



**SUBJECT: Speed Limit Area and Speed Limit Policy Update**

**TO: Community Planning, Regulation & Mobility Cttee.**

**FROM: Transportation Services Department**

Report Number: TS-06-21

Wards Affected: All

File Numbers: 750-01

Date to Committee: May 4, 2021

Date to Council: May 18, 2021

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**Recommendation:**

Direct the Director of Transportation Services to prepare for the approval of Council, the necessary by-laws amending Traffic By-law 86-2007 to include provisions for Designated Speed Limit Areas; and

Approve a 40km/h speed limit for all streets within the area bordered by Lakeshore Road, Brant Street, Baldwin Street and Maple Avenue; and

Approve the Speed Limit Policy included in Appendix A to transportation services report TS-06-21.

**PURPOSE:**

**Vision to Focus Alignment:**

- Improve integrated city mobility

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**Background and Discussion:**

Highway Traffic Act

Speed limits within Ontario municipalities are regulated by the Highway Traffic Act (HTA). Included amongst the many things prescribed within the HTA is a default speed limit of 50 km/h on roadways without the presence of speed limit signs. Roads with a

speed limit other than 50 km/h require a Council approved by-law and for signs to be posted to reflect that speed.

### Traffic By-law

Traffic By-law 86-2007 contains a Rate of Speed Schedule listing all Burlington roads with a speed limit other than 50 km/h. Changes to the Rate of Speed Schedule are occasionally required. These changes are typically based on the recommendations of staff and are accompanied by an amending by-law for the consideration of Council.

### Speed Limit Policy

Burlington's Speed Limit Policy is a corporate policy intended to guide the review and establishment of speed limits on Burlington roads. The current version of the policy was approved in 2012 and includes a methodology based on the Canadian Guidelines for Establishing Posted Speed Limits developed by the Transportation Association of Canada (TAC).

The use of these guidelines when reviewing existing speed limits has created consistency and has ultimately led to the reduction of speed limits on hundreds of roadways throughout the city since it was adopted. Further, these guidelines support the concept of integrated mobility as it takes into consideration the safety and risk of all road users.

## **Strategy/process**

### Designated Speed Limit Areas

Recent amendments to the HTA allow municipalities to set a speed limit other than 50 km/h on roadways within a designated area, often a neighbourhood with defined boundaries. Once designated and assigned a speed limit (such as 40 km/h), all roadways within that area will have the speed limit specified. Speed limit signs are then only required at entry/exit points to the defined area.

The benefits of this method of establishing reduced speed limits include a reduction of the number of signs required to post a speed limit as well as creating consistency throughout a given neighbourhood with a goal to increase compliance by drivers.

In addition, the introduction of an 'area-wide' method of setting speed limits aligns well with the City's approach to reviewing speed limits and the ever-increasing number of roadways in residential areas with a 40 km/h speed limit.

Recognizing that Designated Speed Limit Areas may be applicable to other neighbourhoods throughout the city as a method of reducing speed limits, staff have incorporated it into the updated Speed Limit Policy attached to this report and being recommended for approval by Council.

Proposed Designated Speed Limit Area

Transportation Services staff have received a request to investigate the speed limits on roads within Ward 2 between Caroline Street and Birch Avenue, west of Brant Street with a view to create consistency with existing sections of road in the neighbourhood posted at 40 km/h.

In light of the recent HTA amendments and the authority now given to municipalities to designate areas for a reduced speed limit, staff broadened the study area to include roads north of Lakeshore Road, west of Brant Street, south of Baldwin Street and east of Maple Avenue/hydro corridor. Attachment 1 illustrates the study area and the streets with an existing 40 km/h speed limit.

A further review of speed limits on the 50 km/h roads was conducted by staff using the speed limit review methodology identified within the current Speed Limit Policy. The results revealed most roads met the criteria for a 40 km/h speed limit, based primarily on the short block length, spacing of existing stop signs, presence of on-street parking and the high number of driveway accesses.

Given these results and taking into consideration the number of roads currently posted at 40 km/h, staff recommend the implementation of the city's first designated speed limit area.

If approved by Council, staff will provide an amending by-law for the approval of Council that incorporates designated speed limit areas and includes the above described area in Ward 2. Implementation will also include installing signs at entry and exit points to the designated neighbourhood, as illustrated below in figure A.

Figure A - Speed Limit Area Signs



### Speed Limit Policy Update

The inclusion of Designated Speed Limit Areas into the city's Speed Limit Policy has provided staff with the opportunity to update the overall policy. A revised Speed Limit Policy is included as Appendix A of this report.

In general, staff are not recommending any significant changes to the policy that would lead to speed limit modifications in the field. Instead, the updates to the policy have been made to align it with corporate policy authoring guidelines, remove references to technical or procedural elements, strengthen policy statements related to where speed limits are to be reduced throughout the city (i.e. schools and parks) and to update references to applicable legislation.

### **Options Considered**

Given the prescriptive nature of the Highway Traffic Act, there are not many options available with respect to establishing speed limits. The Designated Speed Limit Areas recommended in this report is an alternative to the traditional street-by-street method of setting speed limits.

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### **Financial Matters:**

The designated area-wide speed limit approach to setting speed limits in neighbourhoods has the potential to reduce costs through the elimination of speed limit signs on every roadway with a 40 km/h speed limit in favour of signs at entry and exit points.

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### **Climate Implications**

Not applicable

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### **Engagement Matters:**

As part of the process of implementing a speed limit change, staff routinely provide notification to residents affected by the change.

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### **Conclusion:**

The Highway Traffic Act amendments providing municipalities with the authority to designate areas for a reduced speed limit aligns well with the city's approach to

evaluating and reducing speed limits as well as the goal to provide a safe transportation network for all road users.

The recommended area in Ward 2 will be the city's first designated speed limit area and with the approval of the revised Speed Limit Policy, staff will have the guidance to review speed limits from an area or neighbourhood perspective.

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Respectfully submitted,

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**Appendices:**

A. Proposed Speed Limit Policy

**Report Approval:**

All reports are reviewed and/or approved by Department Director, the Chief Financial Officer and the Executive Director of Legal Services & Corporation Counsel.

