

Vision Zero Road Safety Plan Speed Limit Reductions to 30 km/h on Local Roads and Public Lanes - North York Area (Ward 6 and Ward 18), and on three individual Collector Roadways in Wards 6, 8 and 17

Date: April 29 2021

To: North York Community Council

From: Director, Project Design and Management, Transportation Services

Wards: Ward 6, York Centre; Ward 8, Eglinton-Lawrence; Ward 17, Don Valley North; Ward 18, Willowdale

SUMMARY

This staff report is about speed limit reductions for which Community Council has delegated authority to make a final decision, provided that it is not amended so that it varies with City policy or by-laws.

The Vision Zero Road Safety Plan Speed Management Strategy focuses on how higher speeds contribute to higher risk of serious injuries and fatalities, and that setting lower speed limits is a key tool for reducing operating speeds on Toronto's roadways. The Vision Zero Speed Management Strategy includes a program for reducing speed limits on local roads, as defined in the City's Road Classification System and public lanes or public alleys, to 30 km/h on a neighbourhood basis. With this approach the City is no longer required to sign every individual street within that designated area but only the entry and exit points to/from the designated area where speed limits change and any internal roads with a different speed limit.

The purpose of this report is to recommend area-based speed limit reductions to 30 km/h on public lanes or public alleys and local roads in North York Community Council area as part of the Vision Zero Road Safety Plan Speed Management Strategy.

In addition to the local road speed limit reductions, three additional collector roads have been identified for speed limit reduction in support of the Speed Management Strategy. These include proposed speed limit of 30 km/h on Elm Ridge Circle and 40 km/h on Torrens Avenue, and Singer Court.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Director Project Design and Management, Transportation Services, recommends that:

1. North York Community Council designate the areas in Ward 6 and Ward 18 as a designated areas with an associated speed limit of 30 km/h, with the exception of specified excluded highways or bridges, and amend the City of Toronto Municipal Code Chapter 950, Traffic and Parking, generally as outlined in Attachment 1 to the report (April 29, 2021) from the Director, Project Design and Management, Transportation Services.
2. North York Community Council reduce the speed limit from 40 km/h to 30 km/h on the entire length of Elm Ridge Circle.
3. North York Community Council reduce the speed limit from 50 km/h to 40 km/h on Torresdale Avenue between Finch Avenue West and a point 65 metres north of Dollery Court.
4. North York Community Council reduce the speed limit from 50 km/h to 40 km/h on Singer Court between Provost Drive and the east end of Singer Court.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

The financial cost of installing the speed limit signs included within this report is approximately \$250,000. Funding is available in Transportation Services' 2021 Capital Budget.

DECISION HISTORY

At its meeting of April 7 and 8, 2021, City Council approved changes to the Toronto Municipal Code Chapter 950 through the creation of Schedule XLV (Part 1): Designated Areas – Reduced Speed Areas. This new schedule allows for the introduction of designated areas with an associated speed limit of 30 km/h, with the exception of specified excluded highways or bridges. In addition, at this meeting City Council delegated final decision-making authority to Community Councils with respect to public lanes or public alleys for a number of matters including speed limit setting. The Council decision can be found at:

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2021.IE20.15>

At its meeting of December 16, 17 and 18, 2020, City Council approved a number of recommendations from staff to further enhance the Road Safety Program. As a part of this staff report, staff also presented evaluation results of speed limit reductions on nearly 250 kilometres of major arterial roadways across the City. The Council decision can be found at:

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2020.IE18.4>

At its meeting of July 16, 17 and 18, 2019, City Council unanimously approved the Vision Zero 2.0 - Road Safety Plan Update, as amended. At this time, City Council approved speed limit reductions from 60 km/h to 50 km/h on nearly 250 kilometers of major arterial roadways across the City as part of the Speed Management Strategy. Within this report, staff also committed to reducing the speed limit of all local roadways to 30 km/h by submitting reports to the appropriate Community Council for by-law amendments. The Council decision can be found at:

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2019.IE6.8>

COMMENTS

Area Speed Limits

The Vision Zero 2.0 - Road Safety Plan Update report highlighted how higher speeds contribute to higher risk of serious injuries and fatalities, and that setting lower speed limits is a key tool in the Speed Management Strategy for reducing operating speeds on Toronto's roadways. As part of the report, City Council approved speed limit reductions from 60 km/h to 50 km/h on nearly 250 kilometres (km) of major arterial roadways across the City as part of the strategy.

As part of the second phase of the Speed Management Strategy, speed limit reductions on approximately 250 km of minor arterial and collector roadways were approved by Community Councils in December 2019 and January 2020. The implementation of these speed limit reductions was completed in 2020, except for a few segments where implementation was delayed due to active construction.

The third phase of the Speed Management Strategy, consists of a program for reducing speed limits on local roads, as defined in the City's Road Classification System, and on public lanes or public alleys (also commonly referred to as laneways), to 30 km/h on a neighbourhood basis.

On May 30, 2017, the Province of Ontario amended the Highway Traffic Act in respect to speed limit setting in municipalities. This legislative change allows the City to designate areas through by-laws and prescribe a speed limit that is lower than 50 km/h which will apply to all highways within the designated area. With this approach the City is no longer required to sign every individual street within that designated area but only the entry and exit points to/from the designated area where speed limits change and any internal roads with a different speed limit. Other municipalities in Ontario that have utilized this legislative authority include Hamilton, Ottawa, and London with others in the process of developing programs to do the same.

On April 7, 2021 City Council approved the addition of a new Schedule in the Toronto Municipal Code to facilitate the designation of areas in the City with reduced speed limits of 30 km/h. With the creation of Schedule XLV (Part 1): Designated Areas – Reduced Speed Areas, includes descriptions of the boundary of each area and any excluded highways or bridges contained within not governed by the area speed limit.

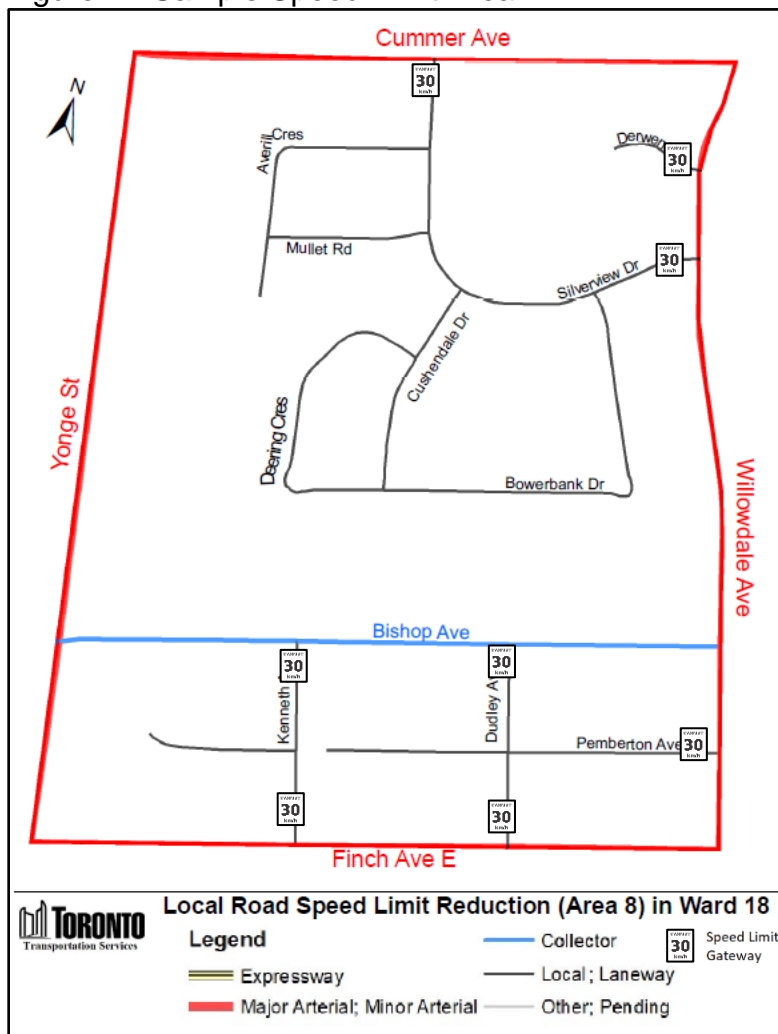
The intention is that every local roadway and laneway in the City will ultimately be included in one such zone in order to have the speed limit set at 30 km/h.

The reduced speed limit within a designated area will be posted through signage at the transition point between roadways with a higher speed limit and the reduced speed limit area defined in Schedule XLV to let drivers know that they have entered the area. Similarly, the transition from a lower speed area would be posted through signage at the exit points of the designated areas between the local roadways with lower speed limits and any roadways with higher speed limits. Any collector or arterial roads with a higher speed limit within the reduced speed limit area would be specified as exceptions in Schedule XLV and signed with the appropriate speed limit.

Sample Speed Limit Area Signage Plan

Figure 1 has been created in order to help visualize the speed limit signage within a speed limit area. Within this speed limit area, the entrance/exits into the area would be marked with speed limit area begins/end signs and internally, additional signage would be included wherever exceptions to the 30 km/h speed limit are present (primarily at collector and arterial roads).

Figure 1 - Sample Speed Limit Area



Ultimately, the speed limit on all local roadways and laneways within a ward will be set to 30 km/h, irrespective of the specific designated area in which the roadway falls. In the example above, Bishop Avenue is not a boundary of the designated area but is listed in the by-law as an exception because it is a collector roadway. Despite not being identified as a boundary, the local roads that intersect with Bishop Avenue will still have the speed limit area gateway features since it represents where the 30 km/h speed limit starts.

Speed Limit Reduction Delivery Timelines

As outlined in the Vision Zero 2.0 staff report, the large-scale reduction in speed limits on public lanes and local roads will be a multi-year program with significant amount of by-law amendments and new signage installations. The current projected rate of installation is approximately two to three wards per Community Council area per year. The reductions will be rolled out on a systematic, ward-by-ward basis using a data driven approach with priority going to wards with a higher rate of vulnerable road user injury collisions on local roads. This collision rate is the ratio of the number of vulnerable road user injury collisions on each ward's local road network to the total length of local roads in the ward.

Table 1 below presents the prioritized list of wards within North York Community Council area based on collision rate. By-law recommendations to reduce speed limits to 30 km/h on public lanes and local road in designated areas in wards with priority level of 1 and 2 in North York are presented in this report. These are Ward 6 York Centre and Ward 18 Willowdale.

This report introduces 24 new entries to Schedule XLV, covering the entire areas of Ward 6 and Ward 18 and all local roads and laneways contained within. By-law recommendations for designated areas to reduce speed limits to 30 km/h on public lanes and local roads in all remaining wards will be presented to North York Community Council in phases until all of the proposed speed limit reductions are completed, anticipated by the end of 2023, subject to available staffing resources within the Transportation Services Signage and Marking unit.

Table 1 Ward Ranking in North York Community Council Area

Priority- Based on Rate of Serious Collisions	North York Ward
1	Ward 6 - York Centre
2	Ward 18 - Willowdale
3	Ward 8 - Eglinton-Lawrence
4	Ward 16 - Don Valley East
5	Ward 17 - Don Valley North

Priority- Based on Rate of Serious Collisions	North York Ward
6	Ward 15 - Don Valley West

Elm Ridge Circle, Torresdale Avenue, and Singer Court Speed Limit Reductions

In addition to the introduction of the speed limit areas covering local roads in Wards 6 and 18, this report recommends the reduction of the speed limit on three individual collector roadways.

It is recommended to reduce the speed limit on the full length of Elm Ridge Circle from 40 km/h to 30 km/h. Staff have reviewed the speed limit on this collector roadway and this speed limit reduction is recommended based on the curved geometry of the roadway as well as ensuring consistency with the five roadways that intersect with Elm Ridge Circle.

It is also recommended to reduce the speed limit on Torresdale Avenue between Finch Avenue West and a point 65 metres north of Dollery Court from 50 km/h to 40 km/h. Staff have reviewed the speed limit on this collector roadway and this speed limit reduction is recommended based on the curved geometry of the roadway and the adjacent land uses.

It is also recommended to reduce the speed limit on Singer Court between Provost Drive and the east end of Singer Court from 50 km/h to 40 km/h. Staff have reviewed the speed limit on this collector roadway and this speed limit reduction is recommended based on the narrow width and short length of the roadway with on-street parking and the adjacent residential land uses.

Effectiveness of Speed Limit Reductions

The goal of the Speed Management Strategy is to mitigate the risk of injuries and fatalities on Toronto's roads by reducing the speed of vehicles. To that end, at the City Council meeting of December 16, 17 and 18, 2020, staff presented evaluation results of speed limit reductions on nearly 250 kilometres of major arterial roadways across the city. The study found that there is evidence that the reductions have had a positive impact on reductions in operating speeds of vehicles.

It is important to note that speed limit reductions are just one part of the Speed Management Strategy. The holistic strategy also includes modifications to the design of roadways, automated and manual speed enforcement, proactive deployment of Watch Your Speed Signs, and revised speed limit setting practices as key tools in order to achieve more significant, sustained, and effective speed management.

The Ward Councillors have been informed of the recommendations of this report.

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ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1 - Proposed Amendments to Speed Limits on Local Roads and Public Laneways in Ward 6 and Ward 18