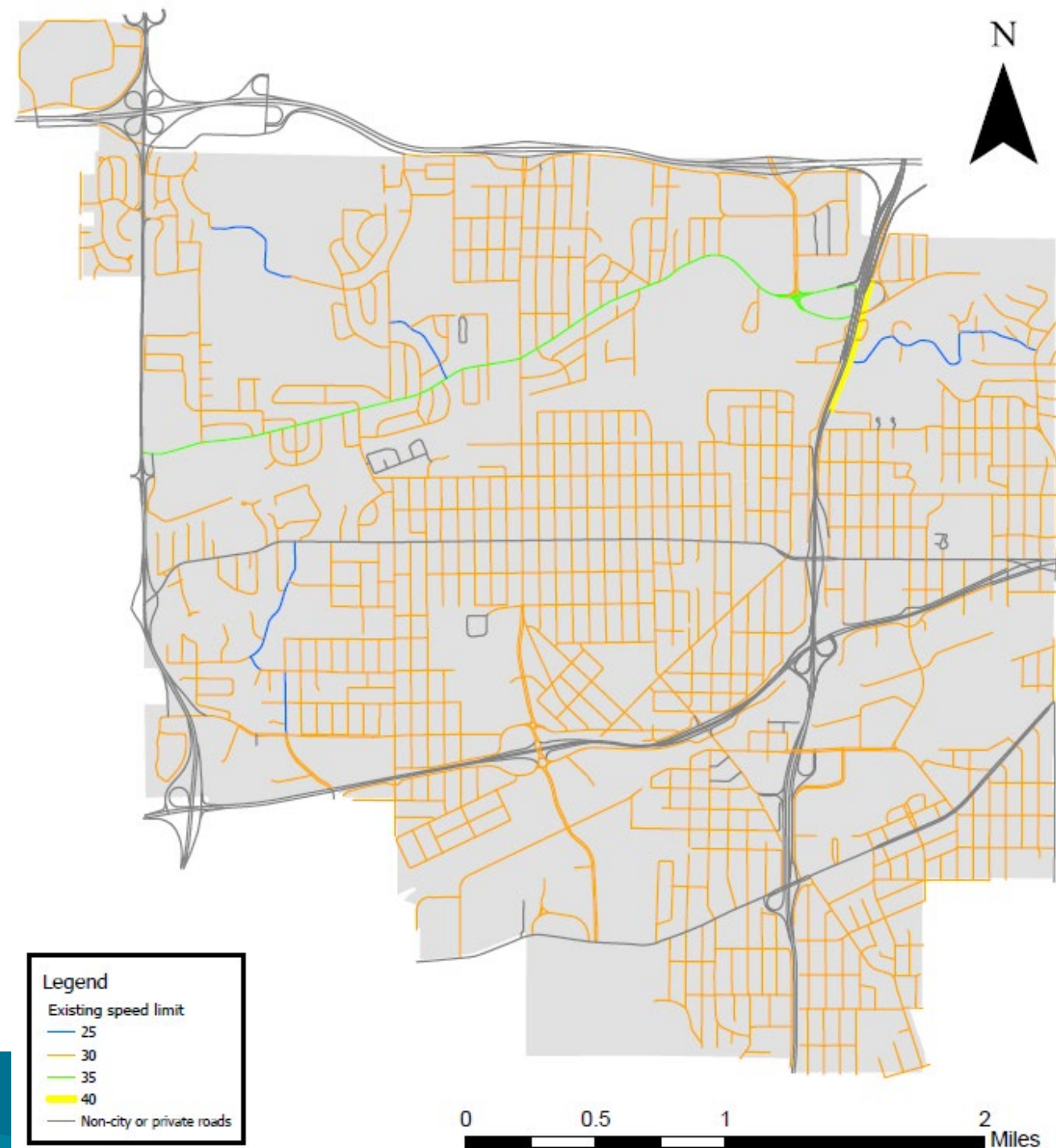
Local examples

- Minneapolis in May 2020 reduced speed limits to:
 - 20 mph on minor streets
 - 25 mph on most major streets
 - 35 mph on four short segments
- Saint Paul in May 2020 reduced speed limits to:
 - 20 mph on minor streets
 - 25 mph on major streets
- Edina will have recommendations by end of 2020.



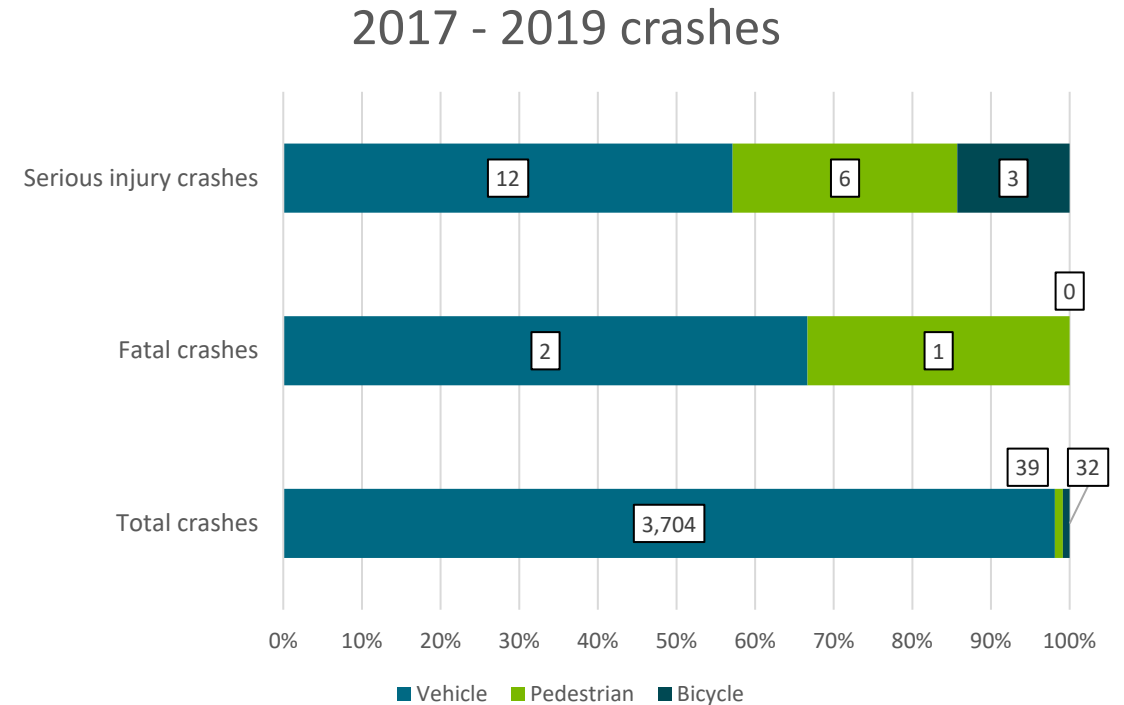
Existing speed limits

- State defaults:
 - 30 mph for urban streets
 - 10 mph for alleys
- Exceptions in St. Louis Park:
 - 25 mph on select neighborhood streets
 - Cedar Lake Road (35 mph)
 - E Hwy 100 Frontage Road (40 mph)



Crash analysis

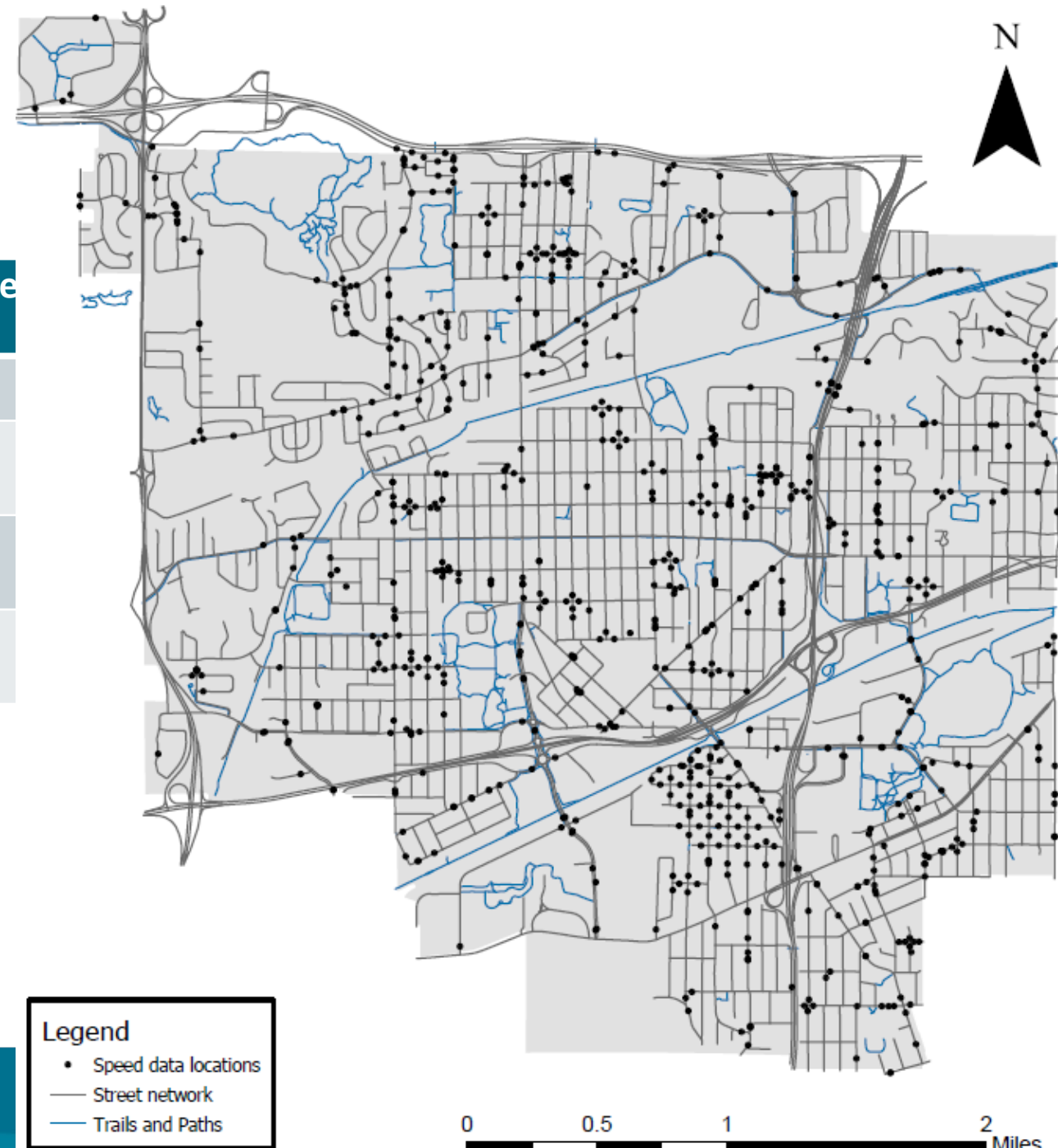
- Crashes are concentrated on higher-traffic streets
- Streets with higher speed limits were more likely to have fatal or high injury crashes
- Pedestrians and bicyclists were overrepresented in severe and fatal crashes
- One-third of crashes happen at intersections, but are two-thirds of fatal and high injury crashes



Existing traffic

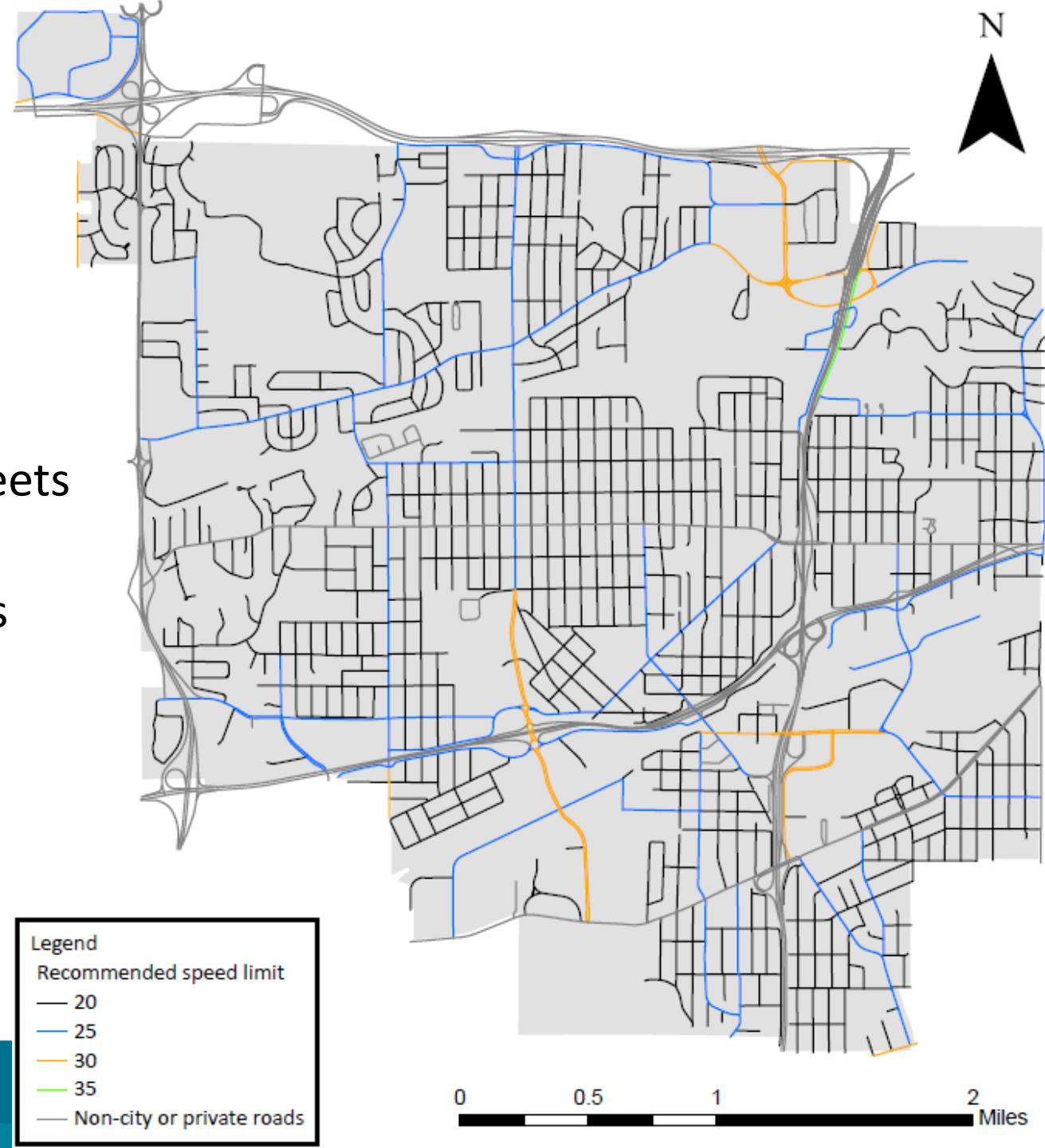
	Median speed	Average speed	85th percentile speed
All city streets	23.5 mph	23.4 mph	27.8 mph
Low traffic roads	21.1 mph	21.0 mph	25.5 mph
Medium traffic roads	28.9 mph	28.4 mph	33.4 mph
High traffic roads	27.6 mph	29.5 mph	34.7 mph

- **Low traffic roads** (less than 2,000 a day)
- **Medium traffic roads** (between 2,000 and 12,000)
- **High traffic roads** (more than 12,000)



Recommendations

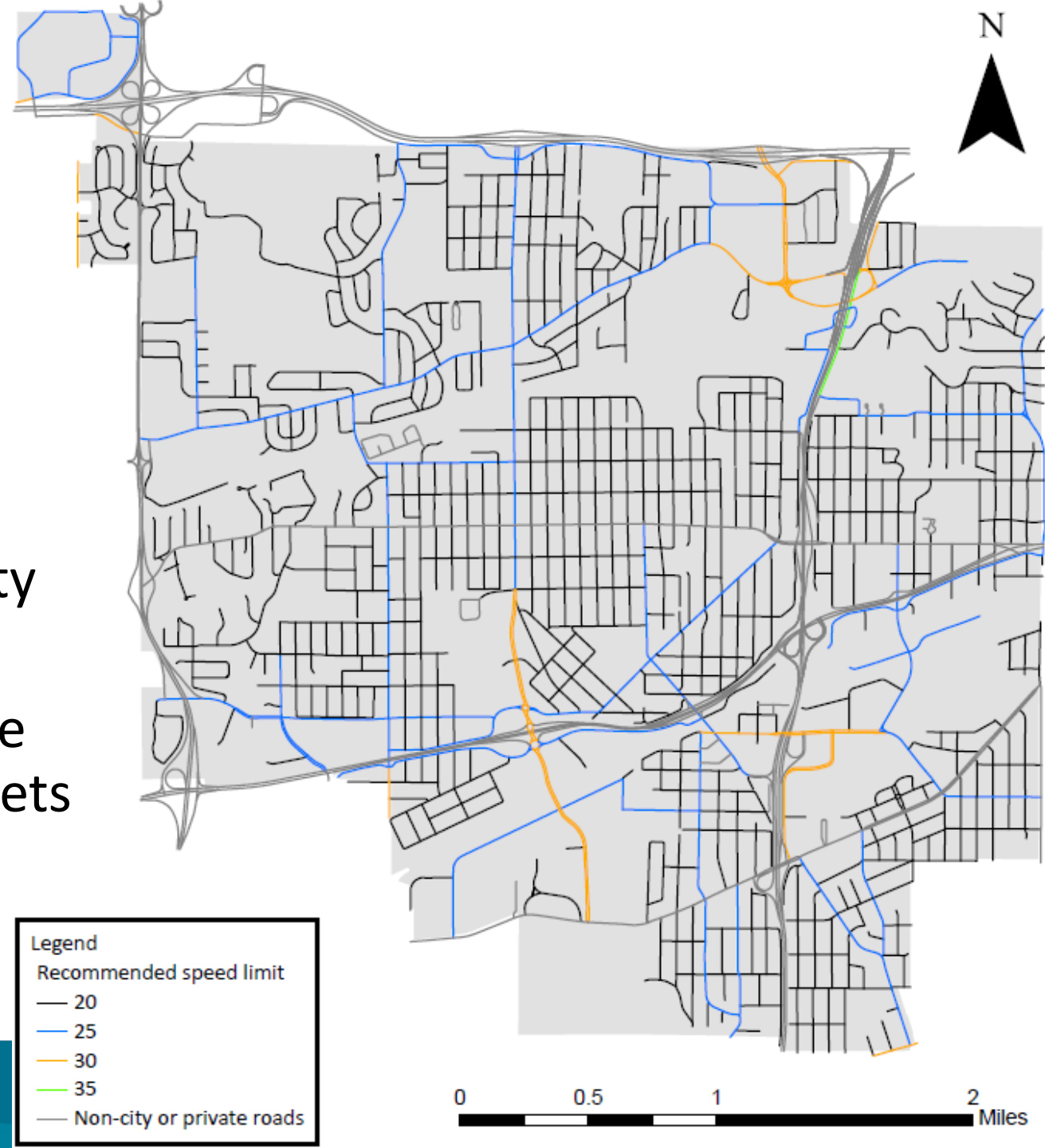
- Generally:
 - 10 mph on alleys
 - 20 mph on local neighborhood streets
 - 25 mph on connecting streets
 - 30 mph on select streets/segments
 - 35 mph on one road



Recommendations

Category approach recommended because:

- It is easier to communicate
- Prioritizes public health and safety
- A citywide speed limit doesn't reflect the design, land use, mode use, and expectations of city streets



Next steps

- Race Equity and Inclusion
- Signage
- Traffic signals
- Environmental benefits
- Communications and education
- Enforcement
- Evaluation