

**CORPORATION OF THE TOWNSHIP OF LEEDS AND THE
THOUSAND ISLANDS**

BY-LAW 15-049

**BEING A BY-LAW TO ESTABLISH A MUNICIPAL SPEED LIMIT
POLICY FOR THE TOWNSHIP OF LEEDS AND THE THOUSAND
ISLANDS.**

WHEREAS Section 8 of the *Municipal Act, S.O. 2001, c. M. 25*, as amended, a municipality has the capacity, rights, powers and privileges of a natural person for the purpose of exercising its authority under this or any other act;

AND WHEREAS Section 9 of the *Municipal Act S.O., 2001, c. M. 25*, as amended, provides that Sections 8 and 11 shall be interpreted broadly so as to confer broad authority on municipalities to a) enable municipalities to govern their affairs as they consider appropriate and, b) enhance their ability to respond to municipal issues;

AND WHEREAS Section 11 of the *Municipal Act S.O., 2001, c. M. 25*, as amended, provides that a lower-tier municipality may pass by-laws respecting matters within the spheres of jurisdiction set out therein;

AND WHEREAS the Council of The Corporation of the Township of Leeds and the Thousand Islands deems it advisable to adopt a policy with regard to municipal speed limits;

NOW THEREFORE the Township of Leeds and the Thousand Islands enacts as follows:

1. That Schedule 'A' attached hereto forms part of this by-law.
2. That this By-law shall come into force and take effect on the day of passing.
3. This By-law shall be known and may be cited as the "Municipal Speed Limit Policy".

**READ A FIRST AND SECOND TIME THIS 10th DAY OF AUGUST,
2015.**

**READ A THIRD TIME AND FINALLY PASSED THIS 10th DAY OF
AUGUST, 2015.**



Joseph Baptista, Mayor



Vanessa Latimer, Clerk





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SCHEDULE 'A' to By-law #15-049

POLICY STATEMENT

It is the policy of the Township of Leeds and the Thousand Islands to provide *reduced speed zones* where deemed advisable for safety reasons, while still maintaining the rural highway function of the municipal road system as much as possible.

PROCEDURE

Section 128 of the *Highway Traffic Act* (Chapter H.8 of the Revised Statutes of Ontario, 1990) provides that a municipality may, by by-law, prescribe a rate of speed of 40, 50, 60, 70, 80, 90 or 100 kilometers per hour on any township owned road.

The Township Road System is a mainly rural, local and collector road system that is intended to move vehicular traffic over varying distances at a reasonable rate of speed. The normal speed limit on Township roads is 80 km/hr, except where it is reduced through built up areas, such as but not limited to, hamlets or villages and/or for safety reasons.

In addition to recognition of posted speed limits, driver behaviour is conditioned by perceptions of the prevailing roadway environment (surface width, quality, topography, traffic type/volume, climatic conditions and encroaching development). Where, for example, severe topographic or surrounding development conditions are encountered, drivers expect to travel at lower speeds and are likely to adjust accordingly. Similarly, in heavy traffic or poor weather, drivers tend to proceed more slowly than when they perceive the driving conditions to be ideal. Thus drivers recognize, sense and accept a "natural" speed limit as determined by their own appraisal of these types of factors, somewhat in isolation from the posted speed limit.

In order to balance the need for safety of road users and pedestrians with the desire to maintain the Township Road System as a rural highway network, reduced speed zones are necessary at some locations. Reduced speed zones that are not supported by the driver's perception of the roadway environment, however, tend to result in a low compliance level and may actually have a negative effect on safety for this reason. Therefore, guidelines for the establishment of reduced speed zones should recognize the types of factors that affect drivers' perception of the "natural" speed limit in order to avoid establishing artificially low speed limits.



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DEFINITIONS

Built-up Area – The territory contiguous to a Township road not within a town, village or hamlet where,

- a) not less than 50 per cent of the frontage upon one side of the road for a distance of not less than 200 metres is occupied by residential, commercial, industrial or institutional buildings,
- b) not less than 50 per cent of the frontage upon both sides of the road for a distance of not less than 100 metres is occupied by residential, commercial, industrial or institutional buildings,
- c) not more than 200 metres of roadway separates any territory described in clause (a) or (b) above from any other territory described in clause (a) or (b) above,

and signs are displayed in accordance with the applicable regulations under the Highway Traffic Act.

Hamlet/Hamlet Area – An area, normally a *built-up* area, fronting on a Township road where a grouping of properties have been designated by Hamlet or Village designation in the applicable Official Plan and which has been designated as a Hamlet for the purposes of this policy by Resolution of the Council of the Corporation of the Township of Leeds and the Thousand Islands.

Reduced Speed Zone – A section of Township road where a speed limit of less than 80 km/h has been approved and implemented by the Township of Leeds and the Thousand Islands.

Traffic Volume – The Average Annual Daily Traffic (A.A.D.T.) is the average number of vehicles per day at a particular location. This number is based on the latest traffic counts carried out by the Township Public Works Department as well as any future traffic counts carried out by the Township.

Urban Area – An extended *built-up area* where there are also some or all of the following:

- on-street parking
- side walks
- curb, gutter and storm sewers
- lighting
- heavy pedestrian and vehicle turning activity
- speed limit of 50 km/h (or less)



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and which has been designated as an Urban Area for the purposes of this policy, by Resolution of Council of the Township of Leeds and the Thousand Islands.

IMPLEMENTATION

It is the policy of the Township of Leeds and the Thousand Islands to provide *reduced speed zones* where deemed advisable for safety reasons, while still maintaining the rural highway function of the municipal road system as much as possible.

Urban Areas shall have a speed limit of 50 km/h. Where an *urban area* is approached by a stretch of rural, relatively high speed roadway, a speed transition zone *may* be provided with a speed limit of 70 km/h in order to allow vehicles to slow gradually before entering the *urban area*.

Hamlets shall have a speed limit of 50 km/h or 60 km/h, as determined by the Public Works Department.

Reduced Speed Zones shall typically not have a speed limit lower than 60 km/h unless otherwise warranted by road conditions.

Where a *reduced speed zone* has been requested, a two-step approach will be followed;

First, the Physical Characteristics are referenced in order to establish the normal, unrestricted operating speed for the road. This determination will normally be made with reference to the Ontario Good Roads Association publication Geometric Guidelines for Municipal Roads and/or Ministry of Transportation Guidelines as appropriate.

Physical Characteristics - Vertical and Horizontal Alignment
Pavement Width
Shoulder Width
Surface Type/Surface width
Traffic Volume

Second, the Roadway Use Characteristics are considered in order to assess the appropriateness of the proposed *reduced speed zone*.

Roadway Use Characteristics - % Commercial (large trucks)
Entrance Activity (turning movements)
Accident Experience
Agricultural Traffic
Pedestrians/Schools
Seasonal Fluctuations



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Sample Roadway Use considerations:

10-15% Commercial Traffic is considered normal on a Township road. Commercial traffic higher than 15% through a *hamlet* area, combined with high turning activity, higher than average accident experience, high agricultural traffic or a school area, warrants consideration of a *reduced speed zone*.

A high level of turning movements alone does not warrant a *reduced speed zone*. Adequate sight lines, signed intersections and proper entrance design all reduce the impact of turning movements on the through traffic function of a road. Problems related to turning movements will normally be indicated by higher than average "rear-end" and avoidance-type accidents and may warrant consideration of a reduced speed zone.

Accident experience, when considered as support for a *reduced speed zone* proposal, must be analysed for accident type, frequency, speed, etc. in order to assess the appropriateness of the proposal. If, for example, accidents are the result of excessive speed then additional enforcement may be more effective than implementing a *reduced speed zone*.

A school area may warrant a *reduced speed zone* if a significant number of students normally walk along the Township Road to/from school, without the benefit of a separate sidewalk.

An area with a high level of pedestrian (walking, biking, etc.) activity may also contribute towards the need for a reduced speed zone, depending on other roadway characteristics.

PROCESS

There are typically two means by which a change in speed limit is considered:

- (1) when reconstructing a road, the Public Works Department will evaluate the road to determine if a *reduced speed zone* is required;
- (2) a majority of residents on a road may submit a petition (along with reasons for the request) to the Public Works Department for consideration, after which an evaluation will be carried out based on this policy.



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In both scenarios, the final decision for any change in speed limit rests with Council. A change in speed limit on a road comes at a cost (for evaluation and if approved, sign installation). This cost is approximately \$500/km. As these may be unbudgeted amounts, approval *may* be delayed until the following budget year.