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SPEED LIMIT REVISIONS REGIONAL ROAD NETWORK

The Transportation and Works Committee recommends the adoption of the recommendations contained in the following report, December 16, 2004, from the Commissioner of Transportation and Works, with the exception of Recommendations 1, 4 and 8 which are to be referred to the Town of Aurora regarding Recommendation 1 and the Township of King regarding Recommendations 4 and 8 for their comments:

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that:

1. The existing speed limit of 60-km per hour on Yonge Street (Y.R. 1) from 800 metres south of the south limit of St. John's Sideroad (Y.R. 26) to the south limit of St. John's Sideroad (Y.R. 26) in the Town of Aurora, be reduced to 50-km per hour.
2. The existing speed limit of 80-km per hour on Bathurst Street (Y.R. 38) from a point 265 metres north of the north limit of Green Lane West (Y.R. 19) to 1,877 metres north of the north limit of Green Lane West (Y.R. 19) in the Township of King and the Town of East Gwillimbury, be reduced to 60-km per hour.
3. The existing speed limit of 50-km per hour on Lloydtown/Aurora Road (Y.R. 16) from 100 metres east of the east limit of Jane Street (south intersection) to the north limit of the north intersection of Jane Street and Lloydtown/Aurora Road (Y.R. 16), in the Township of King, be increased to 60-km per hour.
4. The existing speed limit of 60-km per hour on King Road (Y.R. 11) from 200 metres east of the east limit of the 10th Concession to 150 metres west of the 10th Concession in the Township of King, be increased to 80-km per hour.
5. The existing speed limit of 60-km per hour on King Road (Y.R. 11) from 290 metres west of the west limit of Kingsley Avenue to 200 metres east of the east limit of the 10th Concession in the Township of King, be reduced to 50-km per hour.
6. The existing speed limit of 40-km per hour on King Road (Y.R. 11) from the east limit of Elizabeth Drive to the west limit of Old King Road in the Township of King, be increased to 50-km per hour.
7. The proposed speed limit of 50-km per hour on King Road (Y.R. 11) from the east limit of Elizabeth Drive to the west limit of Old King Road in the Township of King, be reduced to 40-km per hour on Monday to Friday between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m., on school days only, with the reduced school zone speed limit controlled by flashing beacons.

8. The existing speed limit of 70-km per hour on King Road (Y.R. 11) from 153 metres east of the east limit of the 8th Concession to 1,007 metres west of the west limit of the 8th Concession in the Township of King, be increased to 80-km per hour.
9. The existing speed limit of 40-km per hour on Bayview Avenue (Y.R. 34) from a point 50 metres south of the south limit of Windhurst Gate to 50 metres north of the north limit of North Taylor Mills Drive in the Town of Richmond Hill, be increased to 60-km per hour.
10. The existing speed limit of 70-km per hour on Pine Valley Drive (Y.R. 57) from the north limit of Steeles Avenue to 210 metres south of Strada Drive in the City of Vaughan, be reduced to 60-km per hour.
11. The existing speed limit of 80-km per hour on Nashville Road (Y.R. 49) from a point 100 metres west of the west limit of Huntington Road to a point 900 metres west of the west limit of Huntington Road in the City of Vaughan, be reduced to 50-km per hour.
12. The Regional Solicitor be directed to prepare the necessary by-laws.
13. The Regional Clerk forward a copy of this report to the Chief of York Regional Police and to the Clerks of the Towns of Aurora, East Gwillimbury, Richmond Hill, Township of King, and City of Vaughan.
14. York Regional Police be requested to assist with the enforcement of these speed zones as their resources permit.

2. PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to obtain Council authorization to change existing speed limit regulations for certain sections of roads within the Regional road system.

In accordance with the *Highway Traffic Act*, a Regional by-law is required in addition to the posting of appropriate speed limit signs before any of the proposed changes can be enforced.

3. BACKGROUND

Regional Council at its meeting on September 23, 2004 adopted a new policy on setting speed limits on the Regional road system. This policy is based on a number of factors including completion of field studies to determine operating speed; analysis of collision history to identify any relevant patterns or trends; assessment of physical roadway characteristics; and evaluation of any existing or proposed adjacent land use.

The Roads Transportation Branch regularly reviews posted speed limits on Regional Roads. Revisions to the existing speed limits take into account a number of factors to ensure that the regulatory speed is applicable to the existing roadway characteristics and roadside environment, and is in accordance with actual operating speeds and collision history. Where instances occur that reconstruction changes the roadside environment and alignment to such a degree that existing speed limits are no longer appropriate, steps are to be taken to ensure that the regulatory speed limit is appropriate with the new roadway characteristics.

These reviews are initiated by concerns from residents, requests from local municipalities and general development growth adjacent to Regional roads.

4. ANALYSIS AND OPTIONS

Speed limit reviews were carried out to address requests for speed limit reductions on a number of roadways throughout the Region. A goal of these reviews is to standardize the regulatory speed limit applications for each section of road in accordance with the current roadway characteristics, actual operating speed, and collision history. The speed limit review process of each of the road sections consists of:

- A classification of the roads characteristics.
- Speed studies to determine the operating speeds.
- A summary of the recent collision history.
- Identification of any potential safety issues.

The results of the road characteristics, the speed study, collision history if applicable and potential safety issues for each of the proposed speed regulation changes are discussed below.

4.1 Yonge Street, South of St. John's Sideroad, Town of Aurora

Yonge Street, south of St. John's Sideroad is a five-lane semi-urban roadway, including a two-way left turn lane, which carries approximately 27,500 vehicles per day. The existing speed limit on Yonge Street at this location is 60-km per hour.

Parents, teachers and the Headmaster at St. Andrew's College are concerned about traffic safety and operations at their entrance on Yonge Street. Traffic control signals have been requested several times and each request was declined by York Region due the low traffic and pedestrian volumes at the school entrance. However, this section of Yonge Street has seen an overall increase in volume of traffic and the development of several businesses over the past number of years. It is therefore appropriate to consider reducing the speed limit to 50-km per hour (*see Attachment 1*). The proposed reduction in the posted speed limit will further enhance the security of students, pedestrians and vehicles entering and exiting the school driveway as well as the businesses on the east side of Yonge Street in this area.

It is, therefore, recommended that the existing speed limit of 60-km per hour on Yonge Street from 800 metres south of the south limit of St. John's Sideroad to the south limit of St. John's Sideroad be lowered to 50-km per hour.

4.2 Bathurst Street, North of Green Lane West, Township of King and Town of East Gwillimbury

Bathurst Street, north of Green Lane is a two-lane rural roadway that carries approximately 800 vehicles per day. Bathurst Street, south of Green Lane West has recently been reconstructed and consists of a four-lane rural roadway.

The road cross section reduces from four lanes to two lanes north of the intersection of Green Lane West. There is a full road closure on Bathurst Street approximately two kilometres north of Green Lane West. The existing speed limit on Bathurst Street at this location is 80-km per hour.

It is recommended that the existing posted speed limit of 80-km per hour on Bathurst Street be reduced to 60-km per hour because of the narrow surface treated steep hills and limited visibility (*see Attachment 2*). It is anticipated that the reduction in the posted speed limit will assist in improving the overall safety along this section of Bathurst Street.

4.3 Lloydtown/Aurora Road, Between Jane Street (north intersection) and Jane Street (south intersection), Township of King

Lloydtown/Aurora Road is an east-west road that jogs at Jane Street. Lloydtown/Aurora Road, between the north intersection of Jane Street and Lloydtown/Aurora Road and the south intersection of Jane Street and Lloydtown/Aurora Road is a two-lane rural arterial roadway that carries approximately 2,500 vehicles per day. The existing speed limit on Lloydtown/Aurora Road is 80-km per hour west of Dufferin Street transitioning to 50-km per hour at a point 100 metres east of Jane Street (south intersection) and continuing at 50-km per hour on Lloydtown/Aurora Road northerly and westerly to the east limit of Highway 400. The posted speed limit on Jane Street, north of Lloydtown/Aurora Road is 80-km-per hour and south of Lloydtown/Aurora Road is 70-km per hour.

Lloydtown/Aurora Road, between Jane Street (north intersection) and Jane Street (south intersection) is currently under construction and the north intersection of Lloydtown/Aurora Road and Jane Street has been signalized as part of the work. Prior to the commencement of construction, the posted speed limit was 80-km per hour and traffic flow was continuous for eastbound to southbound motorists; now a stop condition has been created by the installation of traffic control signals. The south intersection of Lloydtown/Aurora Road and Jane Street will also be signalized as part of this reconstruction.

Regional staff conducted a number of traffic studies including, a three-year collision review, a traffic count to measure vehicular and pedestrian volumes and studies to measure vehicle speeds.

A speed review conducted on November 2, 2004 indicated that the mean speed is 64-km per hour and that 85% of vehicles are travelling at or below 75-km per hour. No patterns or trends are identified in a three-year collision review.

Regional staff applied the speed limit policy, adopted by Council on September 23, 2004, for the road section of Lloydtown/Aurora Road along the Jane Street alignment, between the south intersection of Lloydtown/Aurora Road and Jane Street and the north intersection of Lloydtown/Aurora Road and Jane Street. The results indicate that the existing conditions in this area are consistent with a 60-km per hour speed limit. It is, therefore, recommended that once construction is completed, the existing posted speed limit of 50-km per hour on Lloydtown/Aurora Road be increased to 60-km per hour in order to provide less speed transition and more consistent travel speed in this area (*see Attachment 1*).

4.4 King Road, Between 10th Concession and 8th Concession, Township of King

King Road through Nobleton is a two-lane semi-urban roadway that carries approximately 16,000 vehicles per day. Between the 10th Concession road west of Nobleton and the 8th Concession road east of Nobleton, King Road has five different speed zones. Approaching Nobleton from the east, the speed limit changes from 80-km per hour to 60-km per hour and then to 50-km per hour. East of Highway 27, the speed limit changes from 50-km per hour to 40-km per hour for a short distance and then increases to 50-km per hour. Further east, the speed limit increases again from 50-km per hour to 70-km per hour and then to 80-km per hour just east of the 8th Concession Road.

Drivers find the numerous speed zones confusing and find it difficult to keep track of the speed limit changes. As a result of the lack of certainty about the applicable speed limit, drivers often unintentionally exceed the speed limits.

It is, therefore, recommended that the existing posted speed limits on King Road throughout Nobleton be increased on the fringe of the community and decreased in the area of the school to provide a uniform and safe speed in this area. (*see Attachment 2*). During school days, between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m., a 40-km per hour speed zone, controlled by flashing beacons, is proposed to be implemented between the east limit of Elizabeth Drive and the west limit of Old King Road. It is anticipated that the revisions to the posted speed limit will create more consistent travel speed in this area and provide better safety through the school zone.

4.5 Bayview Avenue, South of Elgin Mills Road, Town of Richmond Hill

Bayview Avenue, south of Elgin Mills Road is a four-lane urban roadway that carries approximately 35,000 vehicles per day. The existing speed limit on Bayview Avenue at this location is 40-km per hour. An elementary school was located on the west side of Bayview Avenue necessitating the 40-km per hour speed zone.

The school has recently closed and the reduced speed limit is no longer required. Regional staff contacted the York Catholic School Board to discuss future use of the school site. At this time, there are no definite plans for the use of the school.

A recent speed review indicated that the mean speed is 63-km per hour and that 85% of vehicles are travelling at or below 72-km per hour. No patterns or trends were identified in a three-year collision review.

It is, therefore, recommended that the existing posted speed limit of 40-km per hour on Bayview Avenue be increased to 60-km per hour (*see Attachment 2*). It is anticipated that the increase in the posted speed limit will create more consistent travel speed in this area.

4.6 Pine Valley Drive, Between Steeles Avenue and Strada Drive, City Of Vaughan

Pine Valley Drive, between Steeles Avenue and Strada Drive, is a four-lane urban arterial roadway that carries approximately 25,000 vehicles per day. The existing speed limit on Pine Valley Drive at this location is 70-km per hour.

The City of Vaughan recently approached the Region to consider reducing the posted speed limit on this road. There are numerous commercial properties adjacent to this road section. Additionally, there are plans to construct a new local municipal road which will intersect with Pine Valley Drive and service future industrial developments.

Regional staff conducted a number of traffic studies including, a three-year collision review, a traffic count to measure vehicular and pedestrian volumes and studies to measure vehicle speeds.

A speed review conducted on September 6, 2004 indicated that the mean speed is 65-km per hour and that 85% of vehicles are travelling at or below 74-km per hour. No patterns or trends were identified in a three-year collision review.

In order to determine the appropriate speed limit, Regional staff applied the speed limit policy, adopted by Council on September 23, 2004, for the section of Pine Valley Drive, between Steeles Avenue and Strada Drive. The results indicate that conditions in this area will reflect and be consistent with a 60-km per hour speed limit.

It is therefore, recommended that the existing posted speed limit of 70-km per hour on Pine Valley Drive, between Steeles Avenue and Strada Drive be reduced to 60-km per hour (*see Attachment 1*). It is anticipated that the reduction in the posted speed limit will assist in improving the overall safety along this section of Pine Valley Drive.

4.7 Nashville Road, Between Klein's Crescent and 11th Concession, City of Vaughan

Nashville Road, between Klein's Crescent and 11th Concession, is a two-lane rural arterial roadway that carries approximately 7,200 vehicles per day. The existing speed

limit on Nashville Road transitions from 50-km per hour east of Huntington Road to 80-km per hour west of Huntington Road.

There has been recent development in the area including a church and a school. Due to the land use changes, the Region has been approached by residents of the area to consider reducing the posted speed limit on this road section to provide parents, students and parishioners a safer entry and exit to the Nashville Community Church and Calvary Christian School.

Regional staff conducted a number of traffic studies including, a three-year collision review, a traffic count to measure vehicular and pedestrian volumes and studies to measure vehicle speeds.

A speed review conducted on October 5, 2004 indicated that the mean speed is 88-km per hour and that 85% of vehicles are travelling at or below 96-km per hour. No patterns or trends were identified in a three-year collision review.

In order to determine the appropriate speed limit, Regional staff applied the speed limit policy, adopted by Council on September 23, 2004, for the road section of Nashville Road, between Klein's Crescent and 11th Concession. The results indicate that the conditions in this area are consistent with a 50-km per hour speed limit. It is, therefore, recommended that the existing posted speed limit of 80-km per hour on Nashville Road be reduced to 50-km per hour in the vicinity of the Nashville Community Church and Calvary Christian School (*see Attachment 1*). It is anticipated that the reduction in the posted speed limit will assist in improving the overall safety along this section of Nashville Road.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The costs associated with the manufacture and installation of the new speed limit signs and the school zone flasher equipment are included within the 2004 Roads Transportation Budget.

6. LOCAL MUNICIPAL IMPACT

The recommended revisions to the speed limits relate to the Regional road system with no direct impact on the local municipality. The revisions reflect the changes stemming from both existing and proposed adjacent development and local concerns for speeding and safety. The changes to the posted speed limits are intended to improve the level of speed compliance in areas where safety is an issue.

7. CONCLUSION

The Roads Transportation Branch initiated a review of the existing speed limit regulations as part of a regular speed limit review process. The proposed speed limit changes will assist in standardizing the regulatory speed limit applications for each section of road, in accordance with the current roadway characteristics, speeds, and collision history.

A by-law is required before speed limits can be enforced. Therefore, the Regional Solicitor should prepare the necessary by-laws and a copy of this report should be forwarded to the Chief of Police, with a request to enforce these new regulations, as their resources permit.

The Senior Management Group has reviewed this report.

(The attachments referred to in this clause were included in the agenda for the January 5, 2005 Committee meeting.)