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SPEED LIMIT REVISIONS SCHOOL ZONES ON REGIONAL ROADS

The Transportation Services Committee recommends the adoption of the recommendations contained in the following report dated September 8, 2010, from the Commissioner of Transportation Services.

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that:

1. The existing speed limit of 50 kilometres per hour on Glenwoods Avenue (Y.R. 33) from 80 metres east of the east limit of The Queensway South (Y.R. 12) to 745 metres east of the east limit of The Queensway South (Y.R. 12), in the Town of Georgina be reduced to 40 kilometres per hour, during school hours only, with the reduced school zone speed limit controlled by flashing beacons.
2. The existing speed limit of 50 kilometres per hour on Baseline Road (Y.R. 8A) from 270 metres west of the west limit of Dalton Road (Y.R. 9) to 630 metres west of the west limit of Dalton Road (Y.R. 9), in the Town of Georgina be reduced to 40 kilometres per hour, during school hours only, with the reduced school zone speed limit controlled by flashing beacons.
3. The existing speed limit of 50 kilometres per hour on Prospect Street (Y.R. 34) from 140 metres north of the north limit of Penrose Street to 510 metres north of the north limit of Penrose Street, in the Town of Newmarket be reduced to 40 kilometres per hour, during school hours only, with the reduced school zone speed limit controlled by flashing beacons.
4.
 - a) The existing speed limit of 40 kilometres per hour on Carrville Road (Y.R. 73) from 150 metres east of the east limit of Avenue Road to 440 metres west of the west limit of Avenue Road, in the Town of Richmond Hill, be increased to 50 kilometres per hour.
 - b) The speed limit on Carrville Road (Y.R. 73) from 150 metres east of the east limit of Avenue Road to 150 metres west of the west limit of Myers Boulevard, in the Town of Richmond Hill, be reduced to 40 kilometres per hour, during school hours only, with the reduced school zone speed limit controlled by flashing beacons.
5. The Regional Solicitor prepare the necessary by-laws.

6. The Regional Clerk forward this report to the Clerks of the Towns of Georgina, Newmarket and Richmond Hill and to the Chief of York Regional Police.

2. PURPOSE

This report requests Regional Council authorization to change the existing speed limit regulations for specific Regional roads where there are existing school zones. 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 proposed change to a speed limit can be implemented or enforced.

3. BACKGROUND

Regional staff receives requests to review posted speed limits on Regional roads on a regular basis. These requests are received through concerns of residents, staff of local municipalities and by Regional staff through operational reviews of the Regional road network.

Revisions to existing speed limits take into account a number of factors to ensure the regulatory speed is appropriate for the existing roadway characteristics and roadside environment. In this case, existing school zones on three Regional roads have been identified and reviewed and a lower posted speed limit has been recommended, effective during school hours, which will benefit safety in the vicinity of these schools.

Earlier this year, a report entitled “*Policy Update Establishing Speed Limits on Regional Roads*” was forwarded to the local municipalities for their review and comment. Staff are now in the process of meeting with Councils and staff of the local municipalities to discuss the policy’s impact on the Regional roads located in their municipalities. It is expected that a summary report of these meetings will be submitted to the Transportation Services Committee early in 2011. All speed limits considered in this report have been reviewed in accordance with the existing speed limit policy. The speed limit policy update does not contemplate any changes in relation to posted speed limits in school zones.

4. ANALYSIS AND OPTIONS

The *Highway Traffic Act* regulates speed reductions in school zones and the signage that is required in school zones

The *Highway Traffic Act* regulates speed limit reductions and signage in school zones. These signs consist of white figures and symbols on a blue background and include a speed limit sign complete with amber flashers. These flashers operate during school hours to advise motorists they are entering a school area and that the speed limit is reduced only when the flashers are in operation. At all other times of the day, and on weekends, the speed limit reverts to the regular posted speed limit. Fluorescent yellow green school zone signs are also used in conjunction with the blue and white signs as an enhancement to increase awareness of school areas; however, at this time fluorescent yellow green school zone signs are not considered as legal signs in the *Highway Traffic Act*.

Staff ensures flashers in school zones operate during school hours on a schedule that is customized to the school's schedule

The flashers located within school areas operate only during school hours. At all other times of the day, and on weekends, the flashers are off. These flashers operate on a time-of-day schedule that is customized to suit the schedule of the school. On an annual basis, each school where flashers exist provide a schedule and staff program the flasher to operate only on school days during the hours as established by the school. For example, some schools may want the flasher to operate continuously throughout the day and others may want the flasher to operate during the morning when school starts and again in the afternoon when school ends. This programming is completed by staff using wireless and remote communication devices and is verified and updated on a weekly basis.

Staff reviewed the speed limit on four Regional roads where schools have direct frontage on the road

GLENWOODS AVENUE - East of The Queensway South in the Town of Georgina (Keswick)

Glenwoods Avenue, east of The Queensway South is a two-lane Regional urban roadway, with sidewalks on both sides of the roadway and a posted speed limit of 50 kilometres per hour, located in central Keswick. A commercial plaza is situated on the northeast corner of The Queensway South and Glenwoods Avenue and, further to the east there are reverse frontage residential lots. The signalized intersection of Glenwoods Avenue and Lowndes Avenue is located approximately 400 metres east of The Queensway South.

Our Lady of the Lake Catholic College School and the Prince of Peace Catholic School directly front the south side of Glenwoods Avenue at the intersection of Glenwoods Avenue and Lowndes Avenue. Jersey Public School is located on the north side of Glenwoods Avenue approximately 200 metres east of Lowndes Avenue. A location plan is appended to this report as *Attachment 1*.

Students of all three schools frequent the commercial plaza on the northeast corner of The Queensway South and Glenwoods Avenue and often walk between the schools and the commercial plaza throughout the day.

It is, therefore, recommended that the existing posted speed limit on Glenwoods Avenue, in the area of these schools, be decreased to 40 kilometres per hour, on school days based on the individual specific schedule determined by the schools, and controlled by flashing beacons. This speed reduction will provide lower operating speeds in this school area.

BASELINE ROAD - West of Dalton Road in the Town of Georgina (Sutton)

Baseline Road, west of Dalton Road, is a two-lane Regional urban roadway, with sidewalks on both sides of the roadway and a posted speed limit of 50 kilometres per hour, located in central Sutton. The original Sutton Public School, formerly located on Dalton Road, is now closed and a new Sutton Public School has recently been constructed on the south side of Baseline Road, west of Dalton Road. Baseline Road and Dalton Road is a signalized intersection. A location plan is appended to this report as *Attachment 2*.

Although the school is new and walking routes have not yet been established or identified, it is expected that due to the existing commercial properties in the area and within close proximity of the school, there will be more pedestrian activity in the area.

It is, therefore, recommended that the existing posted speed limit on Baseline Road, in the area of this school, be decreased to 40 kilometres per hour, on school days based on the individual specific schedule determined by the school, and controlled by flashing beacons. This speed reduction will provide lower operating speeds in this school area.

PROSPECT STREET - North of Mulock Drive in the Town of Newmarket

Prospect Street north of Mulock Drive is a two-lane Regional urban roadway with a posted speed limit of 50 kilometres per hour located in south-east Newmarket. Pickering College is located on the east side of Prospect Street and residential properties with direct access to the roadway are located on the west side. There are sidewalks on both sides of the roadway. There are no signalized intersections on this section of Prospect Street between Mulock Drive and Gorham Street. A location plan is appended to this report as *Attachment 3*.

On a regular basis, students of the school have been observed crossing Prospect Street at various locations along the school frontage.

It is, therefore, recommended that the existing posted speed limit on Prospect Street, in the area of this school, be decreased to 40 kilometres per hour, on school days based on the individual specific schedule determined by the school, and controlled by flashing beacons. This speed reduction will provide lower operating speeds in this school area.

CARRVILLE ROAD - Near Avenue Road in the Town of Richmond Hill

Carrville Road in the vicinity of Avenue Road is a four-lane divided Regional urban roadway with a posted speed limit of 40 and 50 kilometres per hour located in southwest Richmond Hill. This area is comprised of residential properties on both sides of the roadway that have direct driveway access to the road. There are sidewalks on both sides of the roadway. Roselawn Public School is located on the north side of Carrville Road just west of Avenue Road. The intersection of Carrville Road and Avenue Road is signalized. A location plan is appended to this report as *Attachment 4*.

As stated, there are two different posted speed limits on Carrville Road between Bathurst Street and Yonge Street. East of Bathurst Street and west of Yonge Street the posted speed limit on Carrville Road is 50 kilometres per hour. Between these two speed zones, and in the area of Avenue Road and Roselawn Public School, the posted speed limit is 40 kilometres per hour which is in effect at all times without the use of flashing beacons. This speed zone is necessary due to the presence of the school; however, it is not typical Regional practice to reduce a speed zone in a school area that is in effect during school and non-school hours. A 40 kilometres per hour speed zone in effect on a continual basis does not raise awareness of the presence of the school or that school children may be in the area. In order to ensure greater compliance to the reduced speed zone and raise awareness of the presence of the school and children walking in the area, this school zone area should be signed according to typical Regional practice.

Based on the existing speed limit policy, this entire road section is conducive to a posted speed limit of 50 kilometres per hour. It is, therefore, recommended that the existing posted speed limit on Carrville Road be increased to 50 kilometres per hour to provide consistency with the existing posted speed limit in the area. It is also recommended that, in the immediate vicinity of Roselawn Public School, the posted speed limit be decreased to 40 kilometres per hour, on school days based on the individual specific schedule determined by the school, and controlled by flashing beacons. This speed reduction will provide lower operating speeds in this school area.

A reduced speed limit in these school zones will lower operating speeds during school hours

It is, therefore, recommended that the existing posted speed limit within each of these school zones be decreased to provide a uniform and lower operating speed during the

hours the schools are operational. It is proposed, during school days, and based on the individual specific schedule determined by each school, a 40 kilometres per hour speed zone, controlled by flashing beacons, be implemented at each of these locations.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The cost associated with the manufacture and installation of the new speed limit signs and flashers for the recommended speed limit changes is included within the 2010 Transportation Services Budget. The cost to review and assess the speed limits is part of the day-to-day operations for staff.

6. LOCAL MUNICIPAL IMPACT

Uniformity and consistent signage is a principle of road safety. Driver expectancy is imperative and provides a safe road network for all motorists. The recommended adjustments to the speed limit on Glenwoods Drive, Baseline Road, Prospect Street and Carrville Road are based on reviews conducted by staff with the intent to create a consistent treatment of all school zones on Regional roads. These speed limits will improve driver expectancy in these school zones.

7. CONCLUSION

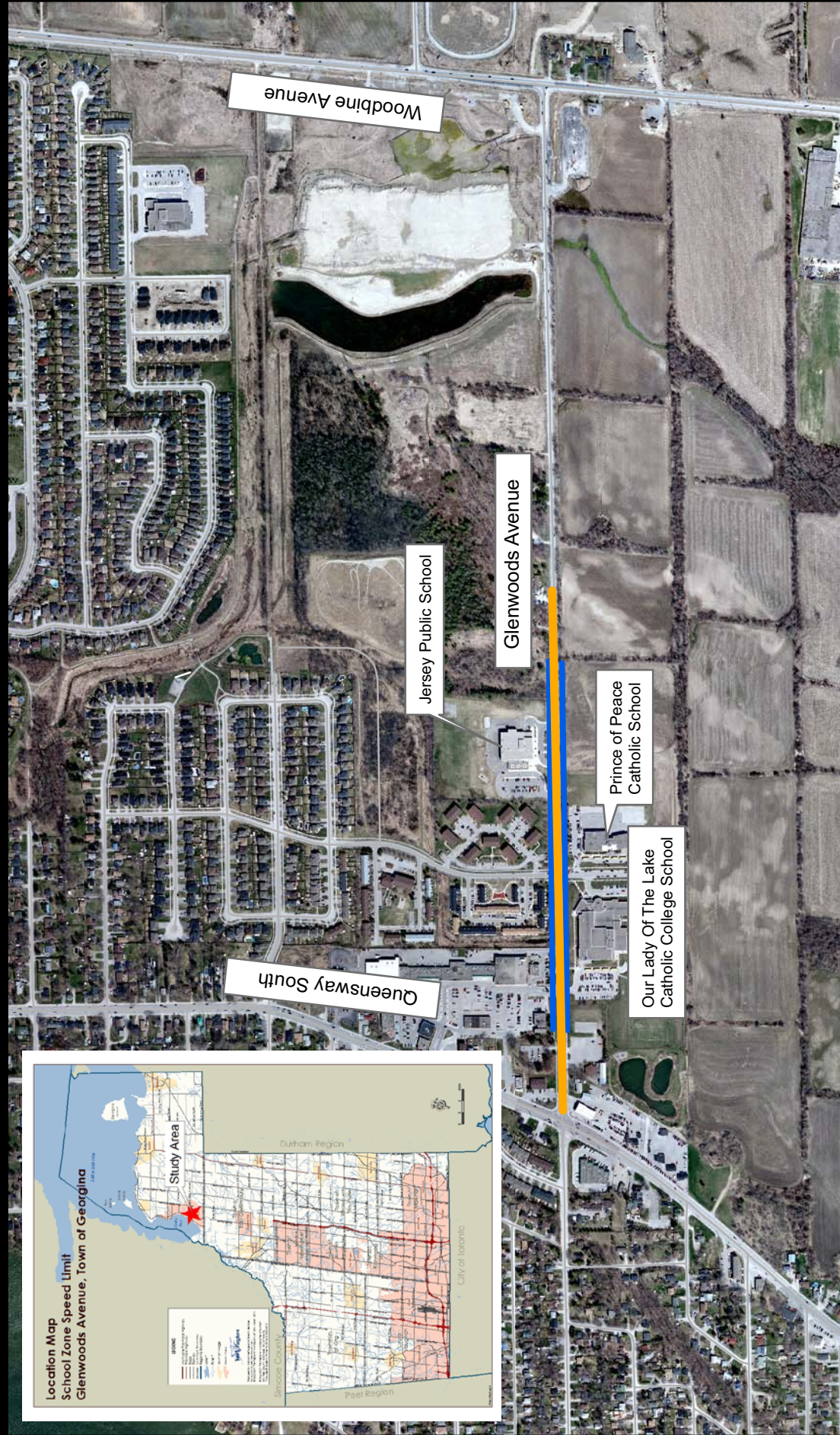
Regional staff initiated a review of the speed limit regulations on specific Regional roads with existing school zones. The recommended speed limit changes will assist in standardizing the regulatory speed limit on these portions of Regional roads ensuring the current posted speed limit is in accordance with the current roadway characteristics and surrounding environment.

A by-law is required before speed limits can be enforced. Therefore, the Regional Solicitor should prepare the necessary by-laws and this report should be forwarded to the Clerks of the Towns of Georgina, Newmarket, and Richmond Hill and to the Chief of York Regional Police.

For more information on this report, please contact Steven Kemp, Director, Traffic Management and Intelligent Transportation Systems at extension 5226.

The Senior Management Group has reviewed this report.

(The four attachments referred to in this clause are attached to this report.)

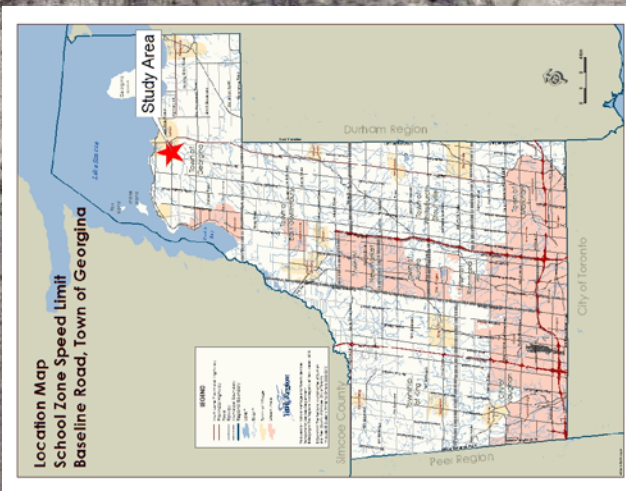


LOCATION PLAN

School Zone Speed Limit Revisions
Glenwoods Avenue
Town of Georgina



TRANSPORTATION SERVICES



LOCATION PLAN

School Zone Speed Limit Revisions

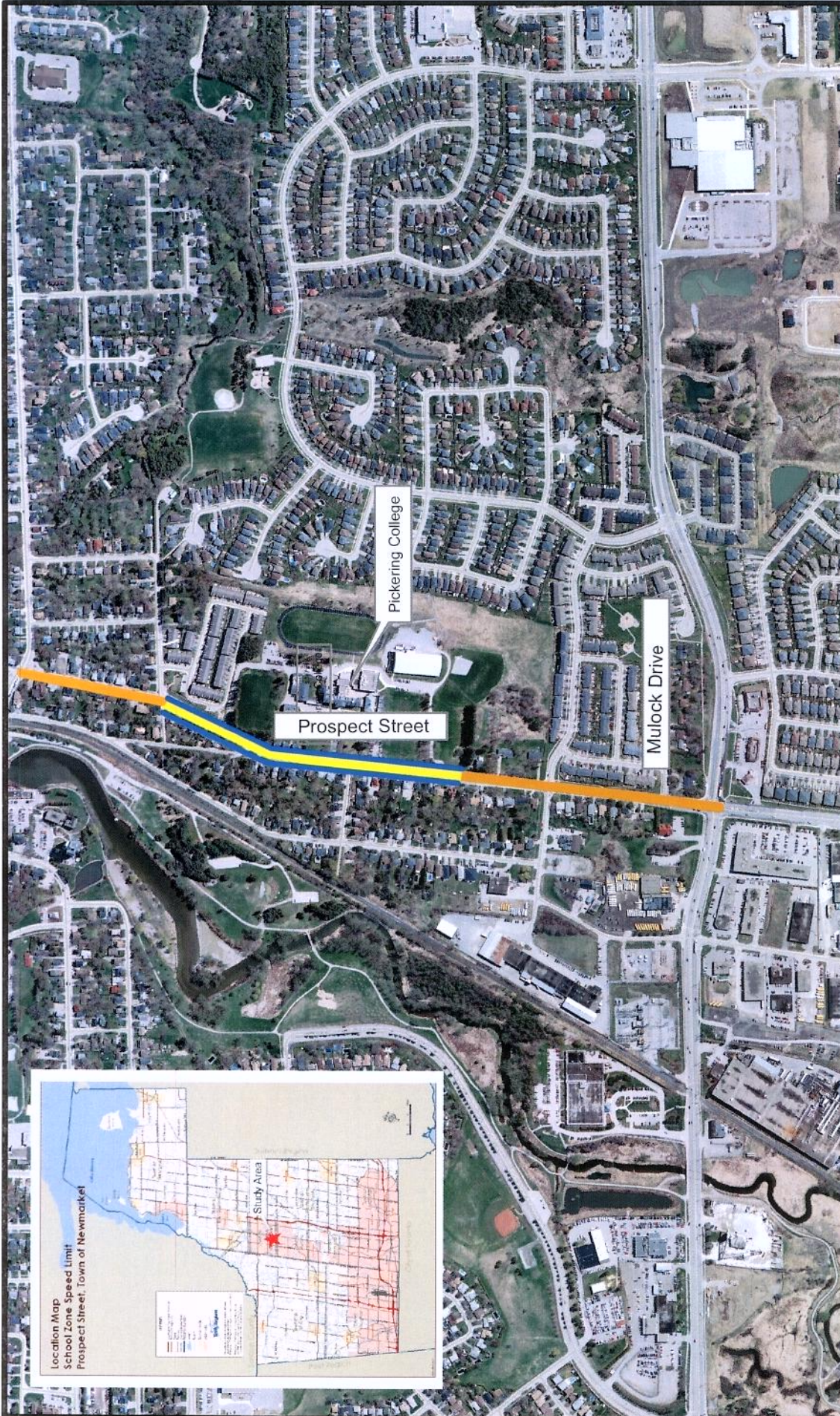
Baseline Road

Town of Georgina



- Existing 50-km-per hour
- Existing 50-km-per hour;
Proposed Flashing 40-km per hour

TRANSPORTATION SERVICES



LOCATION PLAN

School Zone Speed Limit Revisions

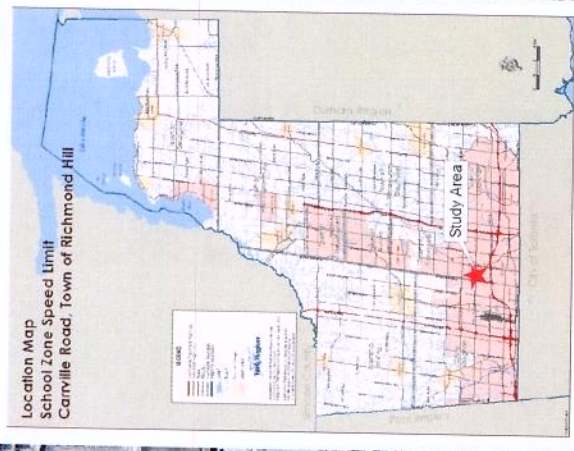
Prospect Street

Town of Newmarket

- Existing 50-km-per hour
- Existing 50-km-per hour;
Proposed Flashing 40-km per hour

TRANSPORTATION SERVICES





LOCATION PLAN

School Zone Speed Limit Revisions

Carrville Road

Town of Richmond Hill



- Existing 40-km-per hour
- Proposed 50-km-per hour;
- Proposed Flashing 40-km per hour

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