



COUNTY OF WELLINGTON

COMMITTEE REPORT

To: Chair and Members of the Roads Committee
From: Don Kudo, County Engineer
Date: Tuesday, May 11, 2021
Subject: **Road MAP: Speed Management Guidelines – Follow Up**

Background:

The intention of this report is to provide further information with respect to the Speed Management Guidelines that were presented to the Roads Committee and Council in April, 2021. At both the committee and council meetings, councilors provided comments on the guidelines and this report provides some follow up information with respect to the comments.

Process

The original Screening Process flowchart was revised following comments at the Roads Committee in April and the updated flowchart was included in the Council agenda. The revisions removed the requirement for a petition and revised the wording to initiate a complaint to be more general by using the term “stakeholder” to include residents, public, county councilor, local council/councilor and others. Wording in the guidelines was also revised to reflect these changes.

Stakeholder engagement is detailed in the Speed Management Guidelines, identifying Points of Contact with stakeholders at four points during the Screening Process. An updated flowchart to indicate these points of contact could be completed.

The ability for councilors to be updated on speeding complaints under review could also be added to the Screening Process, with reports to the Roads Committee on the status of speeding reviews underway. The format and frequency of reporting to the committee can be determined. This reporting would be consistent with the regular meetings for the Speed Management Team consisting of Roads and OPP staff, who will be meeting to co-ordinate, review and recommend speed mitigation measures in response to complaints.

The Roads Committee and Council were provided with the complete draft of the Speed Management Guidelines in addition to a staff report which provided a summary of the guidelines. The guidelines were intended as an internal document for Roads and OPP staff to have a common base to work from when dealing with speeding complaints. The Screening Process flowchart would be the public facing document for complainants to see how the County deals with speeding concerns. The creation of a summary companion document to simplify the guideline could be explored. This type of document could be used as a public reference resource and as a public education tool.

Speed Management Tools - Posted Speed Limit

Reviewing and changing posted speed limits considering the Transportation Association of Canada (TAC) guidelines is one of ten possible modifications to address a speeding concern. A change in posted speed limit is an option to be evaluated on a site specific basis along with other measures noted in the guidelines to address speeding complaints and safety concerns. All the modification options to manage

speed in the guidelines can work in an integrated manner. The assessment of the ten alternative modifications in the guidelines will be done in a manner that will account for the context of the road environment. The Stakeholder engagement detailed in the guidelines would help with the context elements in the speed management planning process.

The TAC guidelines also provides baseline data for evaluation purposes and is a key tool to use and consider when developing a speed management plan and to ensure there are reasonable and credible posted speed limits on County roads. Posted speed limit review using the TAC guidelines is a best practice and is used by the Ministry of Transportation and municipalities including area County roads departments. These guidelines were also approved for use within Wellington County in 2012.

In the Speed Management Guidelines, the consultant does note a review of all posted speed limits that are 70 km/h or lower within the County network should be undertaken to ensure consistency between road design and expected behaviour. At this time, staff is not considering to undertake this County wide review and only use the guidelines on a complaint basis with a review of posted speed limits being one of the factors to be reviewed in the Screening Process.

As noted during the Council meeting, any change to posted speed limits will require a bylaw to be passed by Council. The Speed Management Guidelines will let Council know that that a recommendation to change a posted speed limit followed a comprehensive, co-ordinated and transparent process.

As part of the Road MAP study, the consultant was provided with locations in the County road network where speeding and safety complaints have been noted by the staff, public and councilors. The consultant has received vehicle and speed data from both County staff and the OPP at these locations and is working on providing some technical recommendations for these locations. These examples will be provided to the Roads Committee at a future meeting. The implementation of changes to the road network to address speeding concerns is not the focus of the Road MAP study but instead to provide guidelines and process to assess speeding concerns received by stakeholders.

Local Municipality

The Engagement section of the Speed Management Guidelines does detail the role of project stakeholders that could include local municipal councilors. Collaboration with local municipal roads staff is also part of the stakeholder engagement.

Current practices with pedestrian crosswalks and speed radar signs have required local municipalities to pay for the installation of these facilities on County roads. The County assumes the ownership and responsibility for operation, maintenance and replacement of the infrastructure once installed. For pedestrian crosswalks, the requests were based on warrants and the need to facilitate the use of sidewalks along County roads which is a local municipal responsibility. With the pedestrian crosswalks being proposed as a possible speed management tool in the Speed Management Guidelines, there is a benefit to the County roads system. A cost share for the installation of pedestrian crosswalks would be an implementation practice that could be developed. Similarly for the speed radar signs, the current practice is based on local requests and site specific concerns raised for these types of signs to be installed. The cost share practice proposed for pedestrian crossovers could be applied to speed radar signs.

85th Percentile Data Collection and Analysis

With respect to speed management and the use of the 85th percentile, this industry standard is used as part of the data collection and analysis. The Speed Management Guidelines details the use of the 85th percentile in providing the context to addressing speeding and the practice of setting consistent and reasonable speed limits that result in similar operating speeds between vehicles. This guideline comment was part of the background provided on the complexity of speeding issues and the many variables involved.

The 85th percentile analysis provides staff with baseline data and a benchmark on the road environment, and the comfort for the majority of drivers to travel at a chosen speed. In the proposed Screening Process, the 85th percentile speed would be used as a baseline to confirm whether a speeding issue does exist at a location. The 85th percentile data collection and analysis will not be solely relied upon to set the posted limit. A technically preferred posted speed limit would be determined through a TAC analysis, and used as one consideration in the determination of an appropriate speed mitigation option to be implemented.

Other Road Users

The County road network does provide service to a variety of users including farm equipment and horse and buggy. With respect to road safety, data collection on the road users would need to be undertaken to help with the review of impact these users have on speed management and road safety. The TAC guidelines does account for the risk to pedestrians and cyclists. A review on how others user would be affected by speeding could be done as part of the site specific context input.

Enforcement

Enforcement is a key element of traffic safety. The five “E”s on traffic safety – Engineering, Enforcement, Evaluation/Monitoring, Education and Engagement are elements noted in the Speed Management Guidelines. The guidelines will assist the efforts for both Roads and OPP staff to address speeding concerns. The Speed Management Team consisting of Roads and OPP staff will be an opportunity to work closer together to address complaints and concerns.

Road MAP Vision and Goals

The Road MAP Vision and Goals reviewed a number of County strategic documents in order to align the study with County strategies and directions. Of note, the County’s Official Plan has specific direction that highlights the importance of the County road network:

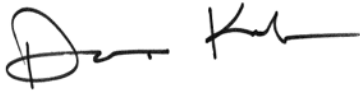
“Roadways are far and away the most important means of transportation in Wellington. The County of Wellington accepts the heavy reliance on automobiles and trucks in small towns and rural areas and will make best efforts at encouraging safe, efficient and convenient community design practices which facilitates people’s desires to use automobiles”

In summary, balancing community needs for mobility and how drivers use the County road network with conflicts between resident and driver attitudes is a goal of the Road MAP and the Speed Management Guidelines.

Recommendation:

That the Road MAP: Speed Management Guidelines – Follow Up report be received for information.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Don Kudo". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Don Kudo, P. Eng.
County Engineer