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CONSTRUCTION ZONES AND TEMPORARY SPEED LIMITS

The Transportation and Works Committee recommends the adoption of the recommendations contained in the following report, August 23, 2006, from the Commissioner of Transportation and Works:

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that:

1. The Commissioner of Transportation and Works be appointed, by by-law, to designate portions of Regional roads as construction zones and to set temporary speed limits in those construction zones in accordance with the provisions of the *Highway Traffic Act*.
2. The General Manager of Roads of the Transportation and Works Department be appointed as a designate to act in place of the Commissioner for the purpose noted in Recommendation 1.
3. The Regional Solicitor prepare the necessary by-laws.
4. The Regional Clerk forward this report to the Ministry of Transportation, the Provincial Offences office, the Chief of York Regional Police, and the Clerks of all local municipalities.
5. York Regional Police be requested to assist in the enforcement of these temporary speed zones, as their resources permit.

2. PURPOSE

This report recommends that Council authorize the Commissioner of Transportation and Works to designate construction zones on portions of Regional roads and to temporarily change the regulatory speed limits within these construction zones.

3. BACKGROUND

In November of 2005, the legislature of the Province of Ontario introduced *Bill 169 Transportation Statute Law Amendment Act, 2005* to revise the *Highway Traffic Act* to include provisions dealing with the fine structure for speeding in construction zones and the posting of signage in construction zones. The Act now doubles fines for motorists who speed through designated construction zones and suggests an appropriate signage layout, located on the Ministry of Transportation's web site, to notify motorists that they

are entering a construction zone (*see Attachment 1*). The doubling of fines is only applicable if workers are present within the construction zone when the offence occurs.

Bill 169 also empowers a municipality to appoint a person to designate a portion of a road, under the municipality's jurisdiction, as a construction zone and to require the installation of proper signage. The bill also permits this person to temporarily set lower speed limits within construction zones from 80-km per hour to 40-km per hour.

4. ANALYSIS AND OPTIONS

A number of construction projects included in the Region's capital program occur on two-lane and multi-lane roadways with speed limits in excess of 60-km per hour. To safely carry out the construction of roads and underground services, as well as control traffic within the construction areas, traffic control persons are stationed on the roadway. In addition, construction workers are required to perform their duties within and adjacent to the travelled portions of the road. To address this potential safety issue for both the travelling public and the construction workers, temporary reduced speed zones are routinely implemented in construction zones.

In addition to construction work on Regional roads related to the capital program, development projects, as a condition of approval, often include similar roadwork which is of extended duration where traffic control is required. The ability to reduce speed limits in these locations would improve the safety of construction workers as well.

Past practice of the Region has been to implement temporary speed limits in some designated construction zones based on existing posted speed limits, duration of work, roadway characteristics, and other traffic safety issues. These temporary speed limits were implemented through a report to Regional Council and included a comprehensive list of locations based on upcoming construction projects in the Region's capital construction program where by-laws were enacted to reduce speed limits in construction zones.

It is proposed that the Commissioner of Transportation and Works be appointed to designate construction zones and implement reduced speed limits in construction zones. This will eliminate the need for reports to the Transportation and Works Committee and Regional Council to implement temporary speed limits, thus being more effective and efficient.

In accordance with past Regional practice, the temporary speed limits will be in effect for the duration of the construction project and then upon project completion, the original posted speed limit, in accordance with existing by-laws, would be reinstated.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The costs associated with the manufacture and installation of temporary “speed limit” signs is included in the 2006 Roads Program Budget.

6. LOCAL MUNICIPAL IMPACT

The Region’s capital construction program improves the Regional road network within all local municipalities. Road safety continues to be a key component for upper tier and lower tier municipalities. The safety of motorists and workers within construction areas is of continuous mutual concern.

7. CONCLUSION

It is proposed that the Commissioner of Transportation and Works be appointed, by by-law, to designate portions of Regional roads as construction zones and to set temporary speed limits in those construction zones in accordance with the provisions of the *Highway Traffic Act* and the General Manager of Roads, of the Transportation and Works Department be appointed as a designate to act in place of the Commissioner as needed.

The Regional Solicitor should prepare the necessary by-law.

The Regional Clerk forward this report to the Ministry of Transportation, the Provincial Offences office, the Chief of York Regional Police, and the Clerks of all local municipalities.

The Senior Management Group has reviewed this report.

(The attachment referred to in this clause is attached to this report.)