



REPORT FOR ACTION

Vision Zero Road Safety Plan: Designation of Community Safety Zones around Schools

Date: May 29, 2018

To: Public Works and Infrastructure Committee

From: General Manager, Transportation Services

Wards: All

SUMMARY

As a part of the Vision Zero Road Safety Plan, City Council recently lifted the moratorium on the creation of new Community Safety Zones. This is a critical step forward in the Vision Zero Road Safety Plan, to help reduce aggressive driving and speeding in areas within the City that have higher concentrations of school children.

Accordingly, this report seeks the approval from Council to amend the necessary by-laws to designate the extended frontages of the 754 kindergarten to grade 8 (K-8) schools within the City as Community Safety Zones. Doing so will make the Zones eligible for automated speed enforcement under the Province's Bill 65, Safer School Zones Act, 2017, once the applicable sections are proclaimed in force, while providing the immediate benefit of speeding fines being doubled in these key walking and biking routes to schools.

In addition, this report details the medium term plans for improving safety in the vicinity of schools.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The General Manager, Transportation Services recommends that:

1. City Council designate the locations listed in Attachment 1 as Community Safety Zones and amend City of Toronto Municipal Code Chapter 397, Community Safety Zones, accordingly.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

In May 2018, City Council approved an increase to the 2018 Operating Budget for Transportation Services by \$120,000 gross and \$0 net to fund four (4) temporary positions to begin the work to install the necessary signage in each Community Safety Zone on a temporary basis up to December 31, 2018, fully funded by the Vision Zero Road Safety Plan (RSP) project in the 2018-2027 Capital Budget and Plan for Transportation Services.

In order to continue this work beyond 2018, Transportation Services will request funding to continue the positions, including additional materials, as part of the 2019 budget submissions. Additional operating funding (\$240,000 gross and \$0 net) and capital funding in the RSP project to fund positions, signage, line-painting work, etc. (\$1,240,000 gross and debt) will be required. The request for these additional funds will be considered as part of the 2019 budget process.

The Interim Chief Financial Officer has reviewed this report and agrees with the financial impact information.

DECISION HISTORY

At its meeting of January 31 and February 1, 2018, City Council directed the General Manager, Transportation Services to proceed with Automated Speed Enforcement in conjunction with the Province of Ontario and other partnering municipalities, including the issuance of a Request for Proposals and investigating the feasibility for the City of Toronto to manage the Joint Processing Centre on behalf of the partnering municipalities for the future Automated Speed Enforcement program.

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2017.PW25.10>

At its meeting of May 22, 23, and 24, 2018 City Council lifted the moratorium on the creation of new Community Safety Zones. City Council also directed the General Manager of Transportation Services to report in June 2018 on School Safety Zones and Community Safety Zones across the City along with an implementation plan.

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2018.PW29.6>

COMMENTS

Background

In May 2018, City Council lifted the moratorium on the creation of new Community Safety Zones. This represents a key step forward in the Vision Zero Road Safety Plan to help improve safety in areas within the City that have higher exposure and, hence, greater potential for road safety issues for both school children and seniors citizens. When an area is legally designated as a Community Safety Zone, provincial legislation currently provides that fines associated with speeding will be doubled within the Community Safety Zone and, once the applicable sections of Bill 65, Safer School

Zones Act, 2017 are proclaimed in force, the use of an automated speed enforcement system will be permitted within the zone as well.

The combination of an automated speed enforcement system and the current Red Light Camera automated enforcement program will, in future, serve as two key tools to help address aggressive driving behaviours.

Accordingly, this report seeks approval from Council to amend the necessary by-laws to designate the extended frontages of the 754 kindergarten to grade 8 schools within the Toronto District School Board and Toronto Catholic District School Board as Community Safety Zones. This represents the youngest and most vulnerable road user group.

Doing so will make the Zones eligible for automated speed enforcement under the Province's Bill 65, Safer School Zones Act, 2017, once the applicable sections of the Act are proclaimed in force, while providing the immediate benefit of speeding fines being doubled along these key walking and biking routes to schools.

This is the first step in the overall review process being conducted by staff that will subsequently include a detailed side-by-site review of the boundaries of each of the Community Safety Zones and identification of safety measures to be implemented. Amendments to Community Safety Zone boundaries will be brought forward in a report for Council approval in 2019.

Definitions

In May, 2017, the Province of Ontario passed Bill 65, the Safer School Zones Act, 2017. Although one section of the Act has been proclaimed in force, the majority of the sections, including the amendments dealing with automated speed enforcement, have not yet been proclaimed in force. Once this is done the Act will authorize municipalities to implement automated speed enforcement cameras in areas designated via municipal bylaw as either a School Zone or Community Safety Zone.

- *School Zone* - The Highway Traffic Act permits the council of a municipality by by-law to designate a portion of a highway under its jurisdiction that adjoins the entrance to or exit from a school and that is within 150 metres along the highway in either direction beyond the limits of the land used for the purposes of the school as a School Zone, and, for motor vehicles drivers, on days on which school is regularly held, on the portion of a highway designated as a School Zone, to prescribe a rate of speed that is lower than the rate of speed otherwise prescribed within the City.
- *Community Safety Zone* - In comparison, pursuant to the Highway Traffic Act, City Council has the authority to designate by by-law a part of a highway under its jurisdiction as a Community Safety Zone, where in Council's opinion, public safety is of special concern on that part of the highway. Unlike School Zones, there is no measurement limitation on the area that can be defined as long as Council's opinion is that public safety is of special concern on that part of the highway. In addition, where a person is convicted of a speeding offence in a Community Safety Zone, that person is liable to double the applicable fine for speeding as set out in Subsection 128(14) of the Highway Traffic Act.

Implementation Strategy

Short term, Transportation Services staff have completed a review of 754 K-8 schools and are recommending initial Community Safety Zones limits from intersection to intersection along the frontage of the schools. Attachment 1 contains a list of immediate by-law amendments to assign Community Safety Zones across the extended frontages of these schools.

Each Community Safety Zone will require signage at the beginning and end of each zone as per the Highway Traffic Act. Given the requirements, each school would require a minimum of 4 signs (i.e. 2 per direction) and possibly additional signs mid-block depending on the length of the defined section as seen in the images below.



Figure 1 - Example of Community Safety Zone signage to be installed

In May 2018, City Council approved four (4) temporary staff positions to begin the work to install the necessary signage. Through a combination of this additional staff and existing resources, it is estimated that roughly 250-300 schools will be completed by Q4 2018 provided the locations in this report are designated.

Operating funds in the amount of \$240,000 per year for four (4) permanent staff and capital funding in the amount of \$1,000,000 for signage will be requested in the 2019 capital and operating budget to continue with this work until completion. It is anticipated that all of this work will be completed by Q4 2019.

With the Community Safety Zone by-laws in effect and necessary signage in place, these school zones would be eligible for the automated speed enforcement pilot in 2018 and the live operation planned for 2019.

Medium Term

In parallel with the immediate efforts, City staff are initiating a City-wide program of school zone safety reviews to identify medium term safety improvements. Given the number of school zones that need to be reviewed, an engineering consultant retainer

assignment is being prepared that would employ a number of firms who would work in parallel undertaking the school zone safety reviews in various parts of the City. It is anticipated that the assignment would be tendered and awarded over the summer with work on the reviews commencing as early as Q4 2018 with recommendations from the reviews being implemented in 2019 onward.

Each individual school zone safety review will include refinement of the boundaries of each Community Safety Zone on a site-by-site basis, along with consideration of a number of safety improvements such as implementation of the new school ahead signs with flashing beacons, "School" pavement stencils, "Watch Your Speed" driver feedback signs, zebra markings at pedestrian crosswalks, elevated crosswalks, painted lane width reductions and curb radius reductions, the new flexible in-road warning signs and bollards. The reviews would also consider improvements that require by-law amendments such as speed limit reductions, traffic calming humps and prohibited turn movements. With the management of the School Crossing Guard program being transitioned to Transportation Services under the Vision Zero program, the addition of school crossing guards would also be a possible recommendation as part of the school zone safety reviews.

As part of the overall review process, City staff will also coordinate with the Toronto District School Board's (TDSB) recently initiated Traffic Management Plan program and the Toronto Catholic District School Board's (TCDSB) ongoing School Travel Plan program. Through these programs, the TDSB and TCDSB has engaged Green Communities Canada to facilitate workshops with parents and principles to identify potential routes to school and opportunities for safety improvements in an effort to encourage active and safe route to school. The recommendations gathered from the prior and ongoing public consultations will be taken into consideration as part of the overall school zone safety review process.

CONTACT

Ashley Curtis
Senior Strategic Director, Capital Projects
Transportation Services Division
Telephone: 416-338-6583
Email: Ashley.Curtis@toronto.ca

SIGNATURE

Barbara Gray, General Manager
Transportation Services

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1 - Amendments to Community Safety Zones