

# The Regional Municipality of York

Committee of the Whole  
Transportation Services  
April 7, 2022

Report of the Commissioner of Transportation Services

## 2022 Speed Limit Revisions

### 1. Recommendations

1. Existing speed limits on Regional roads listed in Attachment 1 of this report be revised as detailed.
2. The Regional Clerk circulate this report to the Clerks of the Towns of East Gwillimbury and Georgina, Cities of Richmond Hill and Vaughan and Chief of York Regional Police.
3. The Regional Solicitor prepare the necessary bylaws.

### 2. Summary

This report seeks Council approval to implement the recommended speed limit revisions detailed in Attachment 1. Revisions reflect changing land use, increased urbanization and improvements to traffic operations.

Key Points:

- Lowering speed limits helps to protect travellers as the Region continues to intensify and traffic volumes increase
- Speed limit revisions are recommended based on principles defined in the Regional speed limit policy
- Staff propose speed limit revisions as detailed in Attachment 1

### 3. Background

#### **Speed limit revisions are recommended based on principles defined in the Regional speed limit policy**

In 2011, Council approved and adopted a policy for [Establishing Speed Limits on Regional Roads](#) that provides guidelines in setting speed limits on Regional roads to assist in ensuring a consistent approach. The guidelines reference industry standards that help the policy remain current as industry-accepted best practices evolve. The *Highway Traffic Act* gives a

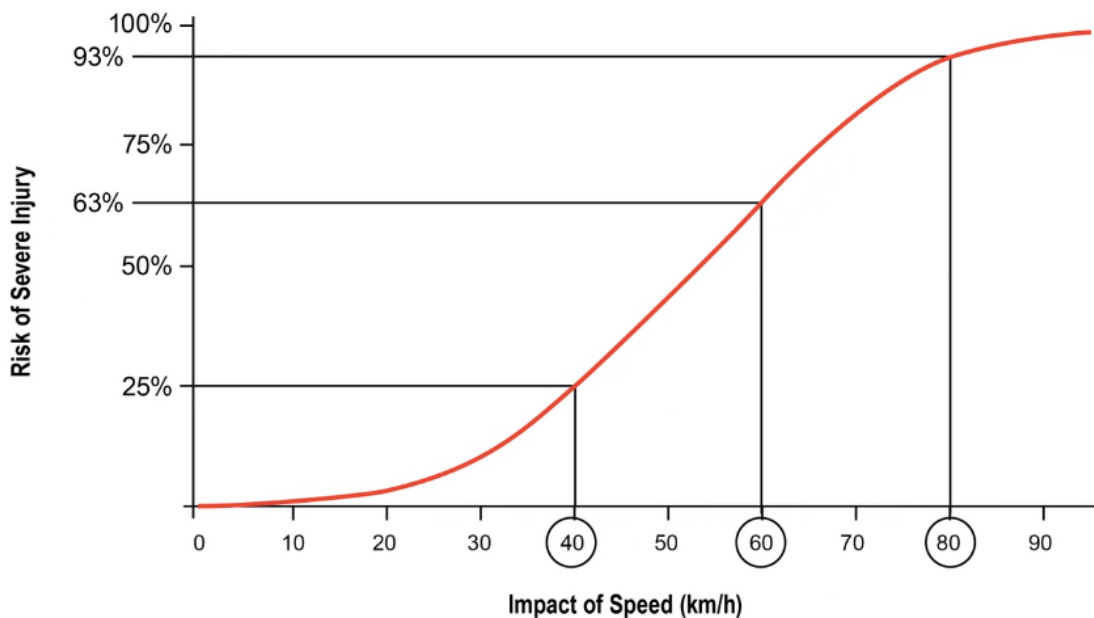
municipal council the authority, by bylaw, to revise speed limits under 100 km/h in its jurisdiction.

## Lowering speed limits will help improve traveller safety as the Region continues to intensify

Between 2016 and 2021, the Region's population grew by 7.2% to 1,226,500 residents. From 1996 to 2016, the total number of daily walking or cycling trips increased 5% annually. The Region is expected to continue to grow to approximately 2.02 million people and 990,000 jobs by 2051.

Physical environment is a key driver in determining the most appropriate travel speed for a roadway. Where a physical environment encourages walking and cycling, pedestrians and cyclists must co-exist with vehicles. While 24% of vehicle-only collisions resulted in injury or fatality, almost all pedestrian (94%) and cyclist (82%) collisions resulted in injury or fatality. Figure 1 shows the relationship between the probability of a severe pedestrian injury and vehicle collision speed. As vehicle speed increases, pedestrian severe injury rates rise dramatically in a pedestrian/vehicle collision.

**Figure 1**  
**Pedestrian Severe Injury Rate in Relation to Vehicle Travel Speed**



Source: Adapted from TAC Geometric Design Guide for Canadian Roads, June 2017

## 4. Analysis

### **Setting speed limits consistently across the road network and complementing urbanizing land use encourages compliance and improves traffic operations**

The Regional road network is a dynamic system. Staff monitor and periodically review the road network to ensure speed limits are updated in accordance with the Region's speed limit policy and are set at appropriate levels for each road.

Justifications for speed limit revisions are:

- Changing land use – Urbanization resulting from new development and infrastructure can include changing land uses and traffic patterns along a road corridor. When communities are built adjacent to Regional roads, operating conditions of these roads must change to reflect increases in volumes, intersections, driveway connections, turning movements, pedestrians, cyclists and transit activities.
- Promoting consistent speed limits – Speed limits that change frequently within short distances on the same road may result in low compliance. Limiting the number of speed zone changes encourages driver awareness and compliance.
- Improving traffic operations – Speed limits that complement roadway characteristics improve traffic operations and encourage increased compliance. An appropriate speed limit increases the amount of time a driver has to react to potential hazards. Speed limits are determined in accordance with existing roadway elements and characteristics.

### **Speed limit revisions are proposed on several Regional road sections to improve traffic operations and address changing land use**

Proposed speed limit revisions on Regional roads are detailed in Attachment 1. Location maps are included as Attachments 2 through 8.

Travellers are notified of new speed limits through on-street signs and a range of communication methods. When speed limits are changed on Regional roads, a NEW sign is placed above each speed limit sign at the beginning of the speed zone. The NEW sign remains in place for approximately 60 to 90 days. Citizens are informed through a range of other communication methods including media alerts, social media and information posted on York.ca.

## 5. Financial

Costs associated with the manufacture and installation of new speed limit signs are included in the approved 2022 Transportation Services Operating Budget.

## 6. Local Impact

The proposed speed limit revisions detailed in Attachment 1 will help promote safety and consistency for all travellers, reflect changes in land use and improve traffic operations. Lower speeds also help create a more conducive environment for pedestrians and cyclists and may encourage walking and cycling. Local municipal staff support the proposed speed limit revisions.

## 7. Conclusion

Staff recommends implementing the proposed speed limit revisions on the Regional roads as described in this report. Setting appropriate speed limits helps protect all travellers, encourages compliance, complements urbanizing land use across the road network and improves traffic operations.

Bylaw amendments are required before speed limit revisions may be implemented. Subject to Council approval, the Regional Solicitor will prepare the necessary bylaws and forward applicable copies to the Towns of East Gwillimbury and Georgina, Cities of Richmond Hill and Vaughan and Chief of York Regional Police.

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For more information on this report, please contact Joseph Petrunaro, Director Roads and Traffic Operations, at 1-877-464-9675 ext. 75520. Accessible formats or communication supports are available upon request.



Recommended by:

**Ann-Marie Carroll**  
Acting Commissioner of Transportation Services



Approved for Submission:

**Bruce Macgregor**  
Chief Administrative Officer

March 18, 2022  
Attachments (8)  
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