

20

SPEED LIMIT REVISIONS REGIONAL ROAD NETWORK

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 existing speed limit of 80-km per hour on Bathurst Street (Y.R. 38) from 183 metres north of Lowther Avenue to 200 metres south of Keith Avenue, be reduced to 70-km per hour, in the Towns of Aurora, Richmond Hill, Newmarket, and the Township of King.
2. The existing speed limit of 80-km per hour on Weston Road (Y.R. 56) from the north limit of Rutherford Road (Y.R. 73) to the north limit of Major Mackenzie Drive (Y.R. 25), be reduced to 60-km per hour, in the City of Vaughan.
3. The existing speed limit of 80-km per hour on Dufferin Street (Y.R. 53) from the north limit of Rutherford Road (Y.R. 73) to the north limit of Major Mackenzie Drive (Y.R. 25), be reduced to 60-km per hour, in the City of Vaughan.
4. The existing speed limit of 70-km per hour on 16th Avenue (Y.R. 73) from 500 metres west of Ninth Line (Y.R. 69) to the east limit of Markham By-Pass (Y.R. 48) (west intersection), be reduced to 60-km per hour, in the Town of Markham.
5. The existing speed limit of 60-km per hour on Nashville Road (Y.R. 49) from the east limit of Klein's Crescent (east entrance) to the west limit of Highway 27 (Y.R. 27), be reduced to 50-km per hour, in the City of Vaughan.
6. The existing speed limit of 80-km per hour on Morton Avenue (Y.R. 78) from 527 metres east of The Queensway (Y.R.12) and the west limit of Woodbine Avenue (Y.R. 8), be reduced to 70-km per hour, in the Town of Georgina.
7. The existing speed limit of 80-km per hour on Ninth Line (Y.R. 69) from the north limit of Bloomington Road (Y.R. 40) and 360 metres south of Hillsdale Drive, be reduced to 60-km per hour, in the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville.
8. The Regional Solicitor prepare the necessary by-law.
9. The Regional Clerk forward this report to the Clerks of the Towns of Aurora, Georgina, Newmarket, Richmond Hill, the Township of King, and the City of Vaughan and to the Chief of York Regional Police.

10. 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 Branch regularly reviews posted speed limits on Regional roads. Revisions to the existing speed limits take into account a number of factors to ensure 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 taken to ensure the regulatory speed limit is appropriate with the new roadway characteristics.

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. The 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 for 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 and potential safety issues for each of the proposed speed regulation changes are discussed below.

4.1 Bathurst Street Between Lowther Avenue and Keith Avenue, Towns of Aurora, Richmond Hill, Newmarket, and Township of King

The existing speed limit on Bathurst Street between Lowther Avenue and Keith Avenue is 80-km per hour. This section of Bathurst Street is currently undergoing major reconstruction to widen Bathurst Street from two-lanes to four-lanes. It is anticipated that construction will be completed by 2008.

To efficiently accommodate constraints presented by the right-of-way, the vertical alignment and numerous driveways, a design speed of 80-km per hour was adopted for the re-design of Bathurst Street. To provide a margin of safety, the practice in York Region is to set the speed limit at 10 to 20-km per hour below the design speed.

It is proposed that the existing posted speed limit of 80-km per hour on Bathurst Street be lowered to 70-km per hour from 183 metres north of the north limit of Lowther Avenue to 200 metres south of the south limit of Keith Avenue in the Towns of Aurora, Newmarket, Richmond Hill and the Township of King (see *Attachment 1*).

4.2 Weston Road Between Rutherford Road and Major Mackenzie Drive, City of Vaughan

Weston Road between Rutherford Road and Major Mackenzie Drive is a five-lane urban roadway, including a two-way left-turn lane, which carries approximately 14,400 vehicles per day. The existing speed limit on Weston Road in this area is 80-km per hour.

As part of the Region's annual speed review, this location has been identified for a potential speed reduction due to the increase in residential and commercial development. In addition, The Vellore Village Community Centre and St. Jean de Brebeuf Catholic High School reside along this section of Weston Road, which attracts many pedestrians.

A recent speed review indicated that the mean speed is 70-km per hour and that 85% of vehicles are travelling at or below 78-km per hour. A three-year collision review identified no patterns or trends.

The speed limit policy indicates this road section is conducive to a 60-km per hour speed zone. It is, therefore, recommended that the existing speed limit of 80-km per hour on

Weston Road from the north limit of Rutherford Road to the north limit of Major Mackenzie Drive be reduced to 60-km per hour, in the City of Vaughan (see *Attachment 2*).

4.3 Dufferin Street Between Rutherford Road and Major Mackenzie Drive, City of Vaughan

Dufferin Street between Rutherford Road and Major Mackenzie Drive is a five-lane urban roadway that carries approximately 14,500 vehicles per day. The existing speed limit on Dufferin Street at this location is 80-km per hour.

As part of the Region's annual speed review, this location has been identified for a potential speed reduction due to the increase in development. In addition, there are residential homes in close proximity to the roadway.

A recent speed review indicated that the mean speed is 82-km per hour and that 85% of vehicles are travelling at or below 90-km per hour. A three-year collision review identified no patterns or trends.

It is proposed that the existing posted speed limit of 80-km per hour on Dufferin Street be reduced to 60-km per hour. It is anticipated the reduction in the posted speed limit will assist in improving the overall safety along this section of Dufferin Street (*see Attachment 3*).

4.4 16th Avenue Between Ninth Line and Markham By-Pass, Town of Markham

16th Avenue between Ninth Line and Markham By-pass is a four-lane urban roadway that carries approximately 12,300 vehicles per day. The existing speed limit on 16th Avenue in this area is 70-km per hour. This road section is composed of two continuous horizontal curves. In addition, two unsignalized intersections are situated within the curves.

A local resident is requesting a speed reduction from 70-km per hour to 60-km per hour on 16th Avenue between Ninth Line and Markham By-pass due to residential development on either side of 16th Avenue.

A recent speed review indicated that the mean speed is 66-km per hour and that 85% of vehicles are travelling at or below 73-km per hour. A three-year collision review identified no patterns or trends.

It is proposed that the existing posted speed limit of 70-km per hour on 16th Avenue from 500 metres west of the Ninth Line to the east limit of Markham By-pass (west intersection) be reduced to 60-km per hour due to the increase in development. It is anticipated that the decrease in the posted speed limit will create a more consistent travel speed in this area and improve the overall safety along this section of 16th Avenue (*see Attachment 4*).

4.5 Nashville Road Between Klein's Crescent and Highway 27 City of Vaughan

Nashville Road between Klein's Crescent and Highway 27 is a two-lane semi-urban roadway that carries approximately 10,600 vehicles per day. The existing speed limit on Nashville Road is 60-km per hour and this road section consists of vertical and compounded horizontal curves intersecting with residential streets on the north and south side of Nashville Road and a new "Crossroads Community Church" located immediately west of Highway 27 on Nashville Road.

The community of Nashville Road is requesting a speed reduction from 60-km per hour to 50-km per hour on Nashville Road between Klein's Crescent and Highway 27 due to the curvature of the road and high vehicle operating speeds.

A recent speed review indicated that the mean speed is 67-km per hour and that 85% of vehicles are travelling at or below 75-km per hour. A three-year collision review identified no patterns or trends.

It is proposed that the existing posted speed limit of 60-km per hour on Nashville Road from the east limit of Klein's Crescent (east entrance) to the west limit of Highway 27 be reduced to 50-km per hour. It is anticipated that the decrease in the posted speed limit will create more consistent travel speed in this area and increase safety in this area (*see Attachment 5*).

4.6 Morton Avenue Between The Queensway and Woodbine Avenue, Town of Georgina

Due to safety concerns, especially at the intersection of Woodbine Avenue and Morton Avenue in the Town of Georgina, officials have requested a reduction in the 80-km per hour speed limit on Morton Avenue west of Woodbine Avenue.

The 80-km per hour speed limit on Morton Avenue starts at a point 527 metres east of the east limit of The Queensway and ends at the west limit of Woodbine Avenue. The speed limit on Morton Avenue between this section and The Queensway is 60-km per hour.

The section of Morton Avenue with a speed limit of 80-km per hour, is a two-lane rural roadway that carries approximately 6,000 vehicles per day and is surrounded by commercial developments on the south side and residential areas on the north side. No pedestrian sidewalks are present.

A speed study was conducted and it was found that almost 85% of drivers obey the existing 80-km per hour speed limit. Therefore, in terms of the Region's Speed Limit Policy, only a marginal reduction in the speed limit can be justified and it is proposed that the existing posted speed limit of 80-km per hour on Morton Avenue from 527 metres east of the east limit of The Queensway and the west limit of Woodbine Avenue be reduced to 70-km per hour. It is anticipated that the decrease in the posted speed limit

will create more consistent travel speeds and increase safety in this area (*see Attachment 6*).

4.7 Ninth Line Between Bloomington Road and Hillsdale Drive, Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville

Ninth Line between Bloomington Road and Hillsdale Drive is a two-lane rural roadway that carries approximately 3,500 vehicles per day and serves as a gateway to Mussleman's Lake. Additionally, there is a gravel pit located on the east side of Ninth Line north of Bloomington Road. The existing speed limit on Ninth Line in this area is 80-km per hour.

As part of the Region's annual speed review, this location has been identified for a speed reduction due to the future residential development in this area combined with the high number of trucks visiting the gravel pit daily.

A recent speed review indicated that the mean speed is 80-km per hour and that 85% of vehicles are travelling at or below 88-km per hour. A three-year collision review identified no patterns or trends.

It is proposed that the existing speed limit of 80-km per hour on Ninth Line from the north limit of Bloomington Road and to 360 metres south of Hillsdale Drive be reduced to 60-km per hour, in the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville (*see Attachment 7*).

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The cost associated with the manufacture and installation of the new speed limit signs is included within the 2006 Roads Branch 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 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 this report should be forwarded to the Chief of York Regional 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 September 6, 2006 Committee meeting.)