

**Report to
Rapport au:**

**Transportation Committee
Comité des transports
15 August 2018 / 15 août 2018**

**and Council
et au Conseil
29 August 2018 / 29 août 2018**

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**Submitted by
Soumis par:**

**Philippe Landry, Director/Directeur, Traffic Services/ Services de la circulation,
Transportation Services Department/Direction générale des transports**

Contact Person

Personne ressource:

**Krista Tanaka, Program Manager/Gestionnaire de programme,
Road Safety & Traffic Investigations Branch / Direction Sécurité et Enquêtes sur
la circulation**

613-580-2424 x 23597, Krista.Tanaka@ottawa.ca

Ward: CITY WIDE / À L'ÉCHELLE DE LA VILLE File Number: 2018-TSD-PLN-0008

SUBJECT: Gateway Speed Limit Signage in Residential Areas

**OBJET: Panneaux de limitation de vitesse aux entrées des secteurs
résidentiels**

REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

That Transportation Committee recommend that Council:

1. **Approve the proposed approach for the implementation of gateway speed limit signage in local residential areas citywide as outlined in this report; and,**
2. **Approve the by-law to delegate to the General Manager, Transportation Services Department, the authority to establish and designate certain residential areas with gateway speed limit signage, as further outlined in this report and in the attached Document 3.**

RECOMMANDATIONS DU RAPPORT

Que le Comité des transports recommande au Conseil :

1. **Approuver l'approche proposée pour la mise en place de panneaux de limitation de vitesse aux entrées des secteurs résidentiels de la ville, comme le précise le présent rapport; et,**
2. **Approuver le règlement visant à déléguer au directeur général des Transports le pouvoir d'établir et de désigner certains secteurs résidentiels au moyen de panneaux de limitation de vitesse, comme le précisent également le présent rapport et le document 3 ci-annexé.**

BACKGROUND

Speed limits are established on City roadways based on criteria defined in the City of Ottawa Speed Zoning Policy, approved by Council in 2009. At the time the Speed Zoning Policy was developed, it was recognized that a reduced 40 km/h speed limit would be more appropriate on local residential roadways, based on feedback/requests from residents and Councillors. The estimated cost at that time was approximately \$5 million to implement 40 km/h speed limits on all local residential roadways in the City, based on signing requirements under the *Highway Traffic Act*, R.S.O. 1990, c.H.8., as amended (*HTA*). In order to meet the needs of residents, the Speed Zoning Policy, sought to establish an equitable and cost-effective means of implementing 40 km/h speed limits within local residential areas. The policy therefore included the following process for implementation:

- Existing communities: implement 40 km/h speed limit based on a petition process (66% support required); and,
- New subdivisions: implement 40 km/h speed limits on all local residential roadways and qualifying collector roadways, requiring developers to fund installation as part of the subdivision process.

It was noted at that time that the City required a less costly way to establish lower speed limits within local residential areas. To that end, the City of Ottawa has been formally petitioning the Government of Ontario for lower default speed limits and supporting changes to the *HTA* since 2009. The following is a summary of activities the City took part in to influence change in Ontario:

- On October 28 2009, Council approved, as amended, the [City of Ottawa Speed Zoning Policy Report \(ACS2009-COS-PWS-0021\)](#). In particular, Council approved a resolution that the City of Ottawa ask municipalities in Ontario with a population over 50,000, and the Association of Municipalities of Ontario, for their support for an amendment to *HTA* to permit municipalities, on local roads in residential communities:
 - to set their own default speed limits (unsigned); or,
 - in the alternative, to set alternative default speed limits with limited signage (gateway signs) at the entrances to these residential communities.

The City received 30 responses from the survey which was sent to 440 municipalities, and in May 2010, sent a letter to the Ministry of Transportation Ontario (MTO) requesting *HTA* changes based on the survey support. In May 2010, the City received a letter from the Minister of Transportation indicating that more support would be required before any changes could be made to the default speed limit in the *HTA*.

- In 2015, the MTO conducted a number of consultation sessions throughout Ontario to determine the amount of support for changes to the *HTA* to allow municipalities to set their own default speed limits. Four options were being considered:
 1. Maintain current default speed limit of 50 km/h.
 2. Through a legislative change, reduce the default speed limit from 50 km/h to 40 km/h.
 3. Through a legislative change, permit municipalities to set a default speed limit of 50 km/h or 40 km/h inside municipal boundaries, and require the posting of a sign at each entry point of the municipality.
 4. Through a legislative change, permit municipalities to set a different default speed limit inside municipal boundaries or neighbourhoods, and require the posting of a sign at each entry point of the municipality/neighbourhood.

The City participated in the consultation sessions and supported option #4 as it provided municipalities the following opportunities:

- The authority to explore default speed limits under 40 km/h in the future (i.e. 30 km/hour residential and school zones);

- The option of maintaining existing unposted speed limits in certain roadways within the city; and
- The option to distinguish between local and arterial/collector roads with respect to speed, while minimizing the amount of signage required.
- On May 12, 2016, Mayor Jim Watson sent a letter to the Honourable Steven Del Duca, MPP, on behalf of City Council requesting that the Province allow the City of Ottawa to conduct a number of pilot projects, including one that would reduce speed limits from the current default of 50 km/h to 40 km/h on residential streets using gateway speed limit signage.

On May 30, 2017, Bill 65 – [Safer School Zones Act 2017](#) was passed by the Government of Ontario and received Royal Assent. The new legislation amends the *HTA* to allow municipalities, among other things, to implement new gateway speed limit signage. Associated changes to the *HTA* were enacted and [regulations updated](#) on May 1, 2018. Since this date, municipalities have the authority to establish speed limits lower than 50 km/h within neighbourhoods using specialized gateway speed limit signage. Please see *Document 1: Gateway Speed Limit Signs*, for an illustration of the specialized gateway speed limit sign designated for both the entry and exit points of applicable neighbourhoods.

This report outlines Transportation Services' proposed approach to implement gateway signage to reduce speed limits within residential areas in Ottawa.

DISCUSSION

According to the new regulations, specialized gateway speed limit signs are required on both the entry points and exit points of neighbourhoods to designate all streets within the respective borders at the specified lower speed limit. The use of these types of signs offers great benefits to our municipality. Lowering roadway speed limits aligns with the City's strategic goal for improved roadway safety, and offers the following benefits:

1. Uniformity of Speed Limits within Neighbourhoods: Under the City's existing Speed Zoning Policy, a 40 km/h speed limit is only implemented on a street-by-street basis, following a petition undertaken by residents. This leads to different speed limits on similar looking roadways within the same neighbourhood. Gateway signage, which includes the installation of a specialized speed limit sign at both entry and exit points to a community, allows for a consistent speed limit on roadways within the same neighbourhood. Such consistency helps drivers understand what is expected of them so that they can respond accordingly; and,

2. Reduction in Posted Signs: Currently, a speed limit sign is required at a minimum distance of every 300 m along each street posted at either a 30 km/h or 40 km/h speed limit. The use of Gateway signage only requires the installation of one sign at each entry and exit point to a community, which allows for the implementation of a uniform speed limit. Municipalities can now sign larger neighbourhood areas at lower speed limits with significantly fewer signs than were required in the past. This reduces visual clutter and costs required to implement lower speed limits.

Traffic Services staff have completed a preliminary review of the city's existing roadway network to determine roadways within each neighbourhood that are eligible for a 40 km/h speed limit through gateway signage based on roadway classifications. Eligible roadways generally include the following:

- Local Roads in residential areas as defined in the City of Ottawa Transportation Master Plan 2013; and,
- Collector Roads, as defined in the City of Ottawa Transportation Master Plan 2013, if currently posted at 40 km/h.

More in depth review will be undertaken at the time of implementation to determine if any further opportunities exist to incorporate unposted Collector roadways into an area based on operating speed and/or the warrant process established in the City of Ottawa Speed Zoning Policy. In areas that are likely to meet the criteria established within the Council-approved 30 km/h Speed Limit Policy staff will identify opportunities to establish small pockets of 30 km/h speed limits. An example of an area that would be eligible for 40 km/h gateway speed limit signage is depicted in *Document 2: Example of Proposed Placement of Gateway Speed Limit Signage in a Residential Area in Ward 12*.

The Speed Zoning Policy requires a petition to change the speed limit to 40 km/h on existing local residential streets. Now that municipalities within Ontario have the authority to designate larger areas with a common lower speed limit, the petition process is no longer a reasonable option. For example, if a petition were required to lower speeds for the area depicted in Document 2, the resident circulating the petition would have to seek signatures from over 1,300 households, which would be a very onerous task. In addition, currently all new subdivisions are automatically signed with 40 km/h speed limits and as such, these areas do not require a petition for the lower speed limit. For existing neighborhood gateway speed limit signage, eliminating the petition requirements aligns with the implementation of speed limits within new subdivisions and supports a more fair and transparent process for all residents, regardless of the date

their community was established. Furthermore, the installation of gateway 40 km/h speed limit signs will be applied in all new subdivisions moving forward.

The intent is to implement 40 km/h speed limits in all neighbourhoods of the city based on the process described above. Staff will consult with ward Councillors to determine the priority for implementation within each of their wards. Consultation with Councillors is imperative to ensure community needs are met.

In the following situations, gateway signage will not be applicable and speed limits will continue to be established as per the City of Ottawa Speed Zoning Policy:

- Arterial roadways;
- Major Collector roadways unless currently posted at 40 km/h; and,
- Any roadway with a single point of entry from, or exit to, an Arterial or Major Collector that does not connect to any other roadways beyond the entry/exit point.

In order to implement gateway signage in Ottawa in a consistent and efficient manner, and to align with the provisions of the *HTA*, it is recommended that Council pass a by-law to delegate the authority to the General Manager of Transportation Services to designate areas consistent with the Speed Zone Policy, as determined by the General Manager of Transportation Services. The proposed by-law is included as *Document 3: Gateway Speed Limit Signage Area By-law*. The exercise of delegated authority shall be reported to the appropriate Committee annually.

Public education is required to ensure that residents and visitors are aware of and understand the meaning of Gateway Limit Speed Signs. Staff have engaged Public Information and Media relations to help develop a Communications Plan that would be initiated prior to the implementation of the first Gateway Speed Limit signs. The Communications Plan will include materials for the use of Ward Councillors to target their affected constituents.

Should Council approve this report, Traffic Services expects to implement gateway speed limits in one area per ward by the end of 2019. Funds of \$50,000 are available in the 2018 and 2019 Traffic Services' Signs Maintenance operating budget to accomplish this work. The annual \$50,000 funding was approved as part of the 2009 Speed Zoning Policy Report.

According to preliminary estimates, staff anticipate requiring \$1.58 Million to implement gateway speed limit signs citywide. Staff are currently exploring funding options.

RURAL IMPLICATIONS

The proposed process for the implementation of gateway signage to reduce speed limits within residential areas is applicable citywide.

CONSULTATION

The City of Ottawa has been formally petitioning the Government of Ontario for lower default speed limits and supporting changes to the *Highway Traffic Act (HTA)* since 2009. The implementation of lower default speed limits in residential areas is already a Council-approved initiative.

Consultation with ward Councillors on gateway speed limit signage has been ongoing and input is received through their communication with their respective community associations. Further consultation is expected between Councillors and these groups in order to prioritize neighbourhoods for implementation.

ADVISORY COMMITTEE(S) COMMENTS

This report has not been considered by Advisory Committees.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no legal impediments in implementing the recommendations in this report. Section 23.1 of the *Municipal Act, 2001*, S.O. 2001, c.25 authorizes Council to delegate its powers and duties under this Act or any other Act to a person by by-law, subject to such conditions and limits, as Council considers appropriate.

RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

There are no risk implications associated to this report.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Funds are available to implement gateway speed limit signage in one area per ward as described in the report. Expansion of the program to additional areas citywide will be included in future Traffic Services operating budgets for Committee and Council consideration.

ACCESSIBILITY IMPACTS

There are no impacts to accessibility associated with this report.

TERM OF COUNCIL PRIORITIES

The Gateway Speed Limit Signage Report aligns with the Transportation and Mobility Priority in the City of Ottawa 2015-2018 City Strategic Plan.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Document 1: Gateway Speed Limit Signs

Document 2: Example of Proposed Placement of Gateway Speed Limit Signage in a Residential Area in Ward 12

Document 3: Gateway Speed Limit Signage Area By-law

DISPOSITION

The City Clerk and Solicitor's office will place the required by-law on the agenda of Council for enactment, and the Transportation Services Department will implement gateway speed limit signage in residential areas as described in this report.

Document 1: Gateway Speed Limit Signs

All municipalities in Ontario now have the authority to establish speed limits lower than 50 km/h within neighbourhoods using specialized gateway speed limit signage.

Entry Gateway Speed Limit Sign

Gateway Speed Limit Signs posted at the entry of an eligible neighbourhood consists of a regulatory speed limit sign in addition to a blue tab posted immediately beneath it with the words “Area / Secteur” written in yellow font.

Figure 1 - Sample of 40 Km/h Entry Gateway Speed Limit Sign



Exit Gateway Speed Limit Sign

Gateway Speed Limit Signs posted at the exit of an eligible neighbourhood consists of a regulatory speed limit sign in addition to a black tab posted immediately beneath it with the words “Ends / Fin” written in white font.

Figure 2 - Sample of 40 Km/h Exit Gateway Speed Limit Sign

