



City of Hamilton Report for Consideration

To: Chair and Members
Public Works Committee

Date: July 7, 2025

Report No: PW25042

Subject/Title: Wentworth Street North 30 km/h Speed Limit
Reduction Pilot

Ward(s) Affected: Ward 3

Recommendations

- 1) That the reduced speed limit of 30 km/h on Wentworth Street North, between Bristol Street and Cannon Street East, **BE APPROVED** to remain in place to allow for the collection of additional speed and collision data;
- 2) That the Transportation Division **BE DIRECTED** to explore opportunities to implement additional speed management measures based on findings from the Transportation Association of Canada arterial and collector road speed limit project; and,
- 3) That the Transportation Division **BE DIRECTED** to report back to the Public Works Committee at a future meeting on the results of the implementation of additional measures on Wentworth Street North, between Bristol Street and Cannon Street East, in Q4 of 2026.

Key Facts

- After a serious pedestrian collision in 2022, the Public Works Committee directed that the speed limit on Wentworth Street North be reduced to 30 km/h as a pilot project.
- The speed limit on Wentworth Street North was lowered from 50 km/h to 30 km/h, accompanied by complementary physical changes to the road configuration.
- Operating speeds remained unchanged during the pilot period after speed limit reductions and configuration changes to the roadway were implemented.

- The pilot highlighted the difficulty of reducing vehicle speeds on arterial roads, a challenge faced in all jurisdictions.
- The Transportation Division is participating in a national arterial and collector road speed management project with the Transportation Association of Canada and will update the City's speed limit policy based on the project's findings.

Financial Considerations

There are no financial implications regarding the recommendations in this report.

Background

On June 17, 2022 at 8:33 pm, a pedestrian on Wentworth Street North close to Cathy Wever Elementary School (160 Wentworth Street North) was struck by a driver and sustained serious injuries. Stemming from this incident, on July 6, 2022 Public Works Committee provided the following direction:

- That Transportation Operations and Maintenance Staff to review Wentworth Street North between Bristol Street and Cannon Street East to determine and undertake reasonable safety enhancements with an emphasis on pedestrian and school safety, including consideration for a speed limit reduction to 30 km/h within the School Zone.

Subsequently the Transportation Division completed a review and implemented several safety enhancements including expanding the limits of the existing school zone, introducing full-time protected parking, and other measures. Based on discussions with the Ward 3 Councillor, further direction was provided via a motion on August 18, 2023, as follows:

- That the Transportation Division continues with and completes the implementation of the identified safety enhancements on Wentworth Street North between Bristol Street and Cannon Street East based on the completed review.
- That the Transportation Division undertake a speed limit pilot on Wentworth Street North between Bristol Street and Cannon Street East by reducing the speed limit to 30 km/h and report back to Public Works Committee on the results of the pilot, including an assessment of considering similar pilots and/or permanent speed limit reductions on arterial roadways City-wide.
- The Transportation Division coordinates the speed limit reduction with Hamilton Police Service's Traffic Enforcement Unit for consideration of increased enforcement during the pilot period.
- That the speed limit pilot be effective as soon as convenient and conclude no later than Q3 of 2024.
- That Schedule 2 of Traffic By-law No. 01-215 be amended to be reflective of the 30 km/h speed limit reduction on Wentworth Street North between Bristol Street and Cannon Street East to enable to speed limit pilot.

Analysis

Wentworth Street North between Bristol Street East and Cannon Street East is a minor arterial roadway. At the time of the June 17, 2023 collision, it operated with two southbound vehicle lanes and one northbound vehicle lane. Parking was permitted in the southbound curb lane with time-of-day restrictions. The posted speed limit was 50 km/h, with a flashing 40 km/h speed limit in the school zone for Cathy Weaver Elementary School, operating in the morning (7:35 a.m. to 8:55 a.m.), lunch (11:00 a.m. to 12:05 p.m.), and afternoon (2:20 p.m. to 3:05 p.m.).

A five-year collision review (2018–2022) was conducted for Wentworth Street North between Bristol Street East and Cannon Street East. During this period, there were seven collisions, including two involving pedestrians. Both pedestrian-involved collisions occurred in the evening, outside school hours. Hamilton Police Services classified them as ‘crossing without right-of-way’ and ‘crossing – no traffic control.’ These classifications indicate that, under the Ontario Highway Traffic Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. H.8, the pedestrians did not have the legal right-of-way. Of the five non-pedestrian collisions, four were classified as minor non-reportable, and one as property damage only.

The City’s Policy for Setting Speed Limits on City of Hamilton Roadways, approved by Council in 2009, is attached to Report PW25042 as Appendix “A” for reference. The policy follows the most recent Transportation Association of Canada Canadian Guideline for Establishing Posted Speed Limits and includes a secondary policy for speed limits in school zones. This guideline provides road authorities with a standardized method to determine appropriate speed limits using a risk-based assessment that considers engineering factors related to roadway geometrics, traffic characteristics, and operations. Most jurisdictions in Canada use this guideline to determine speed limits. Before the speed limit reduction on Wentworth Street North between Barton Street East and Cannon Street East from 50 km/h to 30 km/h, the posted speed limit complied with the City’s speed-setting policy.

In 2023 and 2024, the Transportation Division implemented operational and physical safety enhancements that altered the roadway’s configuration and operation.

In October 2023, Council approved an amendment to Traffic By-Law No. 01-215 to reduce the speed limit on Wentworth Street North between Cannon Street East and Barton Street East from 50 km/h to 30 km/h. Additionally, the north-south segments between Wilson Street and Cannon Street East and between Barton Street East and 150 meters north of Barton Street East were reduced to 40 km/h. These changes were implemented following the by-law’s approval through the installation of regulatory signage. The existing school zone flashing equipment remains in use and continues to activate as previously scheduled to emphasize the 30 km/h speed limit.

The roadway operated at the 30 km/h reduced speed limit for a period, and in September 2024 additional measures were implemented afterwards. The implemented measures are summarized as follows:

- Road diet: The roadway was converted from two southbound vehicle lanes and one northbound vehicle lane to one southbound and one northbound vehicle lane.
- Lane width reductions: Vehicle lanes were narrowed to a maximum of 3.3 metres in compliance with the Complete Streets Design Manual.
- Repurposed road width: A parking lay-by was introduced in front of Cathy Weaver Elementary School.
- Intersection modifications: Operations at Barton Street East and Wentworth Street North were adjusted to complement the roadway configuration changes, including the addition of an exclusive northbound left-turn lane and a combined through/right lane.
- Advisory signage: Signage was installed to inform road users of the changes.

Bump-outs or narrowings were considered at each end of the 30 km/h road segment, but were impractical since the lane widths would be overly restrictive for transit operations, winter maintenance, and residents safely backing vehicles out of driveways. A drawing showing the safety-based measures is attached as Appendix “B” to Report PW25042 for reference. The drawing also includes an intersection pedestrian signal that was installed in 2022.

As noted, Wentworth Street North is designated as an arterial roadway in the most current version of the City’s Transportation Master Plan. The primary function of an arterial road, whether minor or major, is to efficiently move all modes of travel, thereby helping to reduce traffic volumes and speeds on lower classification streets. As such, traffic calming measures that may be appropriate on non-arterial roadways are not necessarily suitable for arterial roads, for example, speed cushions.

The Transportation Division reviewed existing collision and speed data and collected new data as part of the speed limit reduction pilot review. A detailed summary of the speed data is included in Appendix “C” to Report PW25042.

Three sets of speed data were assessed:

- a) vehicle speeds prior to any changes on Wentworth Street North (baseline data)
- b) vehicle speeds after the speed limit was reduced to 30 km/h
- c) vehicle speeds after both the speed limit was reduced to 30 km/h and the implementation of physical changes.

The following is a summary of the recorded vehicle speeds for each phase of the pilot project:

Phase:	Posted Speed Limit:	85 th Percentile Speed:	Difference from Posted Speed Limit:	Average Speed:	Difference from Posted Speed Limit:
A	50 km/h	52.5 km/h*	+2.5 km/h	44 km/h*	-6 km/h
B	30 km/h	51.5 km/h*	+21.5 km/h	44 km/h*	+14 km/h
C	30 km/h	51.5 km/h*	+21.5 km/h	44 km/h*	+14 km/h

* - 85th percentile and average speeds are an averaged of northbound and southbound.

During the pilot project, collision data collected between November 2023 and December 2024 recorded two collisions within the road segment. Neither collision involved pedestrians or cyclists, and no injuries were reported.

The results of the Wentworth Street North 30 km/h speed limit reduction pilot highlight the complexity of influencing driver behaviour related to vehicle operating speeds. Despite reducing the posted speed limit and implementing physical roadway changes, operating speeds remained unchanged. Managing vehicle operating speeds is a challenge for jurisdictions across Canada. In recognition of this, the Transportation Association of Canada has initiated a project to address the design and operation of arterial and collector roads with low to moderate speed limits (30 to 50 km/h). This initiative aims to provide practitioners with guidance to minimize the risk of serious injuries and enhance community liveability. Transportation Division staff are actively participating as members of the project's multi-jurisdictional review team. The project will equip municipalities with additional tools to help manage vehicle operating speeds on arterial and collector roadways and is expected to be completed towards late Q3 2025.

An update to the City's Speed Limit Policy is scheduled for consideration in approximately Q4 2025. At that time, policy enhancements will be recommended, incorporating the latest industry best practices, including the findings from the Transportation Association of Canada's project.

Alternatives

There are no identified alternatives related to the recommendations in this report.

Relationship to Council Strategic Priorities

The recommendations in this report are in direct alignment with Council Priority 2: Safe & Thriving Neighbourhoods, Outcome 2: Make sure people can safely and efficiently move around by foot, bike, transit or car. Speed management of road users is an important aspect of the safe systems approach to roadway safety and piloting and evaluating the effectiveness of measures aid in meeting the goals and objectives of the City's Vision Zero (2019-2025) Action Plan.

Previous Reports Submitted

There are no previous reports associated with the content of this report.

Consultation

The following key stakeholders have been consulted with respect to the development and content of this report:

- Steve Molloy Acting Director, Transportation Planning and Parking Division
- Hannah Carter, Staff Sergeant Traffic Safety Branch, Hamilton Police Services

- Hamilton Strategic Road Safety Committee
- Transportation Association of Canada

Appendices and Schedules Attached

Appendix A: Policy for Setting Speed Limits on City of Hamilton Roadways

Appendix B: Wentworth Street North Safety-based Measures Diagram

Appendix C: Wentworth Street North Speed Data Summary

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