

# School Slow Zones Update

Fall 2022

## Overview

In Winter/Spring 2022, the County installed school slow zone demonstrations at 13 schools. The demonstrations are 20MPH speed limits (at all times of day) on neighborhood streets within 600 ft of a school access point. The demonstrations included retrofitting the entire school zone to ensure high visibility crossings and school zone signage within the school zone, as well as appropriate speed limits on the school's beacons arterial roadways.

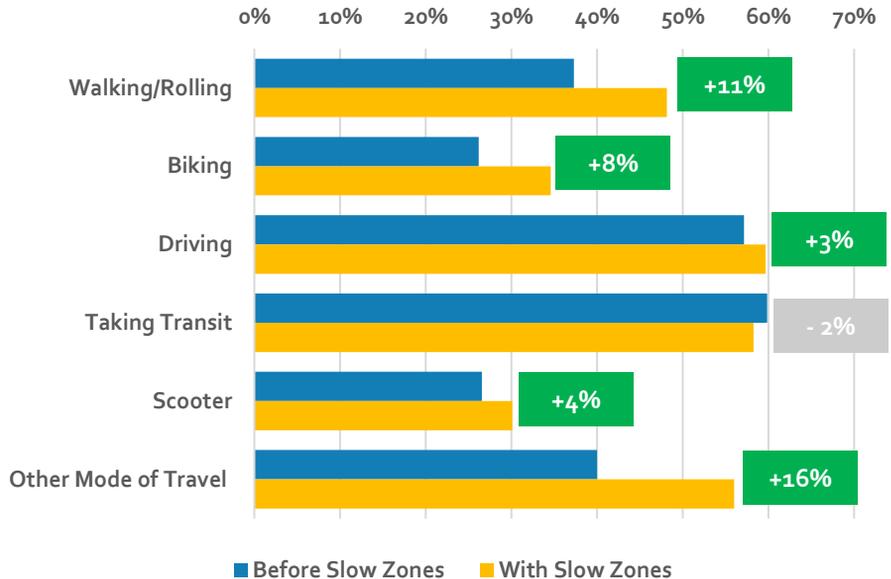
Community feedback from May 2022 indicated that many people felt safer walking, biking, and driving because of the new school slow zones. Before/after speed data was inconclusive due to data collection errors. New data collection is in progress.

In response to community feedback, Arlington will enhance enforcement, signage, and communications in the school slow zones. DES, APS, and Police will continue to evaluate results and refine the program as the County implements additional school slow zone demonstrations/school zone retrofits in winter and spring 2023.

## Community Input on School Slow Zone Demonstrations

- In May 2022, Arlington Department of Environmental Services (DES), Public Schools (APS), and Police asked the community for feedback on the school slow zone demonstrations, as the County prepares to implement these zones countywide.
- Over 170 community members responded to the feedback form, which was available online in six languages.
- Responses indicate that while many people do feel safer walking, biking, and driving in the target areas, the school slow zones need more prominent signing and enforcement.

Before/after comparison of respondents that felt "safe" or "very safe" when asked: "How did you feel while traveling in school slow zones using the following modes?"



***We asked the community: "What aspects of the demonstration school zone could be improved?"***

### The top responses included:

- Increase enforcement (via police officer or by speed cameras)
- Improve signage (e.g., by adjusting sign location or clarifying language)
- Provide clarity on the slow zones (e.g., note that they are 24/7)
- Expand the program to more schools

### Speeds in School Slow Zone Demonstrations

- Arlington Police collected speed data before (Fall 2021) and after (Spring 2022) implementation of the school slow zone demonstrations.
- The speed data analysis was inconclusive due to possible equipment errors. The roadway volumes were significantly different between the before and after datasets (ranging from +9% to -78% changes in the number of cars per day). Changes in 85<sup>th</sup> percentile speed ranged from -12% to +31%.
- DES is working with a contractor to collect a new set of speed data at these demonstration locations this winter to confirm if/how speeds have changed as a result of the demonstrations.

### School Slow Zone Demonstrations: Phase 2

- DES identified 12 schools for the second phase of School Slow Zone implementation/school zone retrofits (2022-23) based on crash data, equity emphasis areas, and where changes to the beaconed school zone were already in progress:
  - Alice West Fleet Elementary School
  - Arlington Career Center
  - Arlington Community High School
  - Barrett Elementary School
  - Campbell Elementary School
  - Carlin Springs Elementary School
  - Discovery Elementary School
  - Jefferson Middle School
  - Kenmore Middle School
  - Montessori Public School of Arlington
  - Swanson Middle School
  - Williamsburg Middle School
- This next phase of demonstrations incorporates the lessons learned and community feedback from the first round of demonstrations.
- DES is working with staff at each of the Phase 2 school slow zone demonstration schools to finalize plans.



### Next Steps

#### Response to Community Feedback

- Police to enhance enforcement measures in school slow zones.
- DES to include additional signage in Phase 2 school slow zone designs.
- DES, APS, and Police to continue to push communications and messaging about the school slow zones.

#### Speed Data & Analysis

- DES to collect new "after" speed data at the Phase 1 school slow zone demonstrations and "before" data at the Phase 2 locations this winter. (This will include extra quality checks to ensure accurate data.)
- DES to report out on findings once analysis is complete in early 2023. This may include the recommendation of additional speed reduction measures based on data findings.

#### Phase 2 & Future School Slow Zones

- Phase 2 demonstrations will go to the County Board for approval in winter 2023 and be implemented in winter/spring 2023.
- DES will target updating all school zones in Arlington in the Phase 3 round of school slow zone implementation and school zone retrofits in 2024.