

Speed Limit Reductions – 2021-180

General Correspondence – Revised Agenda

Good evening

I am writing to discuss the recent drop of speed limits on residential streets. I fully support the dropping of speed limits to 30km per hour on all residential streets. Dropping it only to 40km will not make a difference. Dropping it to 30 will make more people think about their speed on residential streets. I recently moved and the speed on my street is of great concern to me because I have a young daughter and I want her to be safe. And I know that a drop to only 40km won't keep her safe. Please consider dropping the speed limit to 30 to help keep all the kids safe on residential streets.

Thank you for listening

Jaclyn Bryson

City Council:

I strongly support the move to drop the speed limit in residential areas of the city to 30 km/h. The evidence is overwhelming in terms of safety and saved lives, and the difference in driving to an arterial road would be minimal.

I'm sure you are aware of the statistics, but a pedestrian hit by a car at 30 km/h has a 10% chance of dying. At 40 km/h a pedestrian has a 35% chance of dying. (WHO stats) 30 km/h drops noise levels in residential areas. The drop in speed limits to 30 will encourage more pedestrians and more cyclists because they feel safer, which is not only good for our health, but also for the environment. If the city is going to the trouble of dropping the limit to 40, please consider going all the way to 30. Many cities around the world have already done this, and it would be costly to decide on 40 then have to turn around in a few years time and do this all over again to drop it to 30.

This is a deeply personal issue for me. My brother died at the age of 43, as a pedestrian struck by a car as he was crossing a road in another country. As he was hit his body came up over the hood of the car and his head hit the windshield and he was thrown onto the road. He died on the side of the road from head injuries.

This is not a theoretical issue. This is not about people's rights to save two minutes of driving to get to a store or to work. The decision you make can actually save lives. Thanks for considering this point of view.

Andrew Goss
■ Clarke St East

Dear Mayor Guthrie and Council:

The Guelph Coalition for Active Transportation (GCAT) is a not for profit organization that seeks to increase the quantity, quality and safety of active transportation in Guelph. For many years we have acted as the collective advocacy voice for our members and social media followers now numbering over a thousand.

GCAT first wishes to congratulate the City's Transportation Staff and to thank them for their excellent work on the speed limit reduction file.

In general, GCAT supports Staff's recommendations to Council, but we would like to introduce the following additional details:

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3. Context:
4. While GCAT recognizes the importance of speed regulation policy, we also understand that posted speed limits as an isolated measure have little impact on reducing motorists' speeds. Motorist behaviour and the choices they make are determined by a complex relationship
5. among speed limit policy, enforcement and roadway engineering.
- 6.

We wish to emphasize the importance of engineering design. It is the big differences among the relative speeds of pedestrians, cyclists and motorists sharing the same physical spaces that are so dangerous. Consequently, we believe that engineering design solutions that provide separate physical infrastructure for each class of road user will yield the best safety outcomes.

Even in cases where roadway space must be shared, we believe that there are many engineering design solutions that can be implemented that will, quite organically, lead to motorists slowing down, thereby reducing differences in relative speeds and achieving good safety outcomes.

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4. Central Business District:
5. The report recommends reducing speed limits in the Central Business District from 50km/h to 40km/h, with the exception of Carden Street and Wilson Street since they already have speed limits of 30km/h.
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GCAT hopes that Council will reflect upon how, among other factors, the lower speed limits on Carden and Wilson have defined Guelph's citizens' experience of these two streets. In particular, we point out the relative quietude of these streets, even when they're busy, as well as the people-centredness of the area. We suggest that there is a palpable deterioration in atmosphere as road users of all types exit either of these streets onto the surrounding arterials.

GCAT's vision for the Central Business District is that citizens would enjoy the atmosphere of the Downtown area as they do on Carden and Wilson. We support the creation of "woonerfs" or "slow streets" throughout the Downtown district. In this future there would be far more interactions among all classes of road users, and as such, the relative speed differential among them must be reduced for safety. GCAT believes that in this district 40km/h for motorists would result in too great a differential.

We recommend that the speed limit throughout the Central Business District be reduced to 30km/h.

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5. Neighbourhood Speed Limit Reductions:
6. GCAT believes that Staff's translation of speed limit reductions into the time cost to motorists measured in seconds is very appropriate. We note that the analysis is based on the average trip distance of 7.6km, meaning that 10km/h speed reductions from 60km/h
7. and 50km/h equate to time cost of 91 and 137 seconds, respectively.
- 8.

Staff is recommending that speed limits in 48 neighbourhoods be reduced to 40km/h from the current 50km/h.

For the majority of motorists within these 48 neighbourhoods the greatest distance to the nearest arterial roadway (with a higher posted speed limit) is of the order of just one kilometer. We use this distance, not 7.6km, to calculate that the time cost to motorists entering or leaving a neighbourhood, when speed is reduced from 40km/h to 30km/h, is merely 30 seconds.

In the City of Waterloo, Councillor Royce Bodaly confirmed this analysis experimentally by driving from the middle of a residential area to the nearest arterial road first at 40km/h and then again at 30km/h. What he found, recorded as a [video tweet](#), was that the slower speed required an additional 22 seconds. This seems to be an extremely small price to pay for increased road safety of vulnerable road users.

GCAT recommends that, on the basis of minimal time cost to motorists travelling through these neighbourhoods, speed limits should be reduced to 30km/h.

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6. Political Will:
7. We anticipate that, if there is a general reduction in speed limits in Guelph, many motorists will express their opposition. Given Guelph's current transportation modal shares, the volume of this reaction cannot be matched by those who use active forms of
8. transportation.

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GCAT believes that if the City adopts policies that redistribute modal share away from the use of private automobiles and toward active forms of transportation it will enjoy many benefits such as:

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- Invigorated local economy
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- Health and wellbeing of participants
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- Improved traffic flow due to fewer private automobiles on the roadways
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- Reduced infrastructure costs
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- Better use of public space
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- Reduced energy use
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- Alignment with CEI pathway to net zero carbon by 2050
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- Less noise and air pollution
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- Increased social interactions among citizens
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- Independent children
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Increased safety for active transportation users is critically important in causing a shift in transportation modal shares, and certainly speed limit reduction will play a major role.

A future in which more citizens choose to use active transportation will not happen with huge, revolutionary decisions. Instead, it will happen with incremental steps taken right now by leaders who share our vision of this future and who have the political will to make it happen, particularly in the face of opposition.

GCAT believes that speed limit reductions as recommended by Staff, together with the other measures in the Community Road Safety Strategy, will improve safety.

Thank you for your service to the community.

Yours truly,

Mike Darmon,
President, Guelph Coalition for Active Transportation

Hello,

I will be unable to delegate at the Committee of the Whole meeting on July 5, but did want to pass along a few thoughts for consideration on Item 10.3 - Speed Limit Reductions, 2021-180.

I appreciate the City attempting to take broad, city-wide action on reducing speeds across our city and residential neighbourhoods. The increased benefits of lower speed are well-established, and highlighted well in this report. As a result, I think a policy to lower speed limits is a good idea.

However, I think there are a few critical challenges and issues with this approach, namely that it may not result in the desired outcomes of lower speeds and increased safety without further interventions implemented through this strategy, and other capital and operational processes/strategies.

In summary, I think we are falling short on enforcement through this policy and more broadly, I think we're missing opportunities to identify design-based solutions which would reduce the need for continued enforcement. More specifically, I have the following concerns/questions:

- Why are we only pursuing two mobile ASE cameras initially, and at that, only by Q3 of 2023 (more than a year after implementation of reduced speed limits start in Q2 2022). Given limited police resources to enforce now and in the future, we should be expanding ASE resources considerably, and aligning implementation timing with the implementation of reduced speed limits.
- Why are we placing traffic calming requests on hold for one-year following implementation of lower speeds? I accept that lower limits will increase the number of streets eligible, but we should continue collecting data to better understand where there are problems. To me, this speaks to an under-resourced department/policy. This leads to my next point...
- Please, through the capital and operational budgets, start dedicating meaningful resources to traffic calming. The present resources are not enough. My street has qualified for traffic

calming interventions twice now based on operating characteristics, but the need to prioritize streets/projects across the City based on limited budget and resources stops anything at all from being done. Our current approach seems to leave us with things like a few speed humps sporadically (though still strategically) implemented around the city, and fluorescent knock-down posts in the middle of 11-12m roadways (e.g. Kortright).

- Please consider additional design-related strategies being pursued by other cities. For example, Calgary's strategy to lower speed limits recognizes that present design does not make the reduced speed limits "credible" to most drivers, and includes an incremental strategy to address that through design (report TT2020-1036):

In order to continue to make progress towards the desired long-term state, Administration will work with industry partners to revise road standards to ensure that the construction of future roadways and retrofits of existing roadways (including through our existing traffic calming program) result in environments where the recommended long-term speed limits would be credible to most drivers. Administration will then apply its existing authority to post (or rely on unposted limits, as appropriate) these roadways to speed limits in alignment with their new environment and our long-term vision for safe and comfortable roadways in neighbourhoods.

Calgary will be working to ensure that all roadways constructed and calmed in the future will adhere to design standards that encourage speeds closer to the lower limits implemented, which may in time reduce the need to post limits (and presumably enforce speeds).

I do not see anything like this in this proposal, the Community Road Safety Strategy (CRSS), or the Traffic Calming Policy (TCP), and it is likely a little too specific to include in the upcoming Transportation Master Plan (TMP) - though I expect the TMP to adopt Vision Zero principles which encourage better street design. Yes, please lower speed limits, but make a commitment in policy that says that all new or reconstructed roads will be engineered to design speeds that align with lower limits.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment. Again, I think Staff's initiative to adopt lower speed limits should be applauded, but I am having trouble seeing how this strategy that largely relies on enforcement (through Guelph Police and ASE) will be able to reduce speeds without further intervention. I realize there may be plans for further intervention, but if they exist, they are not included in this document or any other public ones I have seen.

Without a revised approach that uses design and enforcement, we're simply buying new signs and relying on the goodwill of drivers. Decades of road violence has told us that approach does not work. Please adopt this policy, but know that there is much more work that must be done. Please provide the leadership required to get that work accomplished.

Thank you.

Darren Shock