

The driver's focus at different speeds.

A low speed allows drivers to be more aware of their surroundings and to have time to react to other highway users.

The photos show how a driver's focus changes as their speed increases. The setting is a typical downtown in a small Oregon city. Shops and on-street parking line both sides of this 2-lane couplet. The highway is built to "full standard" because of the ample right-of-way.

At the posted speed of 30 mph, many drivers have a difficult time seeing bicyclists and pedestrians, and stopping distance is nearly twice that of 20 mph.

To safely accommodate all users, this highway needs substantial design changes that tell the driver that this is not the open highway it was a few blocks before.

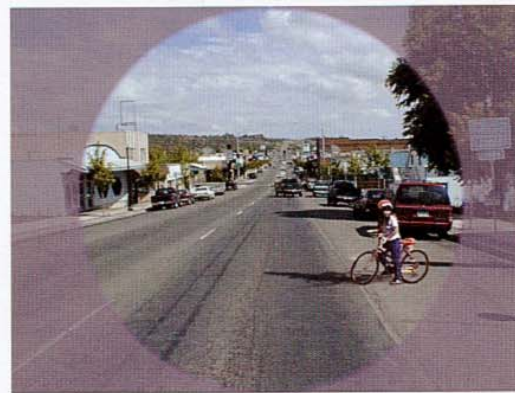
A good start would be wide planting strips with trees to narrow the roadway. A bike lane could be striped. Intersections could be narrowed even further with curb extensions.



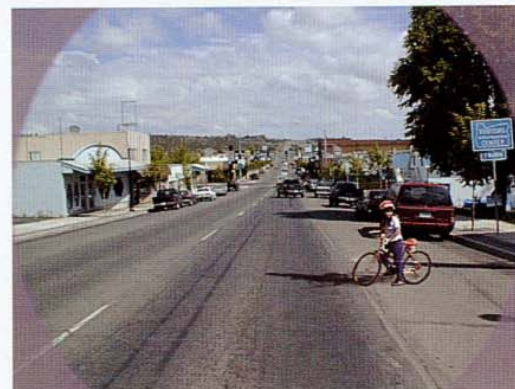
At 40 mph the driver's focus is on the roadway in the distance.



At 30 mph the driver begins to see things at the road edges in the background.



At 20 mph the foreground comes into focus.



At 15 mph the driver easily sees that this is a place where pedestrians and bicyclists are present.

When a person is struck by a motor vehicle, they have the following **chances of death** according to *Killing Speed and Saving Lives*, UK Department of Transportation:

