

COUNCIL REPORT

M&C No.	M&C 2019-224
Report Date	September 03, 2019
Meeting Date	September 09, 2019
Service Area	Transportation and Environment Services

His Worship Mayor Don Darling and Members of Common Council

SUBJECT: Safer School Zones

OPEN OR CLOSED SESSION

This matter is to be discussed in open session of Common Council.

AUTHORIZATION

Primary Author	Commissioner/Dept. Head	City Manager
<i>Tim O'Reilly</i>	<i>Michael Hugenholtz</i>	<i>John Collin</i>

RECOMMENDATION

Your City Manager recommends Common Council receive and file this report.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report is to updated Common Council and the public on two topics:

1. a recent change to the Provincial Motor Vehicle Act related to school zone speed limits, and
2. implementation of the 2019 Safer School Zones Program.

PREVIOUS RESOLUTION

N/A

REPORT

The Province of New Brunswick has recently amended its Motor Vehicle Act resulting in the default speed limit in most school zones in City limits reducing from 50 KM/H to 30 KM/H. Most elementary and middle schools in Saint John have at least one school zone on surrounding City streets. These school zones are communicated to motorists via fluorescent yellow-green "School Zone" and "School Zone End" signs. The limits of each of these zones are also defined in the City's Traffic By-Law. Speed limits in school zones are in effect 7:30 AM until 4:00 PM on school days.

This new 30 KM/H default school zone speed limit is not in effect in a few locations within City limits. Zones with posted school zone speed limit signs of 40 KM/H are in place on some City streets. The zone for Loch Lomond School on Loch Lomond Road is set by the province because this is a Provincial Highway.

The 40 KM/H zones on some City streets were recommended by staff and supported by Common Council through by-law amendments in recent years when the default speed limit was 50 KM/H. City staff intend to return to Council following the Province approving the City's consolidated Traffic By-Law to recommend these 40 KM/H zones be reduced to the new 30 KM/H default.

City staff believe this change to a 30 KM/H default speed limit is not well-known in the community and therefore generating some heightened public awareness is warranted as we start a new school year.

City staff would like to commend the Province for making recent changes to the Motor Vehicle Act to help make school zones safer. A number of years ago the fine that could be issued for speeding in a school zone doubled; the ultimate motivator to discourage speeding in school zones. The Province's recent change to the 30 KM/H default speed limit is also expected to improve safety for walking school children. As highlighted in MoveSJ's Pedestrian Strategy, slower vehicle speeds allow more time for motorists to react to crossing school children, reduces the distance required to stop a vehicle, and reduces collision severity. Standardized changes to the Motor Vehicle Act also reduce the need for the City to manage site-specific issues through individual by-law changes.

Safer School Zones Program Update

As has been consistent for the previous 5 years, the City is once again in 2019 improving the safety of streets around individual elementary and middle schools (Lakewood and Samuel-de-Champlain) as part of the Safer School Zones Program. In both cases, a crosswalk with signals as well as driver speed feedback signs are being installed. The school zone speed limits during school times would be 30 KM/H.

The below table is an updated summary of the entire program including completed or planned year of implementation:

School	Highest Classification of Street in Area	Year of Implementation
Bayside	Arterial (Bayside Drive)	2014✓
Bayview	Arterial (Loch Lomond Road)	2014✓
Prince Charles	Arterial (Union Street)	2014✓
Centennial	Collector (Millidge Avenue)	2015✓
Champlain Heights	Collector (Champlain Drive)	2015✓
Forest Hills School	Collector (Westmorland Road)	2015✓
Hazen White St. Francis	Collector (Sandy Point Road)	2016✓

St. Rose and Barnhill	Collector (Manawagonish)	2016✓
Seaside Park	Collector (Fundy Drive)	2017✓
M. Gerald Teed	Collector (Daniel Avenue)	2018✓
Princess Elizabeth	Collector (Cranston Avenue)	2018✓
Samuel-de-Champlain	Collector (Ragged Point Road)	2019
Lakewood	Local (Lakeview Drive)	2019
Loch Lomond	Local (Evergreen)	2020
Devine Mercy	Local (Clarendon Street)	2020
Islandview	Local (Ridge Row)	2021
Millidgeville North	Collector (Woodward Avenue)	2021
New South End School	TBD	TBD
Beaconsfield	Collector (Fundy Drive)	TBD (Capital investment needed)

Update on Overall 2019 Traffic Safety and Improvement Projects

Staff also intend to return to Council in the coming weeks to provide an overall summary of traffic safety and improvement projects completed in 2019 in addition to the two Safer School Zone projects described in this report.

STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT

This report aligns with Council's priority of progressing a Vibrant, Safe City, particularly for active transportation modes. This report also aligns with the City's Transportation Plan (MoveSJ).

SERVICE AND FINANCIAL OUTCOMES

Service outcomes are described previously in this report.

Dedicated funding for the Safer School Zones Program is provided in the City's Pedestrian & Traffic Management Service operating budget, approximately \$30,000 for each.

INPUT FROM OTHER SERVICE AREAS AND STAKEHOLDERS

Each school is consulted as part of their Safer School Zone project.

The City's Communications Department will issue a public advisory about the reduced 30 KM/H default school zone speed limit.

The Saint John Police Force has been advised of the lower default speed limit.