

Speed Limit Reduction - Avenue Road between Lawrence Avenue West and Eglinton Avenue West

Date: January 24, 2017

To: North York Community Council

From: Director, Transportation Services, North York District

Wards: Ward 16 - Eglinton-Lawrence

SUMMARY

As the Toronto Transit Commission (TTC) operates a transit service on Avenue Road City Council approval of this report is required.

Transportation Services was requested by the local Councillor to reduce the speed limit from 50 km/h to 40 km/h on Avenue Road between Lawrence Avenue and Eglinton Avenue.

Given the characteristics of Avenue Road between Eglinton Avenue West and Lawrence Avenue West, the existing 50 km/h speed limit, with a 40 km/h school speed zone in the vicinity of the local schools, is appropriate and should not be reduced.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Director, Transportation Services, North York District recommends that:

1. City Council deny the speed limit reduction from 50 km/h to 40 km/h on Avenue Road between Lawrence Avenue West and Eglinton Avenue West.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

There are no financial implications to this report. However, should North York Community Council determine that a 40 km/h speed limit should be introduced, all costs associated with amending the speed limit on Avenue Road between Lawrence Avenue West and Eglinton Avenue West are included within the Transportation Services 2017 Interim Operating Budget.

DECISION HISTORY

This report addresses a new initiative.

COMMENTS

Avenue Road, between Lawrence Avenue and Eglinton Avenue is designated as a major arterial roadway and is approximately 2.3 km in length. It consists of a four lane cross-section, with two lanes per direction. Left turn lanes are introduced along this section of roadway based on the need and available roadway width. Municipal sidewalks exist adjacent to the curb on both sides of Avenue Road. Horizontal curves exist on Avenue Road in the vicinity of Glenview Avenue, Glencairn Avenue and Burnaby Boulevard.

The speed limit on this section of Avenue Road is 50 km/h, with the exception of the area between Briar Hill Avenue and Willowbank Boulevard, which has a 40 km/h school speed zone, between 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m., Monday to Friday. The 40 km/h speed limit is identified by the use of flashing beacons and regulatory signage in both directions of travel. The limit of the 40 km/h speed zone encompasses both Marshall McLuhan Catholic Secondary School and Allenby Public School. Advisory 40 km/h curve warning signs are also provided on the horizontal curves in the vicinity of Glenview Avenue and Burnaby Boulevard.

In general on-street parking is permitted along Avenue Road at all times except during peak periods. Between the hours of 7:00 a.m. and 9:00 a.m., Monday to Friday, stopping is prohibited on the west side of the roadway for southbound traffic. Between the hours of 4:00 p.m. and 6:00 p.m., Monday to Friday period, stopping is prohibited on the east side of the roadway for northbound traffic.

This section of Avenue Road is primarily comprised of low density residential properties. There are three schools along this section of roadway, Marshall McLuhan Catholic Secondary School, Allenby Public School and Havergal College.

In order to assess the operating characteristics and driver behaviour, a review of the Toronto Police Services Collision Statistics for the period from January 1, 2012 to December 31, 2016 was conducted for the mid-block sections of Avenue Road. These sections include roadway sections adjacent to Marshall McLuhan Catholic Secondary School and Allenby Public School. The results of this review are illustrated in the following table:

Table 1: Collision Analysis on Avenue Road between Lawrence Avenue and Eglinton Avenue

Location	Dir.	Collision Type and Frequency			Total
		Single Motor Vehicle	Multiple Motor Vehicle	Pedestrian	
Lawrence Avenue to Glenview Avenue	NB	0	6	0	12
	SB	1	5	0	
Glenview Avenue to Briar Hill Avenue	NB	0	3	0	15
	SB	7	8	0	
Briar Hill Avenue to Eglinton Avenue	NB	2	8	0	16
	SB	0	6	0	

The collision analysis indicates that the majority of the mid-block collisions occur on the curved sections of the roadway near Glenview Avenue, Glengrove Avenue and Burnaby Boulevard. As shown above, the majority of the collisions occurred in the southbound direction and were predominantly rear-end collisions. The collision data also reveals that weather conditions and/or roadway conditions (wet/snow) were a factor. However, in all of the incidents, driver behaviour was found to be the primary factor. It appears that motorists failed to adjust their driving behaviour based on the prevailing weather and roadway conditions.

Recent speed studies have not been conducted on Avenue Road between Eglinton Avenue West and Lawrence Avenue West. However, historically, vehicle operating speeds have been recorded in the range of 58 to 65 km/h. These results were consistent over the entire section, even where the school speed zone is in effect.

Transportation Services staff have reviewed the applicable City of Toronto policies with respect to speed limits on roadways. Given that the City of Toronto Road Classification System (approved by City Council in 2000) indicates that the minimum speed limit on an arterial roadway be 50 km/h, the Warrants for the Implementation of a 40 km/h Speed Limit do not apply to major arterial roadways. Also, the maximum road width for a 40 km/h speed limit is 10.5 metres. The introduction of 40 km/h is restricted to school areas and should only be in effect during the daytime periods when schools are in session.

Regardless, when determining the appropriate speed limit on a roadway a number of factors are considered. These include the pedestrian environment, including the presence of schools and parks and the provision of sidewalks, the road and traffic environment, including horizontal curves and hills, sight lines and parking, and the potential for collisions.

Recently, the City of Toronto's Vision Zero Road Safety Plan was developed to address existing safety concerns within the City of Toronto and create new safety measures that include engineering, education, enforcement and technology programs and initiatives. One of the safety measures discussed within the Road Safety Plan is to reduce the speed limit on some arterial roads from 50 km/h to 40 km/h, in key pedestrian safety corridors, in conjunction with other safety enhancements. The Plan identifies certain arterial roadways where pedestrians have been killed or seriously injured, that are being proposed to have the posted speed limit reduced from 50 km/h to 40 km/h. These locations differ from the subject section of Avenue Road, as these locations are mainly heavily congested commercial roadways, located within the downtown core with much higher volume of pedestrian traffic. The Road Safety Plan indicates that lowering the speed limit on arterial roads or other roads with current posted speed limits of 50km/h or more will involve using the 40km/hr Maximum Speed Limits Policy. Reducing speed limits, without changing the nature of the roadway, typically is ineffective and could result in a wider variation in driving speeds and decreased safety.

Given the characteristics of Avenue Road between Eglinton Avenue West and Lawrence Avenue West, the existing 50 km/h speed limit, with a 40 km/h school speed zone in the vicinity of the local schools, is appropriate and should not be reduced.

CONTACT

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SIGNATURE

Jacqueline White, P.Eng.
Director

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1: Map - 50 km/h to 40 km/h - Avenue Road between Lawrence Avenue West and Eglinton Avenue West