

# The Regional Municipality of York

Committee of the Whole  
Transportation Services  
June 15, 2023

Report of the Commissioner of Public Works

## 2023 Community Safety Zones and School Zone Speed Limit Reductions

### 1. Recommendations

1. The Region's Community Safety Zone bylaw be amended to include locations on St. John's Sideroad in the Town of Aurora and Ninth Line in the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville, as detailed in Appendix A, and existing speed limits on St. John's Sideroad in the Town of Aurora and Ninth Line in the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville be amended to include school zone speed limit reductions, as outlined in Appendix B.
2. Council approve the updated Community Safety Zone Warrant Criteria policy, as indicated in Appendix C, and the updated Establishing Speed Limits on Regional Road policy, as indicated in Appendix D, which shall include proposed delegated authority recommended herein.
3. Council delegate authority to the Commissioner of Public Works to submit bylaws to amend the Community Safety Zone Bylaw in accordance with the Region's Community Safety Zone Warrant Criteria policy and to amend the speed limits in School Zones in accordance with the Region's Establishing Speed Limits on Regional Roads policy, including placement of each such bylaw on the Council agenda without an accompanying report to Council.
4. The Regional Solicitor and General Counsel prepare the necessary bylaws.
5. The Regional Clerk circulate this report to the Clerks of the local municipalities, Chief of York Regional Police and York Region school boards.

### 2. Summary

This report seeks Council approval to amend the Region's Community Safety Zone and Speed Limit bylaws to reflect new schools expected to open in September 2023. This report requests Council delegate authority to the Commissioner of Public Works to amend said bylaws to account for schools that may open and close in the future.

Key Points:

- Community Safety Zones are enacted through municipal bylaw and intended to help increase safety for all travellers

- Council previously approved designation of Community Safety Zones in all school areas, subject to authorized exceptions by local municipalities
- Council previously approved implementing school zone speed limit reductions in all school areas
- In accordance with previous Council direction, Community Safety Zone and Speed Limit bylaw amendments are required to reflect new schools expected to open in September 2023
- Delegating authority to the Commissioner of Public Works to submit amendments to the Community Safety Zone and Speed Limit bylaws, which are in accordance with the respective policies, without an accompanying Council report, will allow for an efficient and expeditious response to meet safety needs of the community

### 3. Background

#### **Community Safety Zones are enacted through municipal bylaw and intended to help increase safety for all travellers**

A Community Safety Zone is a designation under the Ontario *Highway Traffic Act* and is intended to help change driver behaviour, including reducing speed and distracted driving, to improve safety. Fines are increased for traffic offences within a designated Community Safety Zone. A municipal bylaw must be enacted to designate a Community Safety Zone.

Community Safety Zones are typically designated on roadways near schools, daycare centres, retirement residences or high-collision locations, to advise motorists they are within a zone where public safety is of special concern.

#### **May 2012, Council approved designation of Community Safety Zones in all school areas on the Regional road network, subject to authorized exceptions**

In [May 2012](#), Council approved revisions to the Community Safety Zone Warrant Criteria Policy to designate all school areas as Community Safety Zones. Council further directed staff to request York Regional Police and each local municipality to identify any exceptions or deletions of specific Community Safety Zones before implementation.

#### **May 2021, Council approved a Region-wide speed limit reduction in all Regional school areas**

In [May 2021](#), Council approved school zone speed limit reductions in all Regional school areas, in conjunction with use of a new school zone maximum speed sign with a reduced speed limit introduced by the Province. This resulted in a 10 km/h reduced speed limit at more than 60 school locations on Regional roads. The new sign facilitates use of automated speed enforcement through clear direction to motorists as to the day and time when reduced speed limits are in effect. School zone speed limits are in effect from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday to Friday, September to June. This helps enhance safety when school is in session,

as well as during the morning and evening commute periods when children are walking, cycling, being dropped off/picked up, and during after-school activities.

Reduced speed limits throughout the Region's school zones help increase a motorist's ability to stop in time to avoid collisions, preventing serious injury or death to vulnerable road users. Reduced speed limits may also strengthen active school travel initiatives, promote safety of vulnerable road users in school zones throughout the Region and facilitate use of automated speed enforcement.

## 4. Analysis

### **Community Safety Zone and Speed Limit bylaw amendments are required to reflect new schools opening September 2023**

School locations are reviewed on an annual basis to ensure the Community Safety Zone bylaw is current. During the review for the 2023/2024 school year, staff identified two new school locations on Regional roads expected to open in September 2023. Staff recommend implementing a Community Safety Zone and school zone speed limit reduction at these locations, as outlined in Appendices 1 and 2.

#### **St. Anne's School**

St. Anne's School is located on St. John's Sideroad, west of Yonge Street, in the Town of Aurora. This private school is for students between grades 5 and 12 with a planned enrollment of about 400 students, supported by about 40 staff.

#### **Blessed Chiara Badano Catholic Elementary School and St. Katharine Drexel Catholic Secondary School**

The York Catholic District School Board is constructing a multi-use facility on the southeast corner of Ninth Line and Meridian Drive, in the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville. This facility will consist of Blessed Chiara Badano Catholic Elementary School, St. Katharine Drexel Catholic Secondary School and a childcare centre.

### **Delegating authority to the Commissioner to amend Community Safety Zone and Speed Limit bylaws allows for an efficient response**

To reduce administrative effort on Council and improve efficiency of program delivery, delegated authority is requested for the Commissioner of Public Works to submit bylaws for Council approval, without an accompanying report to Council, to amend Community Safety Zones and Speed Limits for school zones in accordance with prior Council approvals and respective Regional policies pertaining to those zones. This will allow staff to effectively respond and ensure locations remain consistent with changes in land use along with minimizing discrepancies identified through ongoing monitoring and maintenance. It is further recommended the respective Regional policies be updated to include the delegated authority recommended herein. Draft versions of the revised policies are provided in Appendices 3

and 4, which have been modified to conform to the current corporate policy template and include revised language for increased clarity and to better reflect current practices.

## **5. Financial**

Costs to manufacture and install new Community Safety Zone and school zone maximum speed signs at the two proposed locations are \$4,000 and these costs can be accommodated in the approved 2023 Public Works Operating Budget.

## **6. Local Impact**

Local municipal staff have been consulted and support the proposed Community Safety Zone and school zone speed limit reduction at these two new school locations. Our partners support reducing speed limits in school zones on Regional roads. Staff will continue to work with school boards, local municipalities, York Regional Police and Public Health on active school travel initiatives. Residents will be informed through various communication channels including York.ca, media advisory and postcards to area residents and businesses.

## **7. Conclusion**

Community Safety Zones are intended to help change driver behaviour. In conjunction with school zone speed limit reductions, these measures strive to improve safety on roads where public safety is of special concern. Community Safety Zones and school zone speed reductions are implemented at all school areas across the Region. School locations are reviewed annually. Staff recommend implementing a Community Safety Zone and school zone speed limit reduction at two new school locations expected to open in September 2023.

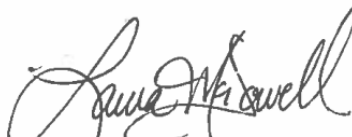
To reduce administrative effort on Council, delegated authority is requested for the Commissioner of Public Works to submit bylaws for Council approval to amend Community Safety Zones and speed limits for school zones in accordance with the respective Regional policies, without an accompanying report to Council. This will allow staff to deliver the program more efficiently, ensuring locations remain consistent with changes in land use and minimizing discrepancies identified through ongoing monitoring and maintenance.

Bylaw amendments through the proposed delegated authority are required to reflect two new schools expected to open in September 2023. Subject to Council approval, the Regional Solicitor and General Counsel will prepare the necessary bylaws and the Regional Clerk will circulate this report to the Clerks of the local municipalities, Chief of York Regional Police and York Region school boards.

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For more information on this report, please contact Joseph Petrunaro, Director Roads, Traffic and Fleet, at 1-877-464-9675 ext. 75220. Accessible formats or communication supports are available upon request.

Recommended by:



**Laura McDowell, P. Eng**

General Manager, Operations and Services, Public Works



**Erin Mahoney, M. Eng.**

Commissioner of Public Works



Approved for Submission:

**Bruce Macgregor**

Chief Administrative Officer

May 30, 2023

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Appendix A – Proposed Community Safety Zone Amendments

Appendix B – Maps of Proposed School Zone Speed Limit Reductions

Appendix C – Proposed Updates to Community Safety Zone Warrant Criteria Policy

Appendix D – Proposed Updates to Establishing Speed Limits on Regional Roads Policy

### Proposed Amendments to Bylaw No. R-1195-1999-077

Designate parts of Regional Roads as Community Safety Zones, by adding the following:

Column 1 (Highway)	Column 2 (Description of Part of Highway)	Column 3 (Hours)	Column 4 (Schools)
<b>TOWN OF AURORA</b>			
St. John's Sideroad (Y.R. 26)	From 210 to 1,130 metres west of the west limit of Yonge Street (Y.R. 1)	24 hours per day/7 days per week throughout the year	St. Anne's School
<b>TOWN OF WHITCHURCH-STOUFFVILLE</b>			
Ninth Line (Y.R. 69)	From 890 metres north of the north limit of Stouffville Road to 50 metres north of the north limit of Bethesda Sideroad	24 hours per day/7 days per week throughout the year	Blessed Chiara Badano Catholic Elementary School and St. Katharine Drexel Catholic Secondary School









## Community Safety Zone Warrant Criteria

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Approved By: Council

Approved On: Date this version of the policy was approved

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### Policy Statement

This policy describes the process and criteria used to establish Community Safety Zones along Regional roads.

### Application

To all staff responsible for evaluating and implementing Community Safety Zones on Regional roads.

### Purpose

To provide a consistent process and criteria to establish Community Safety Zones.

### Definitions

**Community Safety Zone:** A section of road, as designated through Regional bylaw, in accordance with the *Ontario Highway Traffic Act*, where fines are increased for traffic offences.

**Community Safety Zones Warrant Process:** Specific criteria that is applied in a certain order to determine eligibility for a Community Safety Zone.

**High Pedestrian Location:** A location experiencing an average of 100 pedestrians per hour or more for any eight hours of the day.

## Description

Community Safety Zones are intended to improve safety on roads by changing driver behaviours, including speeding and distracted driving. They are designated on roadways near schools, daycare centres, retirement residences or high-collision locations to advise motorists they are within a zone where public safety is of special concern.

Council has directed that a Community Safety Zone can be implemented at all school locations with property adjacent to a Regional road without the need to apply the Community Safety Zones Warrant Process. York Regional Police and each local municipality must be consulted and provided with an opportunity to review proposed Community Safety Zones and identify any exceptions or deletions.

The Community Safety Zones Warrant Process outlined below is used to identify non-school locations that are eligible for Community Safety Zones along the Regional road network. Staff are responsible for evaluating eligible locations and providing recommendations to the Commissioner of Public Works.

Council has delegated authority to the Commissioner of Public Works to submit bylaws for Council approval to amend the Community Safety Zone Bylaw in accordance with this policy, without an accompanying report to Council.

## Warrant Process

There are two sets of criteria outlined in the Community Safety Zones Warrant Process, of which both must be satisfied for a Community Safety Zone to be implemented.

### Warrant 1 - Designated Areas of Special Concern

Community Safety Zones must only be implemented at the following locations of special concern that are obvious to the road user:

- Community centres
- Seniors' centres and residences
- High Pedestrian Locations

(Community Safety Zones can be implemented at all school locations with property adjacent to a Regional road without the need to apply the Community Safety Zones Warrant Process.)

### Warrant 2 - Safety Warrant

The Safety Warrant is comprised of a collision component and a risk component. Either of these two components must be satisfied for the Safety Warrant to be met.

#### a) Collision Component

Community Safety Zone should be implemented if the collision ratio is less than

1:900 (one collision per year for every 900 annual average daily traffic volume), averaged over 36 consecutive months.

b) Risk Component

A significant safety concern may exist even though it is not shown in the collision record. Therefore, a secondary evaluation based on the elements of risk is available, which can be calculated using the scoring matrix outlined in Table 1 below. The minimum accepted value for the risk factor is 15.

Prior to using the risk component, field observations or York Regional Police must verify that there is an unusually high violation rate at the location.

**Table 1**  
**Risk Factor Component**

<b>Risk Factor</b>	<b>High (Score 3)</b>	<b>Moderate (Score 2)</b>	<b>Low (Score 1)</b>	<b>Score</b>
Posted speed (km/h)*	40	50	60	
Average daily volume	Over 20,000	10,000 to 20,000	Under 10,000	
Number of lanes	More than 4	3 or 4	2	
Length of sidewalks	Less than 25%	25 to 75%	More than 75%	
Truck volume	More than 5 %	3 to 5%	Less than 3%	
Pedestrians crossing in any eight hours	More than 100	50 to 100	Less than 50	
Intersection and entrances per kilometre	More than 10	4 to 10	Less than 4	
<b>TOTAL SCORE</b>				

\* Roads with a posted speed limit of more than 60 km/h shall not be considered for a Community Safety Zone

## Reference

- [Ontario Highway Traffic Act, Section 214.1 \(Community Safety Zones\)](#)

## Contact

Director of Roads, Traffic and Fleet, Public Works Department

# Approval

Council Date: <a href="#">December 19, 2002</a>	Committee Date: <a href="#">December 19, 2002</a>
Council Minute Item: 178	Committee Minute Item: 7

Amended by:

Council Date: <a href="#">May 17, 2012</a>	Committee Date: <a href="#">May 2, 2012</a>
Council Minute Item: 90	Committee Minute Item: 1

Amended by:

Council Date: <a href="#">June 28, 2012</a>	Committee Date: N/A
Council Minute Item: 121	Committee Minute Item: N/A

Accessible formats or communication supports are available upon request.

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## Establishing Speed Limits on Regional Roads

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Approved By: Council

Approved On: Date this version of the policy was approved

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### Policy Statement

A policy to outline the process and methods used to establish Speed Limits on Regional roads.

### Application

To all staff responsible for evaluating and implementing Speed Limits on Regional roads.

### Purpose

To provide a consistent approach to evaluate and implement appropriate Speed Limits on Regional roads that promote a safe road environment.

### Definitions

**Speed Limit:** The maximum rate of speed that a motor vehicle can be driven on a section of road, as established through Regional bylaw in accordance with the *Ontario Highway Traffic Act*.

**Regular Posted Speed Limit:** The established Speed Limit in effect during all times, except those identified for school zones.

**School Zone:** The section of any Regional road that is adjacent to, and within 150 metres in either direction beyond the limits of the land used for the purposes of the

school, where the Speed Limit is reduced during specific times as established through Regional bylaw.

**Speed Limit Review Study:** A review of the operating characteristics and infrastructure data for a roadway to determine the appropriate Speed Limit by applying the Transportation Association of Canada's Guidelines for Establishing Posted Speed Limits.

## Description

Speed Limits have considerable influence on road safety and efficiency. The Transportation Association of Canada's Guidelines for Establishing Posted Speed Limits (Guidelines) provide a systematic, consistent, and repeatable process for establishing regular posted Speed Limits. The principals and methodology outlined in the Guidelines are used to establish regular posted Speed Limits on Regional roads.

This methodology results in Speed Limits that are consistent with the roadway's physical characteristics and adjacent land use, match expectation of drivers and promote a safer road environment. The Guidelines consider the following roadway elements to establish appropriate Speed Limit for a given section of roadway:

- Number of access driveways
- Visibility
- Traffic volumes
- Number of lanes
- Roadside hazards
- Pedestrian and cyclist exposure
- Presence of on-street parking
- Volumes of pedestrians and cyclists
- Number of properties that front onto the roadway
- Number and frequency of signalized intersections
- Presence of public transit

The process to implement a Speed Limit revision on a Regional road is:

1. Road section identified for consideration of potential Speed Limit change through request, complaint or staff review.
2. Staff perform a Speed Limit Review Study to determine and recommend the appropriate posted Speed Limit.
3. Staff consult with local municipal staff on the proposed changes and obtain their input.
4. Staff report recommended Speed Limit changes to Committee of the Whole for Council's consideration and bylaw amendments as necessary.

## School Zones

Reduced Speed Limits near school locations help increase a motorist's ability to stop in time to avoid collisions, preventing serious injury or death to vulnerable road users. Council has directed that a reduced speed limit can be implemented at all school locations on Regional roads.

Council has delegated authority to the Commissioner of Public Works to submit bylaws for Council approval to amend Speed Limits for School Zones in accordance with this policy, without an accompanying report to Council.

School Zones must be signed in accordance with the *Ontario Highway Traffic Act*. Ontario Regulation 615 includes an alternative time-based version of the school zone maximum speed sign (Figure 1), which indicates on the sign the specific times, days and months that the reduced Speed Limit is in effect. Ontario Regulation 615 stipulates that flashing beacons cannot be used with the time-based version of the school zone maximum speed sign.

To promote consistency, simplify understanding for motorists and simplify enforcement efforts, a Region-wide 10 km/h Speed Limit reduction will be applied to school locations, using the time-based school zone maximum speed sign. The reduced Speed Limit at all locations will be in effect from 7 am to 5 pm, Monday to Friday, September to June.

**Figure 1**  
**Time-Based School Zone Speed Limit Sign**



## Reference

- [Ontario Highway Traffic Act, Section 128](#)
- [Ontario Regulation 615](#)
- “Canadian Guidelines for Establishing Posted Speed Limits”, Transportation Association of Canada

## Contact

Director of Roads, Traffic and Fleet, Public Works Department

## Approval

Council Date: April 21, 2011	Committee Date: April 6, 2011
Council Minute Item: 85	Committee Minute Item: 2

Amended by:

Council Date: <a href="#">May 27, 2021</a>	Committee Date: <a href="#">May 13, 2021</a>
Council Minute Item: G.1	Committee Minute Item: F.2.1

Accessible formats or communication supports are available upon request.

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