

The Corporation of the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake Information Report to Council

SUBJECT: East and West Line Reduced Speed Limit Petition - Update
DATE: 2024-04-16
REPORT #: OPS-24-018
PREPARED BY: Darren MacKenzie, (A) Director of Operations
DEPARTMENT: Operations Services

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

In June of 2023, residents along East and West Line submitted a petition to the Town to reduce the speed limit from Four Mile Creek Road to 60km/hr (Appendix 1). This petition was included in the June 15, 2023, Information Package to Council and lifted for discussion at the June 20, 2023, Committee of the Whole General meeting (COTW-G).

Upon conclusion of the discussion, the following motion was passed:

“That Council direct staff for an updated speed study on East and West Line between Four Mile Creek Road and Lakeshore Road and for staff to consider the timing due to ongoing construction projects. Staff will also reach out to Niagara Regional Police (NRP) and request more enforcement in this area.”

DISCUSSION

In advance of the petition going to COTW-G, staff proactively initiated speed monitoring using our traffic data collection device from Wagg Road to Four Mile Creek Road. This monitoring was conducted between June 12 and June 19, 2023, with the following results obtained:

- posted speed 80 km/hr
- 85th percentile 85 km/hr
- average speed 71 km/hr

These results would indicate that the current speed limit is performing as intended.

Once this monitoring was completed, the traffic data collection devices were set up from June 23 to July 3, 2023, to monitor speed from Concession 4 to Four Mile Creek Road (east of the requested area, for comparison only). This provided the following results:

- posted speed 70 km/hr
- 85th percentile 79 km/hr
- Average speed 71 km/hr
- no substantive change from 2022 speeds

These results would indicate that the current speed limit is performing as intended.

The information gathered during these monitoring periods does not indicate that a reduction in the posted speed limit will result in a reduction of prevailing vehicle operating speeds.

There are a few things to also consider with respect to East and West Line:

- There are only 3 intersections on East and West Line between Four Mile Creek Road and Lakeshore Road. Speed was not identified as a factor in any of the right-angle collisions occurring at these intersections in the past 3 years.
- There have been no reportable speed-related collisions on the subject section of East and West Line in the past 3 years.
- The Town has reviewed speed and collision data, sightlines, roadway geometrics and roadside environment and can find no support for lowering the speed limit according to the Transportation Association of Canada guidelines which is used as the Town standard.
- East and West Line is a Class 700 roadway functioning as a rural collector and is built to carry significantly higher traffic volumes and speeds than adjacent east/west roadways.
- Being a former Regional Road, the road allowance is wide with a generous asphalt platform, wide shoulders, good road surface and a rural roadside environment. Drivers generally choose an operating speed at which they feel safe and comfortable, and best engineering judgement suggests that it would be difficult if not impossible to enforce a 60 km/hr speed limit on this section of East and West Line.
- Lowering the speed limit on this road by 20 km/hr may serve to push traffic to other east/west roads in the vicinity, which are less suitable to supporting the traffic volumes and speeds accommodated by East and West Line.

NRP was advised of the petition and Council motion of increased enforcement.

ATTACHMENTS

- **Appendix I** – Petition for Reduced Speed Limit – East West Line