

PW 12-2025

Appendix 1

Draft Policy: Regional Speed Limits

Policy Category	Name of Policy: Regional Speed Limits
Public Works	

Policy Owner	Public Works – Director, Transportation Services
Approval Body	Council
Approval Date	
Effective Date	
Review by Date	

1. Policy Statement

Niagara Region adopted Vision Zero with the aim of eliminating traffic fatalities and injuries on the Regional road network.

The establishment of consistent and defensible speed limits is a key aspect of this initiative, ensuring appropriate speeds are designated on Regional roads.

The selection of a posted speed should reflect a balance between mobility and safety in consideration of adjacent land use such as schools, urban or rural environments, design speeds, and risk factors that include the presence of vulnerable road users (i.e. pedestrians and cyclists) using a recognized methodology by means of a speed limit review study.

Posted speeds that are set inappropriately low given the design of the road will result in high levels of non-compliance and this outcome will lead to demands for continuous enforcement that cannot be met.

Base Speed Limits

- Speed limits on Regional roads will be set based on a review of the roadway's physical characteristics and adjacent lane use using the Transportation Association of Canada (TAC) Guidelines for Establishing Posted Speed Limits.
- Permitted speed limits on Regional roads are to be in increments of 10 km/h, ranging between 40 km/h and 80 km/h.
- Community safety zones (CSZ), police enforcement, automated speed enforcement (ASE), and traffic calming should be used to reinforce operating speeds considered appropriate for a given section of road.

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School Zones

The Region has established school zones along Regional roads fronting elementary and secondary schools. Reduced speed limits near school locations help increase a motorist's ability to perceive and react to the presence of school children and other vulnerable road users in the area.

- The Director of Transportation Services will establish criteria for the reduction of speed limits in school zones based on measurable factors including, but not limited to:
 - The school directly fronting or having access to the Regional road;
 - Road cross-section;
 - Presence of a school crossing; and
 - Number of school pedestrians.
- Speed limit reductions in school zones will be in effect at all times.
- The limits of the speed limit reduction may extend beyond the school zone itself for consistency (e.g. to the nearest cross-street).

2. Purpose

- Guide the implementation of speed limits as a component of Niagara Region's Vision Zero initiative.
- Promote the setting of speed limits based on established industry guidelines and best practices.
- Set criteria for implementation of reduced speed limits within school zones.

3. Scope

This policy applies to Transportation Services staff, providing guidance for making recommendations to Council for setting speed limits on Regional roads.

3.1. Roles and Responsibilities

Director, Transportation Services – notify Regional Council and seek approval for updated by-laws for speed limit changes in accordance with delegated authority provided via report PW5-2020.

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Establish criteria for the lowering of speed limits in school zones as part of the Speed Limit Review procedure.

Transportation Road Safety Staff - Undertake speed limit reviews in accordance with the Speed Limit Review procedure.

4. References and Related Documents

- Canadian Guidelines for Establishing Posted Speed Limits, Transportation Association of Canada, 2009

4.1. Legislation, By-Laws and/or Directives

- By-law 89-2000 – Regulation of Traffic and Parking on Regional Roads
- Ontario Highway Traffic Act, Section 128 – 132
- Safer School Zones Act (Bill 65-2017)
- Ontario Regulation 615

4.2. Procedures

- Regional Speed Limit Review Procedure

5. Related Policies

- Community Safety Zones Policy

6. Definitions:

- **Speed Limit:** The maximum rate of speed that a motor vehicle can be driven on a section of road, as established through Regional bylaw in accordance with the Ontario Highway Traffic Act.
- **Regular Posted Speed Limit:** The established speed limit in effect at all times.

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- **School Zone:** The section of any Regional road that is adjacent to, and within 150 metres in either direction beyond the limits of the land used for the purposes of the school.
- **Speed Limit Review Study:** A review of the operating characteristics and infrastructure data for a roadway to determine the appropriate speed limit by applying the Transportation Association of Canada's Guidelines for Establishing Posted Speed Limits (TAC Guidelines).
- **Automated Speed Enforcement:** Automated speed enforcement (ASE) is an automated system that uses a camera and a speed measurement device to detect and capture images of vehicles travelling more than the posted speed limit.
- **Community Safety Zones:** A community safety zone (CSZ) is a designated area of higher risk identified by a municipal council through a by-law. In these zones, certain Highway Traffic Act fines (including speeding) are doubled, and they are often located near schools.

7. Document Control

The electronic version of this document is recognized as the only valid version.

Approval History

Approver(s)	Approved Date	Effective Date

Revision History

Revision No.	Date	Summary of Change(s)	Changed by