



The Corporation of the Municipality of Arran-Elderslie

Staff Report

Council Meeting Date: February 13, 2023

Subject: SRW.23.02 Community Safety Zone - Paisley Detour Route

Report from: Scott McLeod, Public Works Manager

Appendices: Appendix A: Draft Community Safety Zone & Speed Limit Bylaw

Appendix B: November 28, 2022 Resolution

Recommendation

Be It Resolved that Council hereby,

1. Supports Staff's recommendation to reduce the rate of speed for the detour route to 30 km/hr and designate the route as a Community Safety Zone;
2. Approve a by-law to enact the recommendations;
3. Authorizes Staff to proceed with purchasing the signage necessary in accordance with the Highway Traffic Act requirements; and
4. Direct staff to provide a copy of the Bylaw to the Ontario Provincial Police.

Report Summary

The intent of this report is to provide Council with an update regarding the measures available to address concerns raised by the community regarding speeding related to the detour route and the temporary Paisley bridge a motion passed by Municipal Council on November 28, 2022.

Background

Several concerns have been raised by members of the community as well as Members of Council regarding traffic on the bridge detour route in place during the Teeswater Bridge Construction Project in Paisley. Council passed a resolution directing municipal staff to review the opportunities for the establishment of a community safety zone,

reduction in speed limits, adequate signage, vehicle size, weight and/or length restrictions and any other improvements that may avoid future impacts.

Analysis

Rate of Speed and Community Safety Zone

Section 128 of the Highway Traffic Act prescribes the rate of speed assigned to highways. In this section, there are allowances prescribing a municipality to pass bylaws respecting the rate of speed in various situation.

Section 128 (2) of the Highway Traffic Act provides that the council of a municipality may, for motor vehicles driven on a highway or portion of a highway under its jurisdiction, by by-law prescribe a rate of speed different from the rate set out in subsection (1) that is not greater than 100 kilometres per hour and may prescribe different rates of speed for different times of day.

And further that,

If the council of a municipality by by-law prescribes a lower rate of speed for motor vehicles passing over a bridge on a highway under its jurisdiction than is prescribed under subsection (1), signs indicating the maximum rate of speed shall be posted in a conspicuous place at each approach to the bridge.

The current posted speed for the bridge is 30 km/h however, this is through the use of Construction Signs. Upon consultation with the OPP, they have advised that the 30 km/h speed limit is adequate in their opinion however, to provide enforcement, the signs need to be white regulatory signs.

The Highway Traffic Act also provides a municipality with the opportunity to designate a portion of its highways as a Community Safety Zone, if they feel that public safety is of special concern.

Section 214.1 of the Highway Traffic Act, R.S.O. 1990 c.H.8, as amended, provides that a Council of a municipality may by by-law, designate a part of the highway under its jurisdiction as a Community Safety Zone, if in the Council's opinion public safety is of special concern on that part of the highway.

When this designation is made, and the legislated signage requirements have been met, the penalty for speeding becomes doubled for those guilty of an offence.

It is recommended that Council consider a bylaw to both reduce the rate of speed on the detour route to 30 km/h and post regulatory speed signs as required by the legislation as well as designate the detour route as a Community Safety Zone, providing the OPP with the opportunity to enforce speeding at a rate higher than 30 km/h and the penalties for this violation would be doubled.

The portion under the jurisdiction of the Municipality of Arran-Elderslie would be Church Street in Paisley from Queen Street North continuing South on the detour route to the intersection of Goldie Street, Paisley.

From this point, the jurisdiction becomes that of the County of Bruce, and they are proposing to make the same designation for their portion. A report in this regard is to be presented to County Council on February 16, 2023.

Restriction to the weight and dimensions

Additional concerns were made regarding the weight and dimensions of vehicles using the detour route and crossing the temporary bridge.

The temporary bridge is rated to accommodate all standard weight, width and length of traffic in accordance with the Highway Traffic Act. There are no special restrictions that would prevent large vehicles, transports trucks or other equipment from using the detour and bridge.

Under the Highway Traffic Act, only the council of a municipality that was a city on December 31, 2002, may by by-law prohibit the operation of a combination of vehicles having a total length, including load, in excess of 15.25 metres while on a highway or a portion thereof under its jurisdiction designated in the by-law. It does not provide any provisions that allows a municipality to pass a bylaw to limit the width and length of a vehicle.

Further, it only allows for the passing of bylaws related to weight in limited situations and the limits are determined by the engineered load capacity of the structure.

In this case, the bridge is capable of handling all the legal limits.

Conclusion

Upon review of the related legislation and consultation with the OPP as well as the municipal bylaw enforcement, Staff recommend that Council pass a bylaw to reduce the speed on the bridge to 30 km/h, designate it as a Community Safety Zone and post the required speed and community safety zones. Staff will ensure that the OPP are aware of this change so that they can monitor the area.

As noted earlier, Bruce County is also recommending the same action be taken for their portion of the highways which would see the restrictions in place from the top of the east hill on Goldie Street through to the intersection of Queen Street South.

Link to Strategic/Master Plan

6.2 Supporting Businesses and the Local Economy

6.5 Engaging People and Partnerships

Financial Impacts/Source of Funding/Link to Procurement Policy

The financial implications would be minimal and limited to the cost of the signs and hardware to install and minor Staff time. The estimated cost would be less than \$1,000 and would be part of the capital project expenses for the bridge project.

Approved by: Sylvia Kirkwood, Chief Administrative Officer