

# **The Regional Municipality of York**

Committee of the Whole  
Transportation Services  
April 4, 2019

Report of the Commissioner of Transportation Services

## **2019 Speed Limit Revisions**

### **1. Recommendations**

1. Existing speed limits on Regional roads listed in Table 1 of this report be revised as detailed.
2. The Regional Clerk circulate this report to the Clerks of the Towns of East Gwillimbury, Georgina, Newmarket and Richmond Hill, Township of King 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 Table 1 of this report. The revisions reflect changing land use and increased urbanization, promote speed limit consistency and improve traffic operations.

### **3. Background**

#### **The recommended speed limit revisions are based on principles defined in the Regional Speed Limit Policy**

In 2011, Council approved and adopted a [Speed Limit Policy](#) that provides guidelines to assist in ensuring a consistent approach in setting speed limits on Regional roads. The guidelines reference industry standards that help the policy remain current as industry-accepted best practices evolve. The Highway Traffic Act, Section 128, gives a municipal council the authority, by bylaw, to revise speed limits under 100 km/h in its jurisdiction.

## **The Regional road network is monitored to balance traffic flow and safety**

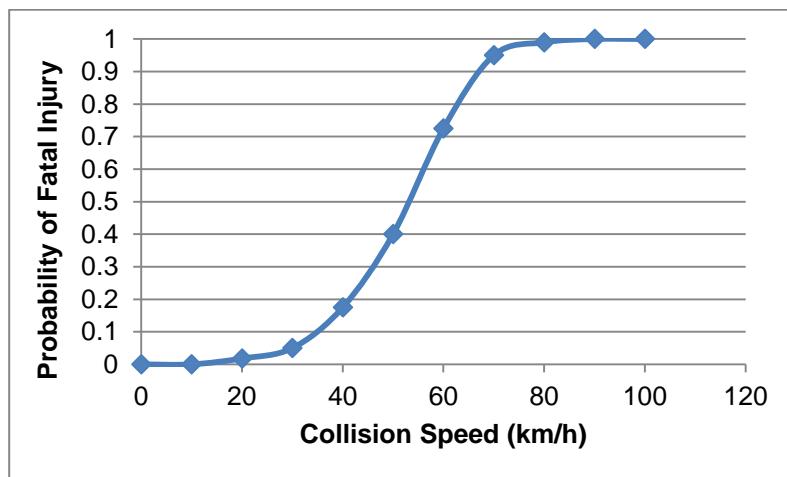
The Region's road network is a dynamic system. The critical parameters of roadside environment, road geometry, adjacent land use and access frequency are considered when establishing a speed zone. These parameters may change over time due to new development, transit routes or road widening. It is important speed limits be monitored and periodically reviewed to reflect changing parameters and address risks to road users.

Staff monitors and reviews the Regional road network to ensure speed limits are updated in accordance with the Region's speed limit policy and are set at appropriate levels for the road.

The Regional road network supports all modes of travel. As the Region continues to grow, traffic flow is increasingly interrupted by various factors, such as traffic volume, traffic signals, rail crossings and transit facilities. These may require motorists to come to a complete stop, which highlights the importance of travel speed in relation to the ability of motorists to stop safely.

Figure 1 shows the relationship between vehicle collision speeds and the probability of a fatal pedestrian injury. Pedestrian fatality rates rise drastically in a pedestrian/vehicle collision as vehicle speeds increase.

**Figure 1**  
**Pedestrian Fatality Rate in Relation to Vehicle Travel Speed**



Source: Wegman, F.C.M. & Aarts, L.T. (eds.) (2006). Advancing sustainable safety; National Road Safety Outlook for 2005-2020. SWOV, Leidschendam.

## **4. Analysis**

### **Setting speed limits based on land use and operational justification encourages compliance and improves traffic operations**

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 can result in driver confusion and low compliance. Limiting the number of speed zone changes encourages driver compliance.
- Improving traffic operations – Credible speed limits that match driver expectations for a given roadway improve traffic operations, increase speed limit compliance, provide a clear reminder to violators and reduce arbitrary enforcement and conviction tolerances. With the appropriate speed limit, the amount of time drivers have to react to potential hazards is also increased. Speed limits are determined in accordance with existing roadway elements and characteristics.

### **Several Regional road sections have been identified for speed limit revisions**

Proposed speed limit revisions on Regional roads are detailed in Table 1. Maps of these locations are included as Attachments 1 through 3.

**Table 1**  
**Speed Limit Revisions**

Road	Municipality	Existing Speed	Proposed Speed (effective April 19, 2019)	Justification
1 Bathurst Street (Y.R. 38) from Davis Drive West (Y.R. 31) to 300 metres north of Davis Drive West (Y.R. 31)  (Attachment 1)	Town of Newmarket and Township of King	80 km/h	60 km/h	Improved traffic operation and consistent speed limit
2 Bathurst Street (Y.R. 38) from 300 metres north Davis Drive West (Y.R. 31) to 265 metres north of Green Lane West (Y.R. 19)  (Attachment 1)	Towns of East Gwillimbury and Newmarket and Township of King	80 km/h	70 km/h	Consistent speed limit
3 Woodbine Avenue (Y.R. 8) from Metro Road North (Y.R. 78) to Lake Drive North  (Attachment 2)	Town of Georgina	80 km/h	50 km/h	Consistent with adjacent residential area in the vicinity
4 Stouffville Road (Y.R. 14) from 100 metres east of Bayview Avenue (Y.R. 34) to 100 metres east of Gormley Road East  (Attachment 3)	Town of Richmond Hill	70 km/h	60 km/h	Changing land use

Benefits of reduced operating speeds outweigh the marginal travel time increases that would result from the recommended speed limit revisions in this report.

## **Citizens are notified of new speed limits through signage**

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 60-90 days.

## **5. Financial**

Costs associated with the manufacture and installation of new speed limit signs is included in the approved 2019 Transportation Services Operating Budget.

## **6. Local Impact**

The recommendations contained in this report have been shared with local municipal staff.

## **7. Conclusion**

Staff recommends implementation of speed limit revisions on the Regional roads described in this report. The recommended revisions would enhance traveller experience by ensuring speed limits are consistent and in accordance with existing roadway characteristics and surrounding environments.

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

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

Recommended by:

**Paul Jankowski**  
Commissioner of Transportation Services

Approved for Submission:

**Bruce Macgregor**  
Chief Administrative Officer

March 21, 2019  
Attachments (3)  
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