

# Research in Progress

## Speed Management and Emergency Response – A Synthesis Study

### Research Need

The impact of speed on roadways throughout the Commonwealth of Massachusetts continues to be a critical concern in the effort of achieving zero fatalities and reducing serious injuries. Speed management solutions are plentiful and their impact known; what's missing is the lack of use - municipal officials may be apprehensive in implementation. The apprehension stems from concerns historically related to first responders and concerns regarding the impact on emergency response times and other metrics. In New England, public works officials are frequently hesitant to implement speed management solutions due to anecdotal challenges related to snow removal.

### Goals/Objectives

This research project aims to enhance the understanding of the impact of speed management strategies on vehicular speeds, as well as the concerns of emergency and public works' personnel. Given the latest MassDOT position in evaluating and implementing new strategies statewide, this research will stem from the development of the new Safe Speeds repository. The deliverables will include a set of recommendations for roadway treatments that impact roadway speeds, follow design standards, and address municipal personnel concerns.

### Project Information

This project is being conducted as part of the Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT) Research Program with funding from Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) State Planning and Research (SPR) funds.

#### Principal Investigators:

Dr. Francis Tainter, Dr. Cole Fitzpatrick, Dr. Michael Knodler Jr (University of Massachusetts Amherst); Dr. Peter Furth, Dr. Daniel Dulaski (Northeastern University)

#### Performing Organization:

University of Massachusetts Amherst & Northeastern University

#### Project Champions:

Jackie DeWolfe & Chris Falcos, MassDOT

#### Project Start Date:

April 15, 2023

#### Expected Project Completion Date:

April 15, 2024

### Methodology

The four main project objectives include:

- Conduct a survey of current speed management techniques, their effectiveness, and local official implementation challenges;
- Strategize and host regional speed management forums to engage with local stakeholders, based on existing municipality feedback;
- Create an inventory of regional speed management case studies and municipal partnerships;
- Develop recommendations and future work regarding modified treatment test strategies.

Research and Technology Transfer Section  
MassDOT Office of Transportation Planning  
[Planning.Research@dot.state.ma.us](mailto:Planning.Research@dot.state.ma.us)

