
Report of the Commissioner of Public Works

2024 Speed Limit Revisions

1. Recommendations

1. Council approve revisions to speed limits on Regional roads listed in Table 1.
2. Council approve the updated Establishing Speed Limits on Regional Roads Policy in Appendix F, which includes authority for the Commissioner of Public Works to impose or modify speed limits in accordance with the Policy.
3. The Regional Clerk circulate this report to the Clerks of Town of Georgina, Township of King, Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville and Chief of York Regional Police.
4. The Regional Solicitor and General Counsel prepare the necessary bylaws to adopt speed limit details in Table 1.

2. Purpose

This report seeks Council approval to implement revised speed limits detailed in Table 1. Requested revisions support consistent speed limits, on-street signage and improved traffic operations. This report also requests Council authorize the Commissioner of Public Works to present speed limit bylaw amendments prepared by the Regional Solicitor and General Counsel for approval without a preceding report to Council.

Key Points:

- York Region Vision Zero Traveller Safety Plan identifies speeding as a contributing factor in aggressive driving behaviours leading to collisions
- Lower speed limits help protect travellers as the Region continues to intensify and traffic volumes increase

- Speed limit revisions are recommended based on principles defined in the Establishing Speed Limits on Regional Roads policy
- Staff recommend speed limit revisions (Table 1) to reduce the likelihood of collisions and enhance public safety
- Section 20.4 of the Region’s Procedure Bylaw restricts bylaws from being presented to Council unless Council has approved its subject matter
- Authorizing the Commissioner to present amendments to speed limit bylaws prepared by the Regional Solicitor and General Counsel to Council for approval, which are in accordance with the respective policy, without a further report, will allow for an efficient response to create safer travel conditions and reduce severe collisions in the Region

3. Background

Speed limit revisions are based on approved criteria in the Region’s Establishing Speed Limits on Regional Roads Policy

Staff proactively review speed limits across more than 200 Regional road sections annually through operational safety reviews and traffic modelling. Staff also investigate public requests for speed limit revisions. To date in 2024, 90% of public requests related to speed limits requested a decrease in speed.

Speed limits have considerable influence on road safety and efficiency. An objective assessment is performed based on engineering factors including visibility, roadside hazards, pedestrian and cyclist volumes/exposure, presence of public transit and number of properties fronting/accessing the roadway. In addition, to promote consistency, simplify motorist understanding and enforcement, a Region-wide 10 km/h reduction is applied to school locations.

The process and criteria used to establish speed limits on the Regional road network are outlined in the Council-approved [Establishing Speed Limits on Regional Roads Policy](#) (Policy). The Policy refers to Canadian Guidelines for Establishing Posted Speed Limits (Guidelines) published by Transportation Association of Canada, which provide a systematic and consistent evaluation for establishing posted speed limits. It is an objective assessment based on engineering factors. This methodology results in speed limits consistent with a roadway’s physical characteristics and adjacent land use, match driver expectation, promote a safer road environment, and align with York Region Vision Zero Traveller Safety Plan.

York Region Vision Zero Traveller Safety Plan identifies speeding as a contributing factor in aggressive driving behaviours leading to collisions

Council approved the [York Region Vision Zero Traveller Safety Plan](#) (Plan) in March 2024 to reduce severe collisions and create safer travel in the Region. The Plan was developed through a data driven approach, best practices review and stakeholder engagement. Plan implementation is underway through to 2028. The short-term target of the Plan is to reduce severe collisions by 10% within five years on Regional roads.

The Plan identifies aggressive driving as one of the five emphasis areas. Aggressive driving represents 45% of severe collisions on Regional roads and includes deliberate driver actions that lead to collisions, such as driving too fast for road conditions. The United States Federal Highway Administration identifies setting speed limits to reflect roadway characteristics and adjacent land use may reduce collisions by about 5%, which supports the objective of the Traveller Safety Plan.

Safety over speed is a pillar of the international Vision Zero strategy. In addition to reducing speed limits to reflect safe operating speeds, other tools are used by the Region to promote speed compliance such as:

- In 2024, 23 automated speed enforcement cameras
- In 2024, 80 locations outfitted with speed feedback boards
- In 2024, 80 new 'slow down' pavement markings in school/senior zones and hamlet locations

Lower speed limits help protect travellers as the Region continues to intensify and traffic volumes increase

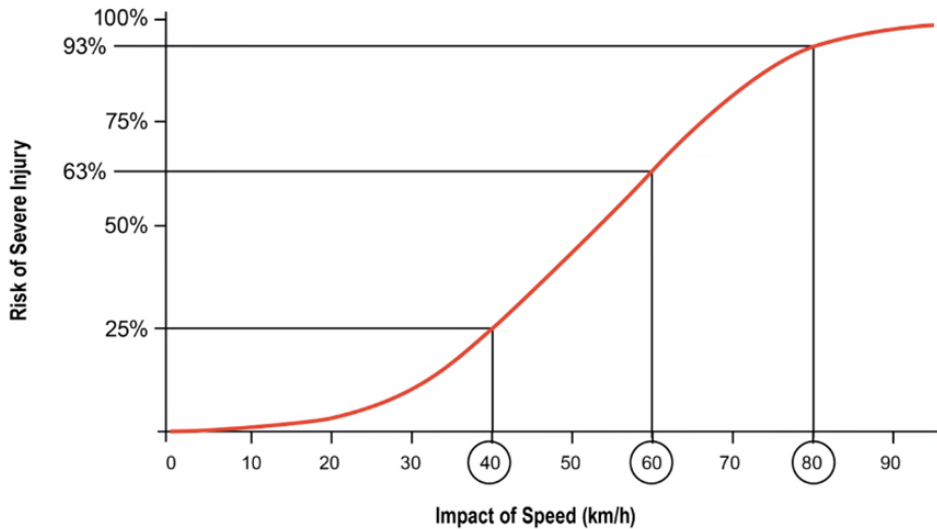
The Region's population of approximately 1.3 million is projected to grow to two million by 2051. This growth will increase use of road networks by all users.

Protecting vulnerable road users, including pedestrians, cyclists, elderly residents, children and motorcyclists, is crucial as these travellers are more likely to sustain injury or death if involved in a collision. As vehicle speed increases, pedestrian severe injury rates rise dramatically in a pedestrian/vehicle collision. Figure 1 shows the relationship between probability of a severe pedestrian injury and vehicle collision speed.

Use by vulnerable road users has and will continue to increase. Since 2011, walking and cycling trips have more than doubled compared to vehicles trips. Demographic modelling predicts that by 2051, one in four residents will be over the age of 65.

Figure 1

Pedestrian Severe Injury Rate in Relation to Vehicle Travel Speed



Source: Adapted from Transportation Association of Canada Geometric Design Guide for Canadian Roads, June 2017

4. Analysis

Consistent speed limits encourage compliance, complement surrounding land use and improve safety for all travellers with minimal impact to travel time

Staff monitor and review the road network to ensure speed limits reflect the Policy and are appropriate for each road segment. Proposed speed limit revisions are required to:

- Promote consistency – limiting the number of speed zone changes encourages driver awareness and compliance
- Improve traffic operations – speed limits that complement roadway characteristics improve traffic operations, encourage increased compliance and help protect all travellers

Proposed speed limit revisions on Regional roads are detailed in Table 1. Location maps are included as Appendices A through E.

Table 1
2024 Proposed Speed Limit Revisions

Regional Road	Municipality	Existing Speed	Proposed Speed	Justification
1 Woodbine Avenue (Y.R. 8) From Metro Road North (Y.R. 78) to Lake Drive East Appendix A	Town of Georgina	50 km/h	30 km/h	Section functions as a local road adjoining 30 km/h neighbourhood with high pedestrian volumes
2 Highway 27 (Y.R. 27) From 230 metres south of Oliver Emerson Avenue to 100 metres south of King-Vaughan Road Appendix B	Township of King	70 km/h	60 km/h	Improved traffic operations, consistent speed limits
3 Weston Road (Y.R. 56) From 210 metres north of King Road (Y.R. 11) to 80 metres south of 16th Sideroad Appendix C	Township of King	80 km/h	70 km/h	Bylaw update required
4 Dufferin Street (Y.R. 53) From Lloydtown-Aurora Road (Y.R. 16)/18th Sideroad (Y.R. 26) to 325 metres north of Wellington Street West (Y.R. 15) Appendix D	Township of King	80 km/h	70 km/h	Improved traffic operations, consistent speed limits
5 Dufferin Street (Y.R. 53) From 145 metres south of Wellington Street West (Y.R. 15) to 15th Sideroad (Y.R. 40) Appendix D	Township of King	80 km/h	70 km/h	Improved traffic operations, consistent speed limits

Regional Road	Municipality	Existing Speed	Proposed Speed	Justification
6 Ninth Line (Y.R. 69) From 100 metres north of Bethesda Road (south intersection) to 564 metres south of Bloomington Road (Y.R. 40) Appendix E	Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville	70 km/h	60 km/h	Improved traffic operations

Various communication methods are used to inform travellers of speed limit revisions

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 revised speed zone. The “NEW” sign remains in place for approximately 60 to 90 days. Travellers are informed through media alerts, social media and information posted on York.ca.

Authorizing the Commissioner to present amendments to speed limit bylaws will improve response time

Authorizing the Commissioner to present amendments prepared by the Regional Solicitor and General Counsel will improve program delivery, allow staff to effectively respond and ensure locations remain consistent with changes in land use. This is consistent with a similar approach used for [Community Safety Zone and School Zone Speed Limit Reductions](#) in accordance with the respective policies, allowing for an efficient and expeditious response to meet safety needs of the community.

Section 20.4 of the Region’s Procedure Bylaw restricts bylaws from being presented to Council unless its subject matter has been approved by Council. It is further recommended Council approve the revised Policy in Appendix F, which includes authorization for the Commissioner of Public Works to present bylaws prepared by the Regional Solicitor and General Counsel without a preceding report.

5. Financial Considerations

This report does not present current or anticipated financial changes to the Region’s budget or fiscal position. Costs associated with manufacturing and installing new speed limit signs are estimated at \$50,000 and included in the approved 2024 Public Works Operating Budget.

6. Local Impact

Proposed speed limit revisions in Table 1 promote safety, reflect changes in land use and improve traffic operations. Lower speeds align with the York Region Vision Zero Traveller Safety Plan objective to create a safer environment for pedestrians and cyclists and may encourage walking and cycling.

Local municipalities will continue to be engaged on speed limit changes

Staff collaborate with appropriate local municipal staff on proposed changes and obtain input. Speed limit bylaw amendments will continue to be shared with impacted local municipalities, York Regional Police and the public through various communication methods including signage, media alerts, social media and information updates on York.ca.

7. Conclusion and Next Steps

York Region Vision Zero Traveller Safety Plan identifies speeding as a contributing factor in aggressive driving behaviours leading to collisions. Lower speed limits help protect all travellers as the Region continues to intensify with increasing traffic volumes and supports objectives of the Plan.

A bylaw setting the rate of speed is required before speed limits may be set or revised. Subject to Council approval, the Regional Solicitor and General Counsel will prepare the necessary bylaws for the speed limit revisions described in this report and the Regional Clerk will circulate this report to Town of Georgina, Township of King, Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville and Chief of York Regional Police.

Subject to Council approval, the Establishing Speed Limits on Regional Roads Policy will be updated to include authorization for the Commissioner of Public Works to present future bylaws prepared by the Regional Solicitor and General Counsel without a preceding report. Future speed limit bylaw amendments will be shared as required with impacted local municipalities, York Regional Police and the public through appropriate communication channels.

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:

Kyle Catney

General Manager (A), Operations and Services



Laura McDowell, P.Eng.

Commissioner of Public Works



Approved for Submission:

Erin Mahoney, M. Eng.

Chief Administrative Officer

August 27, 2024
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Appendix A – Map – Proposed Speed Limit Reduction – Woodbine Avenue – Georgina

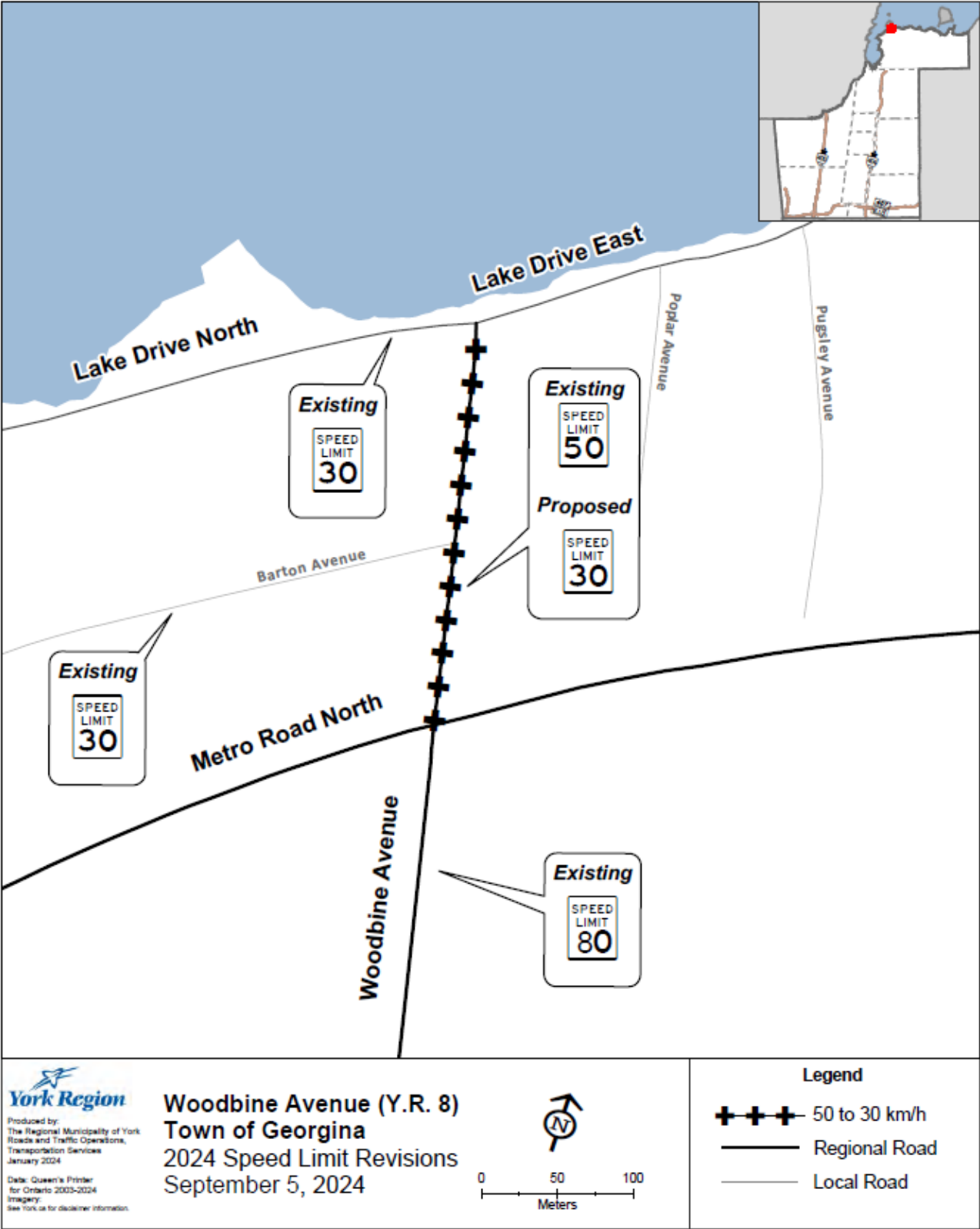
Appendix B – Map – Proposed Speed Limit Reduction – Highway 27 – King

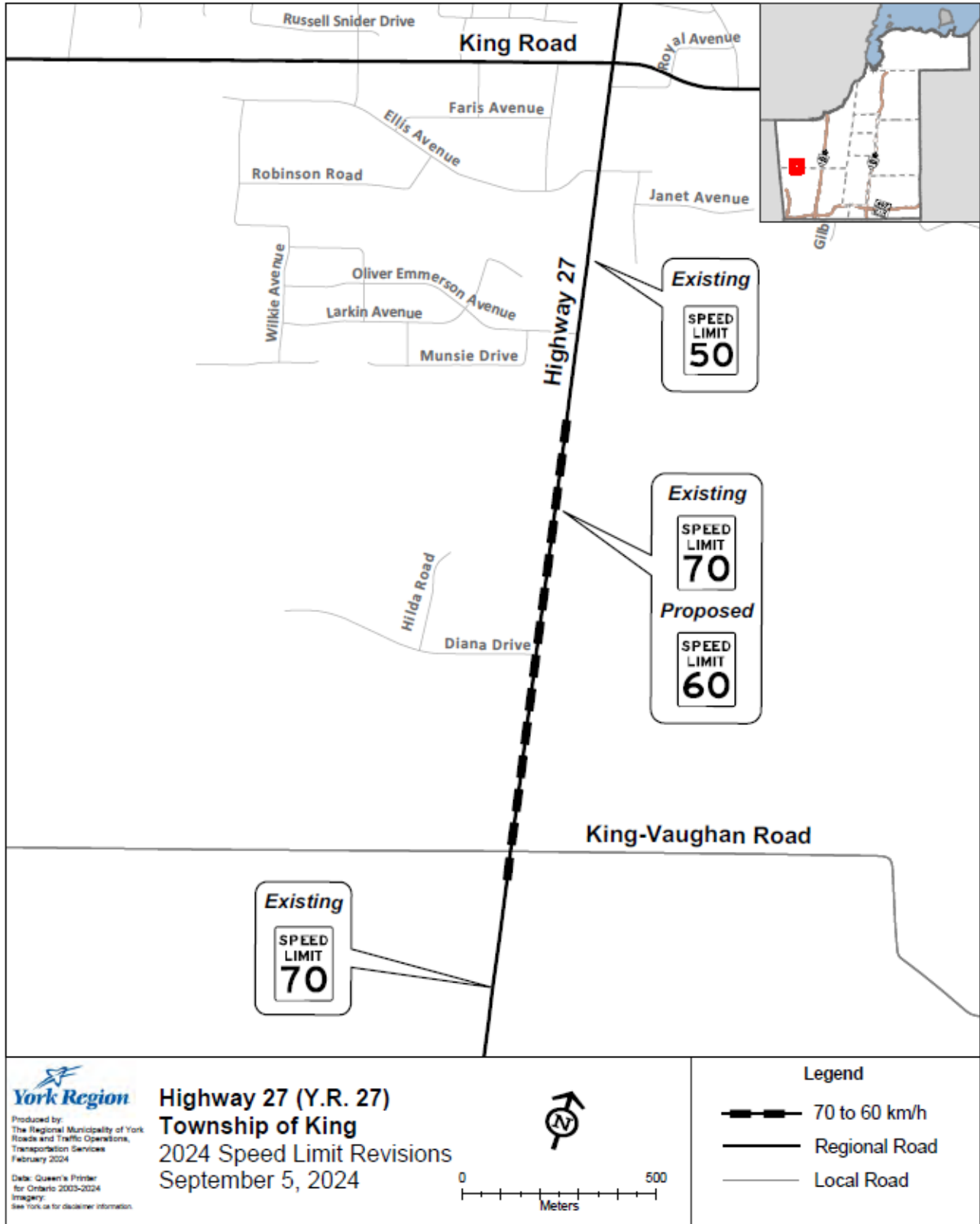
Appendix C – Map – Proposed Speed Limit Reduction – Weston Road – King

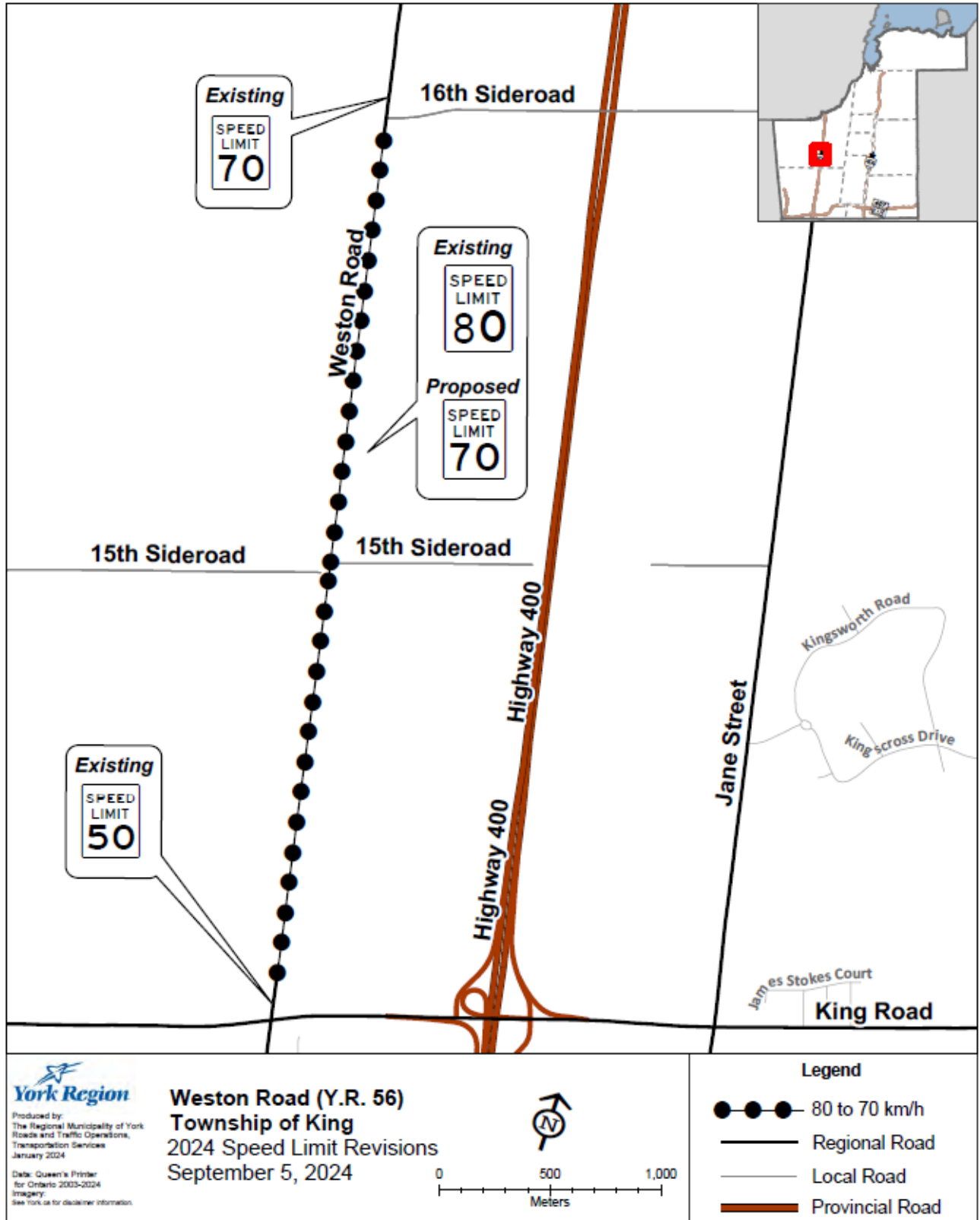
Appendix D – Map – Proposed Speed Limit Reduction – Dufferin Street – King

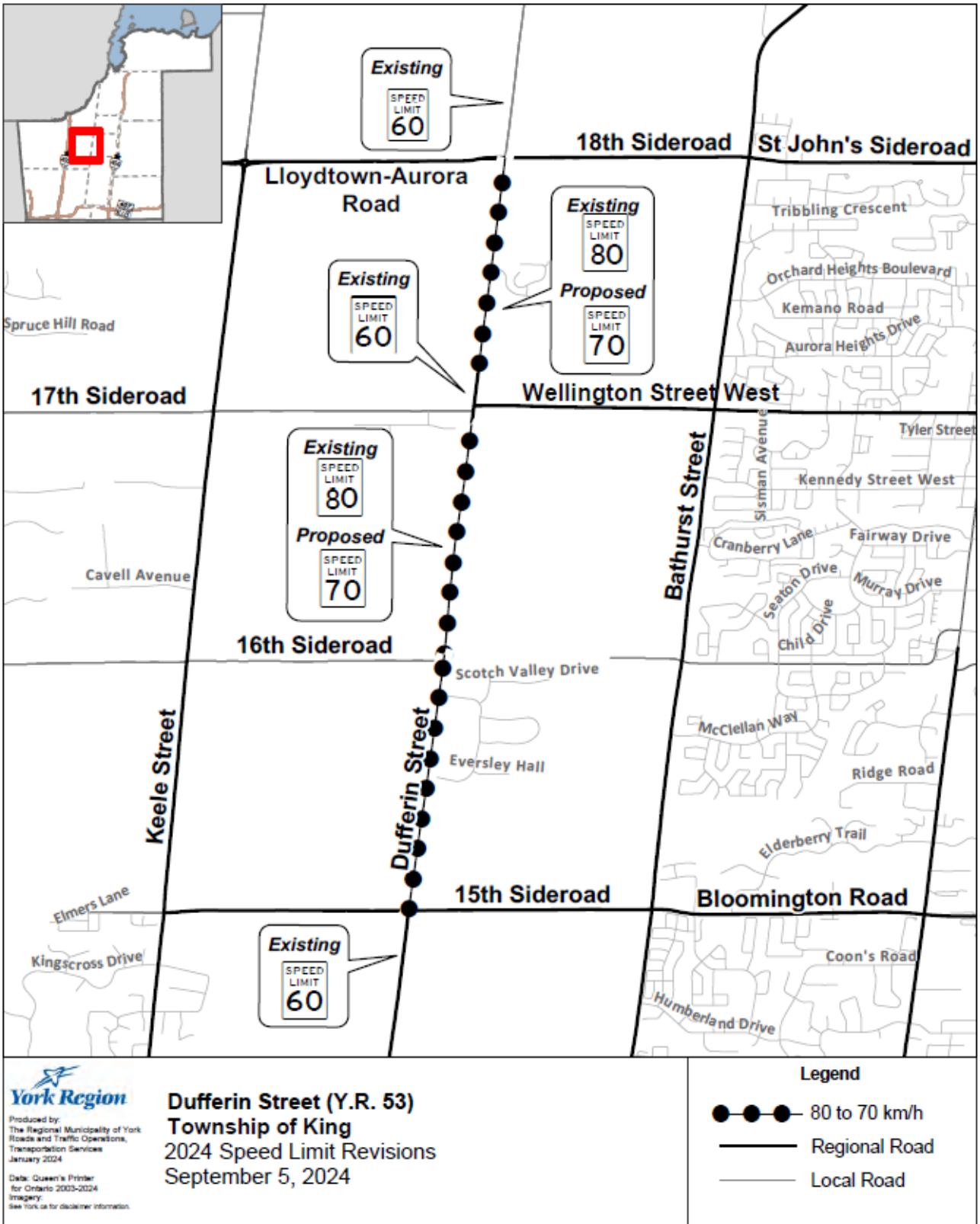
Appendix E – Map – Proposed Speed Limit Reduction – Ninth Line – Whitchurch-Stouffville

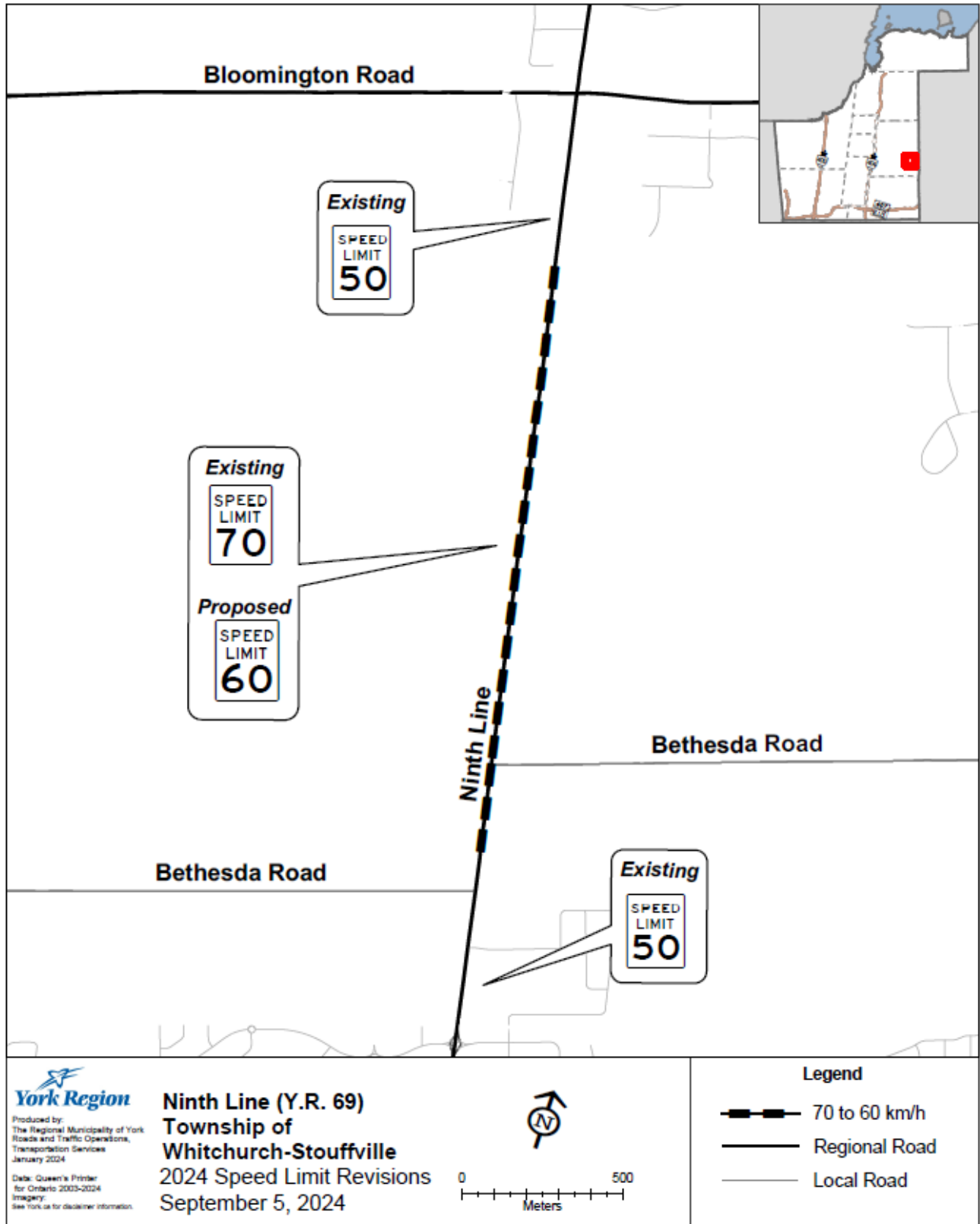
Appendix F – Proposed Policy Update – Establishing Speed Limits on Regional Roads













Establishing Speed Limits on Regional Roads Policy

Approved By: Council
Approved On: June 29, 2023

Policy Statement

A policy to establish criteria for setting speed limits on Regional roads.

Application

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 to foster a safer road environment.

Definitions

Speed Limit: The maximum rate of speed that a motor vehicle can be driven on a road or portion of a road in accordance with the *Highway Traffic Act*.

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

Regional Road or Road: A highway pursuant to the *Highway Traffic Act* which falls under the jurisdiction of the Region.

School Zone: The portion of a Regional road that adjoins and is within 150 metres along the Regional road 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.

Speed Limit Evaluation: A review of operating characteristics and infrastructure data for a roadway to determine the appropriate Speed Limit by applying the most current version of Canadian Guidelines for Establishing Posted Speed Limits published by the Transportation Association of Canada.

Description

Council may, by bylaw, establish Speed Limits for Regional roads that are different than those rates set out in the *Highway Traffic Act (HTA)*. The speed limit may not be greater than 100 kilometres per hour and different speed limits may be prescribed for different times of day.

Speed Limits have considerable influence on road safety and efficiency. The Canadian Guidelines for Establishing Posted Speed Limits (Guidelines) published by the Transportation Association of Canada provide a systematic and consistent process for establishing regular posted Speed Limits. It is an objective assessment based on engineering factors. The criteria and methodology outlined in the Guidelines are used to establish regular posted speed limits on Regional roads.

This methodology results in speed limits consistent with the roadway's physical characteristics and adjacent land use, match expectation of drivers and promote a safer road environment. The Guidelines include the following factors when establishing a speed limit for a given section of roadway which may be modified by Transportation Association of Canada in subsequent versions of the Guidelines:

- 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

Council has authorized the Commissioner of Public Works to submit bylaws prepared by the Regional Solicitor and General Counsel for Council approval to amend speed limits in accordance with this policy without a preceding report to Council.

School Zones

Section 128(5) of the *Highway Traffic Act* enables the Region to establish, through bylaw, school zones and prescribe speed limits within those zones.

Reduced Speed Limits near schools 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 a reduced speed limit can be implemented at all school locations on Regional roads.

School Zones must be signed in accordance with the *Highway Traffic Act*. Ontario Regulation 615 includes a time-based version of the school zone maximum speed sign (Figure 1), which indicates on the sign the specific times, days and months the reduced Speed Limit is in effect. Ontario Regulation 615 stipulates 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



Responsibilities

Public Works Department staff consider a road or portion of a road for potential speed limit change based on request or systematic Speed Limit Evaluation. Criteria established by this policy is used to determine and recommend the appropriate posted Speed Limit.

When speed limit changes are recommended:

- Staff consult with local municipal staff, York Regional Police and School Boards, as appropriate, on proposed changes to obtain input
- Upon determining a speed limit is appropriate based on an evaluation of the engineering factors contained in the Guidelines, Commissioner of Public Works requests the Regional Solicitor and General Counsel prepare a bylaw and present to Council for approval
- Subject to Council approval of proposed bylaws, staff notify the public on the revised speed limit through placement of new signs and standardized communication processes deemed appropriate by the Region
- Staff install signs on Regional roads in accordance with approved speed limit changes

Reference

- [Highway Traffic Act, Section 128](#)
- [Ontario Regulation 615](#)
- Canadian Guidelines for Establishing Posted Speed Limits (2009), Transportation Association of Canada or most recent approved version
- By-law No. 2023-31 (Delegation By-law)

Contact

Title	Director of Roads, Traffic and Fleet
Branch	Roads, Traffic and Fleet
Department	Public Works Department

Approval

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

Council Date: May 27, 2021 Council Minute Item: G.1	Committee Date: May 13, 2021 Committee Minute Item: F.2.1
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Amended by:

Council Date: June 29, 2023 Council Minute Item: H.1	Committee Date: June 15, 2023 Committee Minute Item: F.2.2
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Accessible formats or communication supports are available upon request.

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