

Vision Zero Road Safety Plan Speed Limit Reductions to 30 km/h on Local Roads and Public Lanes - Toronto and East York Area (Ward 4, Ward 9 and Ward 19)

Date: April 29, 2021

To: Toronto and East York Community Council

From: Director, Project Design & Management, Transportation Services

Wards: Ward 4, Parkdale-High Park; Ward 9, Davenport; Ward 19, Beaches-East York

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.

In 2015, two Community Council reports were approved, reducing all local roadways with speed limits of 50 km/h and 40 km/h to 30 km/h.

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 the parts of Wards 4, 9 and 19 added to the Toronto and East York Community Council area in 2018. This will complete the reduction of speed limits on all local roads in the Toronto and East York Community Council area to 30 km/h. This measure supports the Vision Zero Road Safety Plan Speed Management Strategy.

RECOMMENDATIONS

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

1. Toronto and East York Community Council designate areas in Ward 4, Ward 9 and Ward 19 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.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

The financial cost of installing the speed limit signs included within this report is approximately \$150,000. 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>

At its meeting of October 6, 2015, Toronto and East York Community Council approved a recommendation to reduce the speed limit from 50 km/h to 30 km/h on all local roads within the confines of the Toronto and East York Community Council, excluding those that bound more than one community council area. This Community Council decision can be found at:

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2015.TE11.72>

At its meeting of June 22, 2015, Toronto and East York Community Council approved a recommendation to reduce the speed limit from 40 km/h to 30 km/h on all local roads within the confines of the Toronto and East York Community Council, excluding those that bound more than one community council area. This Community Council decision can be found at:

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2015.TE8.1>

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.

In 2015, two Community Council reports were approved, reducing all local roadways with speed limits of 50 km/h and 40 km/h to 30 km/h. Since the local roadways in the

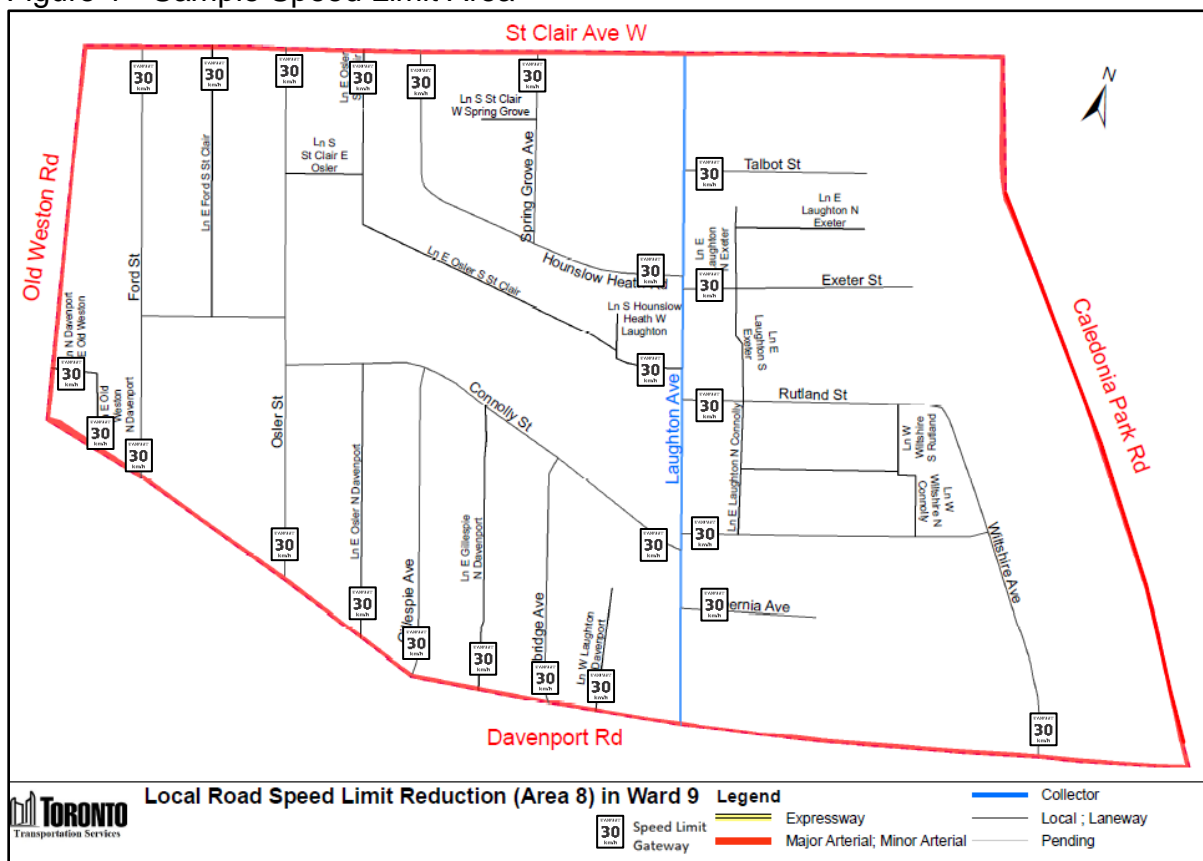
Toronto and East York Community Council area had previously been reduced to 30 km/h prior to the 2018 revision of the boundaries of the area, this report is only recommending the designation of the newly added areas for speed limit reductions to 30 km/h. This will complete the reduction of speed limits on all local roads in the Toronto and East York Community Council area to 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 designated area will be set to 30 km/h, irrespective of the specific designated area in which the roadway falls. In the example above, Laughton 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 Laughton Avenue will still have the speed limit area gateway features since it represents where the 30 km/h speed limit starts.

At this time, staff is evaluating if it will be necessary for the remaining parts of the Toronto and East York Community Council area to be similarly designated as speed limit areas given that it would not result in any changes to the speed limits on the local roads.

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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SIGNATURE

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ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1 - Proposed Amendments to Speed Limits on Local Roads and Public Laneways in Ward 4, Ward 9 and Ward 19