



Speed Limit Policy

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Speed Limit Policy

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Policy Statement:

This policy describes the process used to review and establish speed limits on roads under the jurisdiction of the County of Lennox and Addington.

Application:

This policy applies to all County of Lennox and Addington staff responsible for reviewing and recommending speed limit revisions on the County's road network.

Purpose:

The purpose of this policy is to provide consistent processes and criteria to review and establish speed limits on the County's road network. This policy will permit equitable treatment of each request from the community and will allow a technical review of each location when a request for a speed limit modification is received.

Speed Limits:

When existing posted speed limits are reviewed due to operational or public concerns, the review must consider all road users (motorists, pedestrians and cyclists) using a mix of engineering principles and consideration of human factors such as: road characteristics, vehicle operating speeds and volumes, reported collision history, pedestrian and cyclist activity, driveway spacing, location of signalized intersections, roadway and roadside features such as hills, curves and on-street parking, as well as adjacent land use. The process also recognizes that motorists are required to make a series of complex decisions in relatively short time frames, and that motorists' perception of the roadway characteristics is critical in determining the rate of speed they feel comfortable driving.

Artificially high or low posted speed limits have little impact on actual operating speeds and can result in increased motorist travel time, increased non-compliance, increased driver frustration, and decreased roadway capacity. Conversely, when speed limits are appropriate, there is a decrease in speed variance, a reduction in the instances of aggressive driving, increased credibility for the posted speed limit, and an achieved sustainable balance between positive (e.g. mobility, efficiency) and negative (e.g. environment, collision severity) conditions.

In conducting the review of posted speed limits, the 85th percentile speed factor is generally used as a predominant indication of the appropriate posted speed limit. This represents the speed at which 85% of the motorists are traveling **at or below**, and is based on the reasoning that drivers are in general reasonable and travel at a speed they feel comfortable with so as to avoid crashes. Collection of such data is obtained over a minimum twenty-four (24) hour period during favourable weather conditions on an average weekday.

Definitions:

Urban Road

A road that is located within an urban area as defined by the Transportation Association of Canada (TAC) speed limit guidelines.

Rural Road

A road that is located within a rural area as defined by the Transportation Association of Canada (TAC) speed limit guidelines.

School Area

A segment of a County road that is contiguous to a school and demarcated with School Area warning signs.

School Zone

A segment of a County road that is contiguous to a school and demarcated with School Speed Zone signs.

Statutory Speed Limit

In accordance with Section 128 of the Highway Traffic Act speed limits are generally as follows, unless posted otherwise:

Urban Areas: 50km/h

Rural Areas: 80km/h

The Speed Review Process:

Initiation Request

The first step of this process involves identifying speed limit problems or issues within the County. There are three ways that speed concerns could trigger a review of the posted speed limit on a County road.

1. Resident Request

Speed limit complaints, concerns or informal petitions submitted by residents may or may not explicitly request a speed limit review. They may relate to traffic safety concerns, to issues of traffic volume or to environmental factors such as noise and air pollution on sections of road. While residents may make their concerns known in any number of different ways, the County encourages residents to provide their concerns in writing. For each request that is received, the following information should be included:

- Resident's name and home address
- Contact information such as phone number and email address
- Exact location of the problem (street(s) name, address, intersection etc.)
- Detailed description of the concern
- The time(s) at which this problem typically occurs (morning peak, night time, all day, spring, winter etc.)

Additionally, any related information regarding the conditions or potential solutions may be identified by the individual and should also be included.

2. Staff Initiation

This could be triggered by County or Municipal staff, based on their knowledge and/or observations, or through an annual review of traffic speed data in the County's database.

3. Council Direction

County Council could direct staff to investigate a specific speed concern that has been identified.

Speed Limit Review:

The review will apply the "**Canadian Guidelines for establishing Posted Speed Limits**" (TAC Guidelines) as produced by the Transportation Association of Canada and as updated from time-to-time. Based on the TAC Guidelines, roads under the jurisdiction of the County of Lennox and Addington are classified as either **minor arterial** or **major arterial**.

The Transportation Association of Canada "**Canadian Guidelines for Establishing Posted Speed Limits**" (TAC Guidelines) is the method that will be applied for reviewing and establishing maximum speed limits on County roads. The TAC Guidelines consider the following roadway elements and characteristics when recommending the posted speed limit:

- Road Classification
- Design Speed
- Road Environment (Urban/Rural)
- Number of Lanes
- Lane Widths
- Road Alignment (Horizontal and Vertical)
- Roadside Hazards
- Pedestrian Exposure
- Cyclist Exposure
- Pavement Surface
- Number of Intersections with Public Roads
- Number of Private Driveways
- Presence of on-street Parking

School Zone Review:

The need for a school zone speed limit review will be determined by staff utilizing the "**School and Playground Areas and Zones: Guidelines for Application and Implementation**" (Transportation Association of Canada) and considering the individual situation.

County staff will contact the applicant on an annual basis to verify that the sign is still required. If the County does not receive a response after three attempts, the County will mail or hand deliver a letter to the applicant's address as a final notice. The sign(s) will be removed if an acknowledgement is not received within 30 days of the date of the letter.

These TAC Guidelines consider the following elements and characteristics for school zones:

- School Type
- Road Classification
- Fencing
- Property Line Separation
- Location of School Entrance in relation to the Road
- Location of Sidewalks

Review Process:

The typical process used for a speed limit review on a County road is as follows:

1. Road section identified to County staff for consideration of speed limit review through Council request, Public request or Staff initiated review.
2. Advise Local (Lower-Tier) Roads Manager and OPP of location and solicit comments from these parties.
3. Review available speed data and/or carry out a speed survey if needed to quantify/verify operating speeds.
4. Field review the subject area. (Roadway geometrics, lane and shoulder widths, pavement surface, roadside environment, signing, markings, lighting, etc.)
5. County staff to carry out a review of the road section utilizing the TAC Guidelines. TAC Guidelines will form the basis for the recommendation regarding the appropriate posted speed limit.
6. Where circumstances warrant, staff may consult with a Traffic Engineer, Transportation Professional or other parties as needed to further review the recommendation regarding the appropriate posted speed limit.
7. County staff report through the County's Technical Advisory Committee to County Council with recommendations, which may or may not include amending the speed limit, for Council's information.
8. County staff advise resident or group of the findings and recommendation of the review.
9. County staff report to County Council, on an annual or as needed basis, recommending speed limit changes for Council's consideration.