The Pedestrian Safety Project, S.F. Department of Public Health

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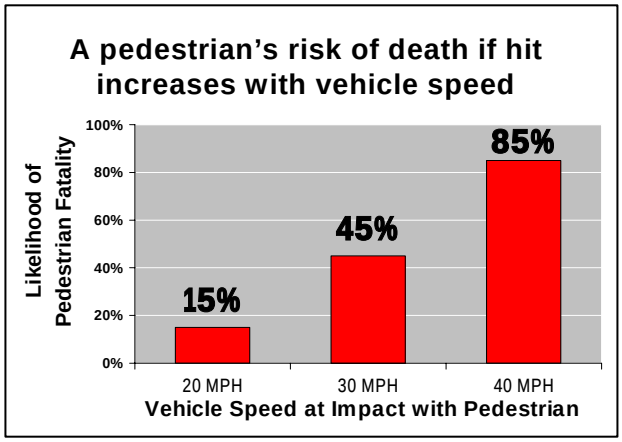
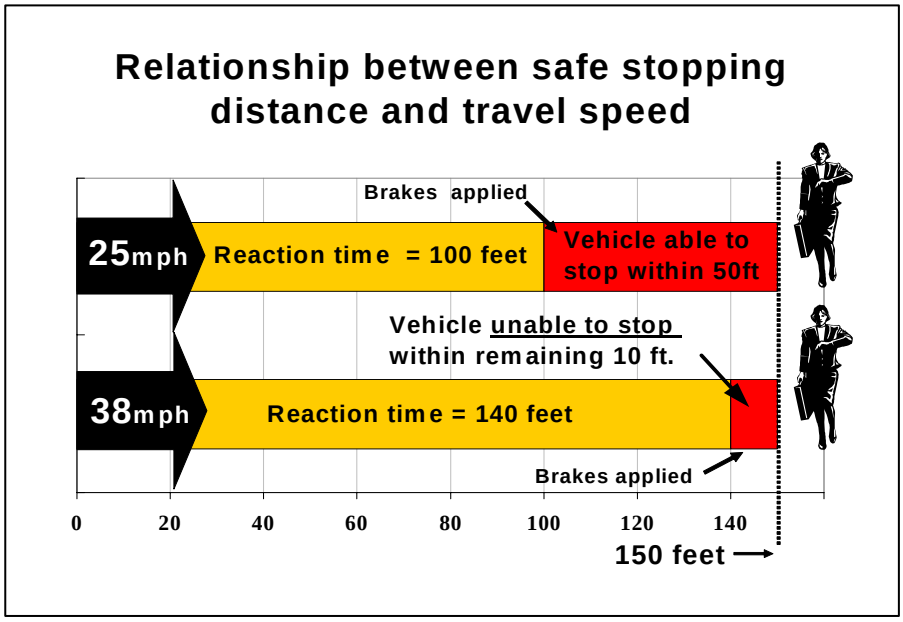
Speed Matters!



The probability of a pedestrian being severely injured and/or killed when struck by a vehicle increases as the vehicle speed increases. The chart to the left shows the correlation of vehicle impact speed and pedestrian death rates.

Reducing traffic speeds not only reduces the severity of pedestrian injuries, but may also reduce the occurrence of crashes. As shown in the chart below, faster vehicle speeds result in increased braking distance, as well as an increase in the distance a vehicle will travel during the **2.5 second perception/reaction** time.

At 25 MPH, it takes 150 feet to stop a vehicle safely. A vehicle travels 100 feet (during the perception/reaction time - yellow) before the driver can apply the brakes (red), leaving 50 feet to bring the vehicle to a stop. At 38 MPH, the vehicle travels 140 feet before the brakes are applied, leaving only 10 feet for stopping the vehicle. The vehicle is still going 36 MPH when it hits the pedestrian.



Charts: Federal Highway Administration. *A walkable community is much more than just sidewalks.* U.S. Department of Transportation, Washington, DC. Available for order at http://safety.fhwa. dot.gov/ped_bike/ walk/order/order3.htm.