

Establishing Speed Limits on Township of Douro-Dummer Roads

Approved By: Council
Approval Date:
Effective Date:
Revision Date:

Policy Statement

Purpose:

The Township of Douro-Dummer has a road network that is large and diverse, with varying conditions that include multiple road users, topography, surface types, road conditions, and land uses. The network consists largely of rural roads, although some roads have urban characteristics. Every year the Township receives concerns with excess speeding and/or requests for speed limit changes on its various roadways, and therefore, this Policy provides for a formal process to guide the Township in establishing and reviewing speed limits on Township of Douro-Dummer roads.

The mere reduction of posted speed limits, without changing the characteristics of the roadway to encourage reduced speeds may have minimal impact on vehicle operating speeds. Road safety may be enhanced through the posting of credible speed limits that match the expectation of drivers for a given roadway and its surrounding area. The purpose of this policy is to provide Administration with a systematic, consistent, reliable, and transparent framework to assess, review, and implement appropriate speed limits on Township of Douro-Dummer roads, in accordance with established technical guidelines

Implementation of this policy will also:

- Create a process for Administration to objectively review speed limit change requests from the Public, Council, and other stakeholders.
- Provide Administration and the public with an objective and reliable tool for evaluating speed limits on Township roads.
- Provide a standard format and process for resolving in a consistent manner, complaints regarding speed limits.
- Reduce the workload and duplication efforts for Township staff in responding to speed limit concerns.

Definitions:

TAC – Transportation Association of Canada

TAC Speed Limit Guidelines

The Transportation Association of Canada's (TAC) Guidelines for Establishing Posted Speed Limits (2009) provides an evaluation tool to assess posted speed limits which is based primarily on factors relating to the function, classification, and physical characteristics of the road.

Urban Road

A road that is located within an urban area as defined by the TAC Speed Limit Guidelines.

Rural Road

A road that is located within a rural area as defined by the TAC Speed Limit

Guidelines.

Posted Speed Limit

The speed prescribed for motor vehicles on a section of road by municipal By-law in accordance with the provincial Highway Traffic Act (HTA).

Design Speed

The speed selected as a basis to establish appropriate geometric design elements for a particular section of road so that drivers can travel safely at that speed under ideal conditions.

Operating Speed

The average speed at which a driver is observed operating a vehicle at a particular location.

85th Percentile Speed

The speed at which 85 percent of drivers are observed to travel at or? under free-flowing conditions past a monitored point.

Speed Limit Review Study

A review of the operating characteristics and infrastructure data for a roadway to determine the appropriate speed limit. For the purposes of this policy, the review will apply the Canadian Guidelines for Establishing Posted Speed Limits as produced by the Transportation Association of Canada, and as updated from time to time. This approach considers roadside environment, access density, roadway alignment, lane widths, pedestrian and cyclist activity, and pavement condition.

Scope:

The authority for the Township of Douro-Dummer to set speed limits is granted through the Highway Traffic Act (HTA). Under this legislation, the Township can set speed limits different from legislated rates that is not greater than 100 km/hour. The HTA establishes a default of 80 km/hour on a highway not within a built up area that is within a local municipality that had the status of a township on December 31, 2002 if prescribed by regulation. Douro-Dummer is one such prescribed municipality.

The Transportation Association of Canada (TAC) Guidelines for Establishing Posted Speed Limits is the proposed methods for establishing maximum speed limits on Township roads. Road section(s) will be reviewed in accordance with the TAC Guidelines in order to make recommendations regarding the appropriate posted speed limits.

Procedures

The following steps shall be adhered to in order to implement this policy: outlines the procedures to be followed in the context of this policy statement.

Establishing Speed Limits on Roadways

Setting Speed Limits on Town Roads

- Speed limits are intended to be an upper boundary when all other conditions are considered favourable such as the geometry of the road and the capabilities of the vehicles travelling them. Road users are expected to adjust their speed to suit varying road, weather, visibility, and traffic volumes.
- The TAC Guidelines for Establishing Posted Speed Limits (April 2009) are used for best practices management. These guidelines provide an evaluation tool to assess appropriate speed limits based primarily on the classification, function, and physical characteristics of a roadway. It is an objective and reliable assessment based on measurable criteria.

- The risks associated with each of the criteria determine the appropriate speed limit. A higher level of risk results in a lower recommended speed limit. The guidelines take into consideration roadway element risk factors, including 85th percentile speed, road classification, whether the road is divided or undivided, the condition of the pavement surface, and other roadside hazards, all to determine the appropriate speed limit for the subject roadway.

Timing for Speed Limit Reviews

- Speed limit reduction and/or increase requests will require a written request with an explanation or reasons for the request which shall be filed with the Public Works Department by April 1st or September 1st of each year.
- Studies on such written and eligible requests will be completed on a bi-annual basis.
- The timing for the traffic count period should consider a representative time of day, day of month, and month of year to be studied. Counts are typically most reliable in May and October of each year.

Eligibility for Speed Limit Reviews

In order for a roadway to be eligible for a resident requested review, it must meet **all** of the following criteria:

- Township of Douro-Dummer road.
- Road length must be a minimum of 500m for urban sections and 1000m for rural sections.
- Any part of the road length requested has not been evaluated in the last 5 years.
- If the road is not eligible, a speed limit review will be discontinued.
- If eligible, the process will commence through a series of structured stages until such a time as: a) a solution is implemented, or b) a speed adjustment is deemed inappropriate for implementation.

Process to Initiate a Speed Limit Review

- Resident requests for a speed limit review must follow the procedure set out in this policy.
- Speed Limit reviews are initiated periodically and/or if a traffic related concern is identified on a particular road segment.
- If a road is reconstructed or following any significant upgrades to a road occur, speed evaluation may be warranted; this will be determined as part of any road reconstruction or upgrade
- Traffic concerns can be identified by staff, Council, Enforcement Agencies, residents, etc.
- Resident requests for a Speed Limit Review shall require support from at least 65% of the residents residing on that section of road where the request is eligible as established above.
- Support will be determined through petition in the format provided in 'Appendix A'. If there is not at least 70% support for the request, a written reply will be sent to the petitioner advising that the request will not be considered at this time. If there is 65% or greater support for the request, the assessment phase begins.

Speed Review Assessment

- For all eligible requests, data along the subject roadway(s) will be collected in the spring or fall to qualify and quantify the extent of the local traffic issues.
- The data collection may include any or all of the following:
 - Vehicle volume count to determine 24-hour traffic;
 - Speed study to determine existing speed data;

- Classification count to determine heavy traffic;
 - Collision data; and
 - Existing roadway conditions (i.e. pavement condition, signing, marking).
- Evaluation criteria are related to physical and road user characteristics and includes the following
 - 'Built-up-area' as defined in the Highway Traffic Act;
 - Horizontal and Vertical alignment;
 - Average lane width;
 - Roadside hazards;
 - Number of intersections;
 - Number of driveways;
 - Pedestrian and cyclist exposure; and
 - On-street parking.
 - For each evaluation criterion, a risk level that appropriately matches prevailing conditions is identified. In general, three levels of risk (higher, medium, and lower) have been defined for evaluation criterion. An automated spreadsheet provided with the TAC guidelines is to be used for the analysis.
 - The spreadsheet includes all the factors to be evaluated. Each factor is assigned a risk level; once all factors are considered, a final total risk score is assigned and a resulting recommended posted speed limit is assigned.
 - Following the initial analysis using the TAC guidelines, additional analysis may be conducted to allow for consideration of special circumstances by reviewing the road segment with enforcement personnel as deemed appropriate by the Manager of Public Works.
 - When recommending a change in the posted speed limit, consideration will be given to adjacent speed zones to avoid incremental speed fluctuations of more than 20km/h as outlined in the Ontario Traffic Manual Book 5: Regulatory Signs as published and updated by the Ministry of Transportation.
 - Based in the analysis undertaken through the review, and the subsequent conclusions, recommendations for the speed limit and its adjustment will be determined by the Manager of Public Works;
 - If warranted, a recommendation, endorsed by the CAO will be made to Township of Douro-Dummer Council for consideration for adoption of the appropriate by-law; if unjustified, a written response will be sent to the petitioner.

Responsibilities

- It is the responsibility of the CAO to ensure that staff is aware and follow this policy.
- It is the responsibility of the Clerk to administer and verify the validity of the petition as described in this policy.
- It is the responsibility of the Public Works Manager to ensure that reviews are conducted in accordance with this policy.
- It is the responsibility of employees of the Township of Douro-Dummer to ensure that the procedures set forth in the policy are adhered to.

References & Related Policies:

Highway Traffic Act

Transportation Association of Canada (TAC) Guidelines for Establishing Posted Speed Limits

Municipal Act, 2001

Ontario Traffic Manual

Review Cycle:

This policy will be reviewed on an as needed basis and shall be reviewed if relevant guidelines are amended or updated to ensure that it is current with best practices.

Appendix "A"

Petition Form

Speed Limit Review on Township of Douro-Dummer Roads

****See Notes Before Signing****

We, the undersigned owners hereby petition the Township of Douro-Dummer under the

Municipal Act to review the speed limit along _____

from _____

to _____

in accordance with the Township's Speed Limit Review Policy Number XX.

Affected Properties

Signatures (Please sign below to indicate your choice)

Roll No., Address & Registered Owners	In Favour	Opposed	Assessment (For Office Use Only)

Roll No., Address & Registered Owners	In Favour	Opposed	Assessment (For Office Use Only)

Roll No., Address & Registered Owners	In Favour	Opposed	Assessment (For Office Use Only)

Roll No., Address & Registered Owners	In Favour	Opposed	Assessment (For Office Use Only)

Roll No., Address & Registered Owners	In Favour	Opposed	Assessment (For Office Use Only)

Petition Form
Establishing Speed Limits on Township of Douro-Dummer Roads
Policy No. XX

We, the undersigned owners hereby petition the Township of Douro-Dummer under the Municipal Act to review the speed limit along _____
from _____
to _____
in accordance with the Township’s Speed Limit Review **Policy Number XX**.

Notes:

Your signature on this petition represents your **Expression of Interest** in proceeding with the speed limit review as outlined above. A change in the posted speed limit is subject to review per the Town’s “Establishing Speed Limits on Township of Douro-Dummer Roads” Policy and signing this petition does not ensure a speed limit change.

1. Once a petition expressing interest has been received:
2. Only eligible roads as defined in the policy for Establishing Speed Limits on Township of Douro-Dummer Roads will be considered for review.
3. The sufficiency and validity of the petition shall be determined by the Clerk.
4. A valid petition exists where the **following criteria is met:**
 - a. at least 65% of the property owners signing the petition are in favour;**
5. If more than one person is registered as an owner on the property, all owners must sign the petition in order to be counted.
6. If one or more people are registered as owners, the property shall be counted as one property only.
7. No person has the right to withdraw the person's name from, and no name shall be added to, a petition after the Clerk has certified as to its sufficiency.

Initiator Contact Name: _____

Date Submitted: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____

Email: _____