



STATUS

Council Approved

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CAO Approved:

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TITLE: ESTABLISHING SPEED LIMITS ON REGIONAL ROADS	NO.: Effective Date: Latest Revision Date:
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POLICY STATEMENT:

This policy provides a warrant process for setting speed limits on Regional roads in York Region.

APPLICATION:

The speed limit warrant criteria provide a consistent approach to determine appropriate speed limits on Regional roads in York Region.

DESCRIPTION:

Speed limits are set on Regional roads in order to:

- Respond to community security concerns
- Provide safety equity among road users

POLICY:

The speed limit is intended to be the *maximum* speed that one can safely travel along a section of road.

This policy contains guidelines for setting speed limits on *urban* roads and *non-urban* (e.g. semi-rural and rural) roads.

POLICY FOR SETTING SPEED LIMITS ON URBAN ROADS

A road is considered to be an urban road when it has been designated by the Region's Official Plan to be either an *Urban Corridor* or a *Regional Corridor* as noted on Map 5 of the Official Plan.

The speed limit on urban roads shall be **60 kilometres per hour**. Exceptions to this are:

- Existing 50 kilometres per hour zones would remain at 50 kilometres per hour in areas where there are high generators of pedestrians such as schools, recreation areas and parks;
- Existing 40 kilometres per hour zones would remain posted at 40 kilometres per hour;
- Highway 7 between Centre Street and Bayview Avenue, which is more reflective of a controlled access highway would remain at 70 kilometres per hour and 80 kilometres per hour;
- Existing 40 kilometre per hour zones, achieved by the use of programmable flashing beacons which operate during school hours, in school zones would in place.

POLICY FOR SETTING SPEED LIMITS ON URBAN “FRINGE” ROADS

The speed limit on urban “fringe” roads, located on the edges of designated urban areas or on the fringe of new developments, shall be **70 kilometres per hour** until such time as development generates:

- 1) Additional traffic
- 2) Adds access points or intersections to the Regional road network;
- 3) Increased pedestrian traffic

at which time the road will be urban in nature and the speed limit will be set at 60 kilometres per hour.

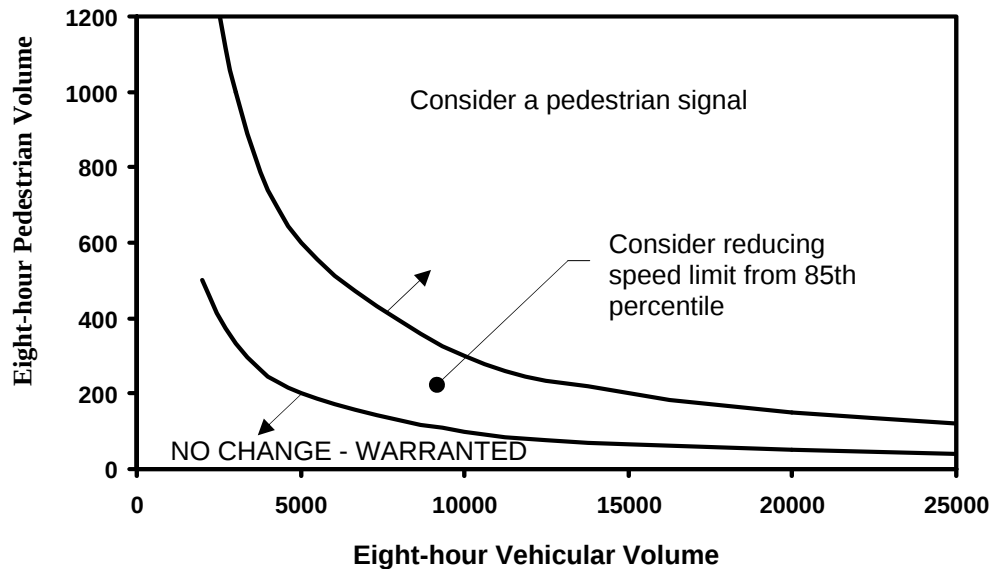
POLICY FOR SETTING SPEED LIMITS ON RURAL ROADS

The speed limit on rural roads shall be **80 kilometres per hour**, including roads that are outside of urban areas and that are not within an *Urban Corridor* or *Regional Corridor* as identified in the Region’s Official Plan. In some cases the speed limit maybe reduced, for example, in areas where there are frequent access points or high a volume of pedestrians the speed limit may be set at the 85th percentile speed of free flowing traffic provided that the speed limit does not exceed the design speed of the roadway.

The speed limit may also be decreased to less than the 85th percentile speed when:

- The driveway density on any one side of the road is greater than 13 driveways per kilometre.
- If the combination of the vehicular and pedestrian volumes meet the criterion of Figure 1.

Figure 1
Pedestrian Criterion for a Reduced Speed Limit



Pedestrian volumes should include pedestrians crossing the road, and in the instance of roads with no sidewalks, include pedestrians walking along the traveled edge of the road. The pedestrian count total should be adjusted by counting elderly pedestrians and unassisted children as two pedestrians each.

GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS

- i) Conditions, situations, and events that are local or temporary should generally not have the speed limit adjusted to reflect the condition, but should be addressed through advisory warning signs along with an advisory “safe” speed tab, as determined by an engineering study.
- ii) The desirable minimum length of a speed zone in urban and non-urban areas is one kilometre and two kilometres respectively. An absolute minimum length of 500 meters in urban areas and one kilometre in non-urban areas is permitted under the following conditions:
 - When conditions, that warrant a lower speed limit, are site specific or apply only to a short section or road, and of such a nature that warning signs, along with an advisory tabs, are expected to be ineffective or inappropriate.
 - As a transition between two limit zones that is different by 20 kilometres per hour or more

- iii) In the event that the pavement surface condition is such that the speed limit set by this policy is considered inappropriate, then a lower speed limit should be posted until the road surface condition can be reinstated to an acceptable level.

DEFINITIONS

Urban Road

A road is considered to be an urban road when it has been designated by the Region's Official Plan to be either an Urban Corridor or a Regional Corridor as noted on Map 5 of the Official Plan.

Non-Urban Road

Any road that is not designated by the Region's Official Plan as either an Urban Corridor or a Regional Corridor.

Centre

Centre, as per York Region's Official Plans, is defined as focal points and concentrations of residential, human service, commercial and office activities at the heart of communities. They are usually small areas adjacent to old main street areas or intensive clusters of building in new areas.

Low Pedestrian Activity

Pedestrians basically move in desired paths without altering their movements in response to other pedestrians. Walking speeds are freely selected, by-passing other pedestrians is not an issue, and reverse or cross movements are possible.

High Bicycle Activity

Bicycles on the road are such that drivers have to continuously be on the look out for them. They are aligned in a linear fashion, their opportunity for passing is limited and their speed is determined by the lead biker.

Low Bicycle Activity

Bicycles on the road are such that drivers have to randomly be on the look out for them.

CONTACT:

Director, Operations, Transportation Services Department.

APPROVAL INFORMATION

CAO Approval Date:

Committee:

Clause:

Report No:

Council Approval:

Minute No.

Page:

Date: