

## **Establishing Speed Limits on Regional Roads Policy**

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Approved By: Council  
Approved On: September 19, 2024

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### **Policy Statement**

A policy to establish criteria for setting speed limits on Regional roads.

### **Application**

Staff responsible for evaluating and implementing speed limits on Regional roads.

### **Purpose**

To provide a consistent approach to evaluate and implement appropriate speed limits on Regional roads to foster a safer road environment.

### **Definitions**

**Speed Limit:** The maximum rate of speed that a motor vehicle can be driven on a road or portion of a road in accordance with the *Highway Traffic Act*.

**Regular Posted Speed Limit:** The established Speed Limit in effect during all times, except those identified for school zones.

**Regional Road or Road:** A highway pursuant to the *Highway Traffic Act* which falls under the jurisdiction of the Region.

**School Zone:** The portion of a Regional road that adjoins and is within 150 metres along the Regional road in either direction beyond the limits of the land used for the purposes of the school, where the Speed Limit is reduced during specific times.

**Speed Limit Evaluation:** A review of operating characteristics and infrastructure data for a roadway to determine the appropriate Speed Limit by applying the most current version of Canadian Guidelines for Establishing Posted Speed Limits published by the Transportation Association of Canada.

### Description

Council may, by bylaw, establish Speed Limits for Regional roads that are different than those rates set out in the Highway Traffic Act (HTA). The speed limit may not be greater than 100 kilometres per hour and different speed limits may be prescribed for different times of day.

Speed Limits have considerable influence on road safety and efficiency. The Canadian Guidelines for Establishing Posted Speed Limits (Guidelines) published by the Transportation Association of Canada provide a systematic and consistent process for establishing regular posted Speed Limits. It is an objective assessment based on engineering factors. The criteria and methodology outlined in the Guidelines are used to establish regular posted speed limits on Regional roads.

This methodology results in speed limits consistent with the roadway's physical characteristics and adjacent land use, match expectation of drivers and promote a safer road environment. The Guidelines include the following factors when establishing a speed limit for a given section of roadway which may be modified by Transportation Association of Canada in subsequent versions of the Guidelines:

- Number of access driveways
- Visibility
- Traffic volumes
- Number of lanes
- Roadside hazards
- Pedestrian and cyclist exposure
- Presence of on-street parking
- Volumes of pedestrians and cyclists
- Number of properties that front onto the roadway
- Number and frequency of signalized intersections
- Presence of public transit

### School Zones

Section 128(5) of the *Highway Traffic Act* enables the Region to establish, through bylaw, school zones and prescribe speed limits within those zones.

Reduced Speed Limits near schools help increase a motorist's ability to stop in time to avoid collisions, preventing serious injury or death to vulnerable road users. Council has directed a reduced speed limit can be implemented at all school locations on Regional roads.

School Zones must be signed in accordance with the *Highway Traffic Act*. Ontario Regulation 615 includes a time-based version of the school zone maximum speed sign (Figure 1), which indicates on the sign the specific times, days and months the reduced

Speed Limit is in effect. Ontario Regulation 615 stipulates flashing beacons cannot be used with the time-based version of the school zone maximum speed sign.

To promote consistency, simplify understanding for motorists and simplify enforcement efforts, a Region-wide 10 km/h Speed Limit reduction will be applied to school locations, using the time-based school zone maximum speed sign. The reduced Speed Limit at all locations will be in effect from 7 am to 5 pm, Monday to Friday, September to June.

**Figure 1**  
**Time-Based School Zone Speed Limit Sign**



## Responsibilities

Public Works Department staff consider a road or portion of a road for potential speed limit change based on request or systematic Speed Limit Evaluation. Criteria established by this policy is used to determine and recommend the appropriate posted Speed Limit.

When speed limit changes are recommended:

- Staff consult with local municipal staff, York Regional Police and School Boards, as appropriate, on proposed changes to obtain input
- Upon determining a speed limit is appropriate based on an evaluation of the engineering factors contained in the Guidelines, Commissioner of Public Works requests Council approve recommended revisions to speed limits and the Regional Solicitor and General Counsel prepare a bylaw for Council approval
- Subject to Council approval of proposed bylaws, staff notify the public of the revised speed limit through placement of new signs and standardized communication processes deemed appropriate by the Region

- Staff install signs on Regional roads in accordance with approved speed limit changes

## Reference

- [Highway Traffic Act, Section 128](#)
- [Ontario Regulation 615](#)
- Canadian Guidelines for Establishing Posted Speed Limits (2009), Transportation Association of Canada or most recent approved version

## Contact

Title	Director of Roads, Traffic and Fleet
Branch	Roads, Traffic and Fleet
Department	Public Works Department

## Approval

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Accessible formats or communication supports are available upon request.

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