

## Report TR-TAPS-09-15

**To:** Chair Barfoot and Members of the Transportation and Public Safety Committee  
**From:** M.J. Kelly, Director of Transportation Services  
**Meeting Date:** January 22, 2015  
**Subject:** Kimberley Signage Delegation  
**Status:** Recommendation not adopted – Committee passed Resolution TAPS27-15, directing that a traffic study be undertaken, that the size and placement of signage in Kimberley be consistent with that in Eugenia, and that “Watch for Children” signs be re-installed at the north and south ends of Kimberley. Council amended resolution TAPS27-15 on February 3, 2015 per Resolution CC35-14 by removing the prefix “re” from “re-installation”.

### Recommendation(s)

**WHEREAS a delegation attended the Transportation and Public Safety Committee meeting on December 18, 2014 regarding signage on Grey Road 13 within the community of Kimberley;**

**AND WHEREAS staff have reviewed the presentation material and are providing additional information and recommendations concerning the requests made from the delegation;**

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT Report TR-TAPS-09-15 regarding information and recommendations about the December 18, 2014 Kimberley Community Association delegation on signage on Grey Road 13 be received for information purposes and no further action be taken.**

### Background

At the December 18, 2014 Transportation and Public Safety Committee meeting Joe Killoran and Wendy Macdonald from the Kimberley Community Association provided a presentation regarding speed limit signage on Grey Road 13 in the community of Kimberley.

The delegation indicated that, in its opinion, there was excessive speeding on Grey Road 13 within the 50 kilometre per hour speed limit in the community of Kimberley. The delegation requested the following signage modifications:

- 1) Speed limit signs placed within a yellow warning sign.
- 2) Flashing amber beacons placed on the speed limit signs.
- 3) An additional tab placed on the speed limit signs below the “BEGINS” tab that is red with white lettering that says “HERE”.
- 4) Extend the 50 kilometre speed limit to the north and to the south.
- 5) Replace the speed limit signs with oversized speed limit signs.
- 6) The placement of chevron signs at the curve north of the community of Kimberley.
- 7) Reduce the speed limit from 50 kilometres per hour to 40 kilometres per hour.
- 8) Extend the “Community Safety Zone” designated area further north and south.
- 9) The installation of electronic radar signs that indicate the vehicle speed to the drivers.

Joe Killoran also indicated that he forwarded suggestions to increase fines and demerit points to Kathleen Wynne, the Premier of Ontario.

### *Existing Conditions*

Kimberley is a community within the Municipality of Grey Highlands located on Grey Road 13. Most of the street development consists of residential properties; however, there are several roadside commercial establishments. Grey Road 13 is constructed to a semi-urban cross-section (mountable curb and gutter and a paved boulevard) throughout the community with rural cross-sections (gravel shoulders) at both the south and north ends.

There are regular sized speed limit signs (as per the Highway Traffic Act) identifying 50 kilometres per hour on Grey Road 13 at the north and south ends of the community. Northbound traffic enters the community on a slight incline grade with good visibility. At the speed limit sign, the roadside is very open and drivers cannot visualize the upcoming urban area. When southbound traffic approaches the speed limit, the road is straight and relatively flat; therefore, drivers can see that an urban center is ahead.

### *Existing Traffic By-Laws*

The speed reduction zone in Kimberley has been in place for many years (at least thirty-five years). A review of the Grey County By-Law for rates of speed did not include the Kimberley speed reduction. Report TR-TAPS-12-15 that will be presented at the January 22, 2015 Transportation and Public Safety Committee meeting will recommend an amendment to the By-Law to include the speed limits in Kimberley.

The By-Law does indicate that there is a Community Safety Zone located from 350 metres north of the junction of Grey Road 31 to 300 metres south of the junction of Grey Road 7. Several years ago the Community Safety Zone sign was relocated inside the 50 kilometre per hour speed limit signs; however, the By-law was not modified to reflect this change. Report TR-TAPS-12-15 will recommend an amendment to the By-Law to capture the revised Community Safety Zone sign placement.

### *Road Sign Principles*

The following information was obtained from the Ontario Traffic Manual.

Traffic control and management relies on a system of traffic control devices for conveying messages to the road user. The objective of these messages is to advise motorists of traffic regulations in order to enable observance of the law, warn them of roadway characteristics and road hazards, and provide them with the information necessary for route selection. Meeting these objectives improves safety and convenience for the road user, and promotes the efficient movement of people and goods and the orderly flow of traffic. Simplification of the driving task through uniformity in the design and application of traffic control devices is necessary to accomplish these objectives.

If traffic control devices are not carefully designed and properly installed they can interfere with and distract from each other, become visually ineffective, and lose their authority through excessive use. Therefore, simplicity in design and care in placement are essential. An effective traffic control device will attract attention, be legible and comprehensible, and be appropriate to the motorist's needs.

A principle goal in the development of the Ontario Traffic Manual is the achievement of uniformity throughout the Province and compatibility throughout Canada and North America. Achievement of this goal requires that the Manual provide the user with the design and dimensions of devices, and with guidance on fabrication and installation.

Traffic control devices should be well chosen and located to assist the road user. Improper or excessive use, particularly of regulatory and warning signs, tends to cultivate disrespect for signs in general. As a result, signs tend to lose their authority.

The wide variation in roadway speeds and complexity requires that traffic control devices be readily recognizable and understandable at a glance. Uniformity and simplicity in design (including shape, colour, pattern, dimensions, symbols, wording, lettering and illumination or reflectorization), position and application are of great importance in aiding recognition. The majority of these designs, symbols and word messages have been approved by the National Committee on Uniform Traffic Control Devices, after a thorough review of the varying designs used in Canada, supplemented by test studies.

Standardization of sign shapes advises the road user of the class of message contained. The task of driving can be simplified by enabling the road user to judge in advance the type of message to be expected. To meet the road user's requirements, a code of sign shapes has been established that applies to all signs.

Standardization of colours also assists the road user in a manner similar to the standardization of shapes. A code of sign colours has been established that applies to all signs.

Uniformity of application is important. Similar conditions should be treated in a similar manner, to accommodate driver expectation. Different types of information (and signs) should not be displayed on the same sign support.

Red or amber flashing beacons may sometimes be required to draw the driver's attention to the presence of a regulatory or warning (amber only) sign. The beacons are normally recommended when visibility distance is reduced to severe roadway geometrics, or other circumstances that are present which suggest that greater emphasis is required.

The use of flashing beacons should be restricted to only critical situations, in order to ensure that the impact is not lost to overuse or that they do not distract the driver.

Grey County Transportation Services utilizes the Ontario Traffic Act and the Ontario Traffic Manual when determining signage for Grey Roads.

### **Legal Signs**

In accordance with the Highway Traffic Act, municipalities have the authority to pass By-Laws for the installation and enforcement of legal signs such as stop, speed limit, no parking, community safety zone and others. However, the signs must comply with the Highway Traffic Act. Legal signs normally have a white background.

### **Warning Signs**

Warning signs are intended to provide advance notice to road users about unexpected and potentially dangerous conditions on or near the road.

The warning signs provide suggestions to the motorist but the information provided is not enforceable. Typically, warning signs are yellow and black and most are in a diamond shape.

### ***Speed Limit Principles***

Speed limits should be set with consideration given to what reasonable drivers feel should be the running speed limit of the roadway, the speed at which the eighty-fifth

percentile of drivers feel comfortable driving. If speed limits are set unreasonably low, drivers will tend to disregard the posted limits.

To determine a speed limit, the following criteria must be considered collectively. As indicated in the Grey County Speed Limit Procedure, there are a number of criteria that need to be considered when determining an appropriate speed limit.

Normally when vehicle operators are exceeding the speed limit it is not because they did not observe the speed limit sign, it is because observed conditions do not justify a speed reduction.

As indicated in the Transportation Master Plan, traffic calming devices can be implemented that will modify the features of a road to encourage the drivers to feel the need to reduce their speeds. No decisions regarding the implementation on traffic calming initiatives have been made. It is important that all traffic calming techniques that are adopted be implemented consistently.

## Recommendations

The following are staff recommendations regarding the nine requests from the delegation.

- 1) Speed limit signs must conform to the Highway Traffic Act to be enforceable. The proposed sign is a warning sign and, as a result, the police would not be able to enforce the speed limit.

The Transportation Services Department does not recommend installing these signs.

- 2) The County placed amber beacons on a speed limit sign in Bognor after a pedestrian vehicle accident several years ago. It does not appear that the amber beacon has had any effect on the speed of vehicles. In accordance with the Highway Traffic Act, amber beacons are required on the "School Zone Maximum Speed When Flashing" signs. This indicates the speed limit is only applicable when the beacons are activated. The Ontario Traffic Manual recommends only using beacons to draw the driver's attention to the presence of a regulatory or warning (amber only) sign. The beacons are normally recommended when visibility distance is reduced as a result of poor roadway geometrics, or other circumstances that are present which suggest that greater emphasis is required.

The Transportation Services Department does not recommend installing flashing beacons on the speed limit signs for consistency reasons. In addition, there is no indication that drivers are not observing the existing sign.

- 3) The tab requested does not meet the requirements of the Highway Traffic Act for a legal sign; therefore, the Transportation Services Department does not recommend the installation of these signs.
- 4) Extending the speed limit zone would result in the signs being placed further from the urban area where the right-of-way is very open and drivers would not recognize a need to reduce their speeds. Therefore the Transportation Services Department is not recommending extending the 50 kilometre per hour speed zone. However, a formal assessment could be completed.
- 5) According to the Ontario Traffic Manual, oversized signs within a 60 kilometre per hour speed limit are not recommended. Grey County does not use any oversized speed limits throughout the County.

The Transportation Services Department does not recommend installing an oversized sign at this location for consistency reasons. In addition, there is no indication that drivers are not observing the existing sign.

- 6) In accordance with the Ontario Traffic Manual, chevrons are recommended to provide additional guidance to drivers at sharp changes in horizontal alignment of the roadway. The curve on Grey Road 13 north of the community of Kimberley has a radius of 400 metres. In accordance with the Geometric Design Manual a radius of 340 metres or greater is adequate for a posted speed of 90 kilometres per hour.

The Transportation Services Department does not recommend installing chevron signs at this location as the radius of the curve exceeds the criteria for the posted 80 kilometre per hour.

- 7) A formal assessment has not been completed on the speed limit through the community of Kimberley; however, there does not appear to be any features that would justify reducing the speed limit to 40 kilometres per hour. Reducing the speed limit too low can reduce the safety due to the increase of variable speeds.

The Transportation Services Department does not recommend reducing the speed limit to 40 kilometres per hour.

- 8) Community Safety Zones are typically designated where public safety is a special concern such as in close proximity of schools, day care centres, playgrounds, parks, hospitals and senior citizen residences. None of these activities are outside the current Community Safety Zone; therefore, it is not recommended to extend the limits.

- 9) Grey County owns two mobile radar devices that indicate driver's speed. The OPP control the temporary location of the signs. In 2015, the County could request the police to occasionally locate the devices within the vicinity of Kimberley.

For consistency and cost purposes, the Transportation Services Department does not recommend installing a permanent radar speed limit device in Kimberley.

On December 2, 2014 Michael Kelly attended a meeting at Joe Killoran's residence that included Grey Highland's Council members. At the meeting, the need for consistency, as well as compliance to the Highway Traffic Act and the Ontario Traffic Manual was discussed.

## Financial / Staffing / Legal / Information Technology Considerations

For legal signs to be enforceable they must meet the requirements of the Highway Traffic Act. The installation of non-Highway Traffic Act signs may expose the County to legal risk.

The placement and information provided on signs have an effect on the overall safety of roads. It is, therefore, highly recommended to maintain consistent road signs throughout the County.

If modifications are made to the current signage practices, there may be significant costs associated with the upgrade of all other signs throughout the County.

## Link to Strategic Goals / Priorities

Not Applicable

Respectfully submitted by,

M.J. Kelly  
Director of Transportation Services