

**Report to
Rapport au:**

**Transportation Committee
Comité des transports
7 October 2020 / 7 octobre 2020**

**and Council
et au Conseil
14 October 2020 / 14 octobre 2020**

**Submitted on September 28, 2020
Soumis le 28 septembre 2020**

**Submitted by
Soumis par:
Councillor / Conseillère Carole Anne Meehan and
Councillor / Conseillère Diane Deans**

**Contact Person
Personne ressource:
Councillor / Conseillère Carole Anne Meehan
613-580-2751, Carolanne.Meehan@ottawa.ca
and
Councillor / Conseillère Diane Deans
613-580-2480, Diane.Deans@ottawa.ca**

Ward: GLOUCESTER-SOUTH NEPEAN **File Number:** ACS2020-OCC-TRC-0012
(22) / GLOUCESTER-NEPEAN SUD
(22) AND GLOUCESTER
SOUTHGATE

SUBJECT: River Road Speed Reductions to 60 km/h

OBJET: Réduction de la limite de vitesse à 60 km/h sur le chemin River

REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Transportation Committee recommend Council reduce the speed limit on River Road from:

- 1. 150 metres south of Balmoral Drive to 80 metres north of Lowen Drive from 80 km/h to 60 km/h; and,**
- 2. 130 metres south of Earl Armstrong Road to Nicolls Island Road from 80 km/h and 70 km/h to 60 km/h.**

RECOMMANDATIONS DU RAPPORT

Que le Comité des transports recommande au Conseil de réduire la limite de vitesse sur le chemin River en la faisant passer :

- 1. de 80 km/h à 60 km/h sur le tronçon commençant à 150 mètres au sud de la promenade Balmoral et se terminant à 80 mètres au nord de la promenade Lowen; et**
- 2. de 80 km/h et de 70 km/h à 60 km/h sur le tronçon commençant à 130 mètres au sud du chemin Earl Armstrong et allant jusqu'au chemin Nicolls Island.**

BACKGROUND

In 2009, City Council approved the City of Ottawa Speed Zoning Policy which defines the process for establishing speed limits along City roadways. The existing 80 km/h and 70 km/h speed limits on River Road, between Balmoral Drive to Lowen Drive as well as from Earl Armstrong Road to Nicolls Island Road were appropriate when the roadway was first evaluated based on the process for establishing speed limits as outlined in the Council-approved Speed Zoning Policy.

DISCUSSION

River Road is designated as an 'Arterial' roadway and runs in a north-south direction from Riverside Drive/Limebank Road to the City's southern limit. It is constructed as a two-lane rural cross-section without sidewalks. The surrounding land use on River Road is mainly residential with some agricultural land use within the sections of the roadway under discussion in this report. The sections of River Road reviewed as part of this report are:

- The 80 km/h speed limit zone located approximately 150 metres south of Balmoral Drive that ends at a point 80 metres north of Lowen Drive. The posted speed limit north and south of this 80 km/h zone is 60km/h; and,
- The 80 km/h speed limit zone which begins approximately 130 metres south of Earl Armstrong Road and transitions to 70 km/h at 750 metres south of Summerhill Drive. The existing 70 km/h speed limit zone continues beyond Nicolls Island Road.

The speed limit on River Road south of Lowen Drive was originally 70 km/h, however was reduced to 60 km/h in June 2017 as a result of Councillor Qaqish and Councillor Dean's joint River Road Speed Reduction from Lowen Drive to 110m south of Tewsley Drive Report (ACS2017-CCS-TRC-0008) which received Council approval as part of the previous Term of Council.

Currently, Temporary Traffic Calming measures are limited to a speed display board in the northbound and southbound directions of River Road. There is one speed display board located 80 metres south of Lowen Drive facing southbound traffic and another speed display board located 50 metres south of Balmoral Drive facing northbound traffic. Both speed boards are located within existing 60 km/h zones on River Road.

RURAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no rural implications associated with this report or its recommendations.

CONSULTATION

Transportation Services Comment:

Industry best practices support that it is important to maintain consistent, uniform speed limits on any roadway to provide all users including pedestrians, cyclists, adjacent residents and motorists with a correct representation of the actual speed of traffic on that roadway. The provision of speed limits considers the roadway function and its design. Implementing a speed limit that does not align with these considerations may result in enforcement difficulties and increases in traffic hazard. Lowering the speed limits on City streets without consideration of the physical configuration of the road will have minimal impact on driver behaviour. In such cases where a posted speed limit is below operating speeds, most motorists will continue to drive at speeds they feel are reasonable and prudent unless continual police enforcement is present. The visual and physical cues a driver uses to determine the appropriate travel speed should be consistent with the posted speed limit.

Furthermore, the Council-approved City of Ottawa Speed Zoning Policy states that the speed limit along a rural arterial roadway should be based on the actual 85th percentile speed (i.e. the speed at or below which 85% of all the vehicles travel) of the free-flowing traffic on the street. A speed survey conducted on River Road by City of Ottawa staff on September 2nd, 2020, between Balmoral Drive and Lowen Drive showed an operating speed of 88 km/h (the 85th percentile speed) and a compliance with the current 80 km/h speed limit of 44%. A speed survey conducted on River Road by City of Ottawa staff on September 11th, 2020 between Summerhill Street and Nicolls Island Road showed an operating speed of 84 km/h (the 85th percentile speed) and a compliance with the current 80 km/h speed limit of 65%. Based on the speed survey results and the Council approved Speed Zoning Policy, the appropriate speed limit along the sections of River Road brought forward for a speed reduction consideration at this time, is 80km/h. Please see Document 1 - River Road Speed Limit Data (Sept 2020), for more details.

Posting a 60 km/h speed limit on a roadway where the operating speed is much greater, such as in the case of River Road may increase the crash risk. Some drivers will choose to comply with the 60 km/h speed limit while others will continue to drive the higher speed at which they feel comfortable travelling. It is expected that the compliance with the new 60 km/h speed limit will be under 10%. The varying difference in operating speeds between individual vehicles may increase the risk of collision as the potential for interactions or conflicts between vehicles is greater. We would expect to see more risky overtaking maneuvers as a motorist might feel frustrated following a vehicle at 60 km/h in a setting that is more conducive to higher speeds.

The Transportation Services Department does not expect the existing operating speeds along the sections of River Road identified in this report to be significantly reduced because of the implementation of 60 km/h speed limit signs unless considerable police enforcement occurs on an on-going basis. Due to the recorded operating speeds, roadway classification and roadway characteristics, temporary traffic calming measures other than additional speed display boards cannot be considered on River Road.

Upon Council approval of the report recommendation, the Transportation Services Department will initiate the necessary work to implement the speed reduction in the affected sections of River Road from 80 km/h and 70 km/h to 60 km/h. The cost of the signage installation, estimated at \$1,000, can be accommodated within the existing Traffic Services operating budget.

COMMENTS BY THE WARD COUNCILLOR(S)

Councillor Meehan is aware of the report and is supportive of the speed reductions as outlined.

Councillor Deans supports this proposal to reduce the speed on River Road, as outlined in this report. Community safety is my top priority and I am pleased that efforts are being made to protect the residential community of Cedardale.

ADVISORY COMMITTEE(S) COMMENTS

This report has not been considered by Advisory Committees.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no legal impediments to implementing the recommend in this report.

RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

There are no risk management implications associated to this report or its recommendations.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implication associated with this report. The signage installation costs will be funded from within the existing Traffic Services operating budget.

ACCESSIBILITY IMPACTS

There are no accessibility impacts associated with this report or its recommendations.

TERM OF COUNCIL PRIORITIES

A specific link with the 2019-2022 Term of Council Priorities has not been identified.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Document 1 – River Road Speed Limit Data (Sept 2020)

DISPOSITION

The Transportation Services Department will take appropriate action based on the recommendations made by the Transportation Committee and Council and will endeavour to install both the signs and pavement markings as soon as practicable.