Speed Reduction Policy

Policy Number:	PW-2
Applies to:	Engineering Services
Approval Date:	April 25, 2016
Revision Date(s):	
Approval Authority:	Council, approved by Council Resolution No.160-16

1. Policy Statement

The Town of Collingwood is committed to ensuring the effective and uniform application and operation of speed reduction measures to improve safety and convenience for road users and promote the efficient movement of people and goods.

2. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to allow members of the public to request that the Town of Collingwood undertake a review of speed limits on a Town roadway for consideration of reducing the speed limit. Upon receipt of this request, it will be referred to Engineering Services for review in accordance with the procedures outlined in this policy.

3. Definitions

- "85th Percentile Speed" means the speed at which 85% of all vehicles are observed to be travelling at or below under free-flowing conditions.
- "Council" means the Council for the Corporation of the Town of Collingwood.
- "Design Speed" means a speed selected as a basis to establish appropriate geometric design elements for a particular section of road.
- "Director of Public Works" means the Director of Public Works and Engineering for the Corporation of the Town of Collingwood or their designate.
- "Ontario Traffic Manual" (OTM) means the Ontario Ministry of Transportation (MTO) design guideline, as current or amended from time to time, comprised of 22 manuals developed to provide guidance for transportation practitioners.
- "TAC" means the Transportation Association of Canada.

4. Scope

In adopting this policy, consideration has been given to the following:

- The strongest influence on a driver's selection of travel speed is the physical appearance of the road, which is partly influenced by the design speed selected for that particular road section;
- Setting the posted speed limit at the 85th percentile speed will generally result in a low dispersion in travel speeds in the traffic stream;
- Speed control, aimed at encouraging drivers to travel at an appropriate speed for prevailing conditions, encompasses enforcement, education, and engineering techniques;
- A posted speed limit that is set too low will result in a significant number of "reasonable" drivers operating illegally, place unnecessary burdens on law enforcement personnel, lead to lack of credibility of the posted speed limit, and result in increased tolerance by enforcement agencies;
- Given the functional hierarchy of the municipal road system, posted speed limits should be set in accordance with the function that each road is designed to serve; and
- Arterial and collector roads that accommodate Transit routes should remain at the existing posted speed to maintain scheduling efficiency and timing.

Criteria for Considering a request for Reduced Speed Control

The combination of warrants to reduce speed on a municipal road requires the following:

Warrant "A" **AND** "B" –TAC Evaluation **AND** 85th Percentile Speed Study

OR

Warrant "C" – School Abutment

Warrant "A" – TAC Spreadsheet for Automated Speed Limit Guidelines

The TAC spreadsheet is a dynamic table that evaluates multiple road criteria and calculates a Risk Score. This Risk Score is then used to determine a recommended speed limit. Criteria evaluated include:

- Horizontal and vertical geometry
- Lane Width
- Roadside Hazards
- Pedestrian and cyclist exposure
- Pavement Surface
- Intersections
- Crosswalks

- Private Driveways / Access Points
- Parking
- Design Speeds

Town Staff will review the road section and complete the spreadsheet to determine a recommended speed. This will then be compared with the existing posted speed with Warrant "B."

Warrant "B" 85th Percentile Speed Study

A study is performed to determine the speed at which road users are currently travelling. The 85th Percentile Speed is the speed at which 85% of all vehicles are observed to be travelling at or below. A speed set at which 85 percent of people drive is considered the maximum safe speed limit for a specific location. Most municipalities use the 85th Percentile Speed concept when determining speed limits.

The 85th percentile speed concept is based upon the theory that the majority of drivers:

- Are responsible and prudent
- Do not want to have an accident
- Wish to reach their destination in the shortest possible time

Town Staff will conduct a speed study to determine the 85th Percentile Speed. This will then be compared with the existing posted speed and with Warrant "A."

Warrant "C" School Environments

The Town will consider speed reductions on roads that directly abut schools with a minimum enrollment of 50 pupils. Speed reductions will be considered within 150m of the school.

5. Procedures

- Requests may be made by residents, business operators or any other user of the public roadway.
- Requests shall be submitted to Engineering Services in written format.
- Once the request is received the Engineering department will undertake the studies required for Warrants "A" and "B". The need for traffic surveys will be at the discretion of the Director as they may be deemed unnecessary or already completed.
- Once the data has been analyzed, the Director will inform the individual making the request of the outcome.

- If the request is approved, the Director shall recommend the passing of the necessary By-Law to the Development and Operations Standing Committee.
- Subsequent to the By-Law being approved by Council, appropriate signage will be installed.

6. General

The Town of Collingwood deems it important to provide and improve public rights of way to ensure the safety of vehicular and pedestrian traffic within the municipality. The implementation of this policy will provide a uniform set of guidelines and procedures that will ensure that any request for a speed reduction will be evaluated effectively.

Furthermore, this policy will also ensure that speed limits are not set artificially or arbitrarily low, which will render a speed reduction ineffective and result in non-compliance by motorists.