

Subject: Speed Reduction on March Road from Teron Road to Carling Avenue/Station Road

File Number: ACS2022-OCC-CCS-0055

**Report to Transportation Committee on 27 April 2023
and Council 10 May 2023**

**Submitted on April 18, 2023 by Christopher Zwierzchowski,
Committee Coordinator**

Contact Person: Councillor C. Curry, Kanata North (4)

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Ward: Kanata North (4)

Objet : Réduction de la limite de vitesse du chemin Teron à promenade Carling/chemin Station

Dossier : ACS2022-OCC-CCS-0055

Rapport au Comité des transports

le 27 avril 2023

et au Conseil le 10 mai 2023

**Soumis le 18 avril 2023 par Christopher Zwierzchowski,
Coordonnateur du comité**

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REPORT RECOMMENDATION

That Transportation Committee recommend that Council approve that the speed limit be lowered from 80 km/h to 60 km/h on March Road between Teron Road to Carling Avenue/Station Road.

RECOMMANDATION(S) DU RAPPORT

Que le Comité des transports recommande au Conseil d'approuver que la limite de vitesse soit réduite de 80 km/h à 60 km/h sur le chemin March entre le chemin Teron et l'avenue Carling/le chemin Station.

BACKGROUND

In 2009, City Council approved the City of Ottawa Speed Zoning Policy which defines the process for establishing speed limits along City roadways. The existing 80 km/h speed limit along March Road between Teron Road and Carling Avenue was considered appropriate based on the process for establishing speed limits as outlined in the Council-approved Speed Zoning Policy.

DISCUSSION

Much has changed since 2009. March Road has been the site of a number of serious car crashes, a number of which, occurring in recent years and resulting in fatalities. To give a few examples, in December 2021, a pedestrian was fatally struck by a vehicle near March Road and Teron Road. Years prior, a vehicular accident produced two fatalities.

There are stretches of March Road where its 80 km/h speed limit is justified. There are long stretches where pedestrians would only cross via the traffic lights. There are long stretches with very few business entrances and exits or reasons for cars to stop other than at a traffic light. However, there is a stretch of March Road between Teron Road and Carling Avenue where there is a much higher number of car accidents, car and cyclist accidents, deaths and regular unsafe pedestrian crossings due to the number of stores, shops, entrances and exits along this stretch of road. The significant pedestrian and vehicle congestion of this section of March Road and an 80 km/h speed limit contribute to a higher number of accidents that have resulted in serious injury, high speed car crashes, car and cyclist accidents, car and pedestrian accidents and multiple deaths.

Upon taking office in November 2021, the Kanata North Councillor's office received a number of emails asking for "something to be done" about the unsafe stretch of March Road. Residents asked for lowered speed limits in the stretch between Teron Road and Carling where a high proportion of accidents take place. The local community association, the Kanata Beaverbrook Community Association, concurs. Additional concerns have been expressed requesting a lowered speed limit. Days after the pedestrian cited above was killed, a van was struck coming out of one of the malls

along this stretch and was flipped upside down on the median due to the force of the crash.

Former councillors have also confirmed that residents had been asking for a reduced speed on March Road along this stretch for many years. They shared that they had inquired and staff had responded that 80 km/h is the proper speed for this type of road.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

No specific Financial Implications have been identified in the preparation of this report; staff will be in attendance at Committee to respond to questions, as required.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no legal impediments to implement the recommendation as outlined in this report.

COMMENTS BY THE WARD COUNCILLOR(S)

The Councillor strongly supports the recommendation to change the speed along March Road from Teron to Carling. There are sections of Eagleson (March Road south of the Queensway) where the speed changes from 80 km/h to 60 km/h. This is not a new concept for Kanata residents. March Road continues to get busier and busier and, given the significant amount of housing being constructed in Kanata North, March Road will become even busier. This stretch of road has seen an ongoing increase in stores, shops, entrances and exits as Kanata North grows. Speed boards are not appropriate in this area, we understand, because of the curve of this section of road. Traffic calming measures are not appropriate for this type of road, we understand.

The Staff rationale is that speed may not be enforced due to the lack of police resources to give out tickets. The community is committed to advertising, alerting and reminding residents of the lower speed limit. The Councillor's office is committed to alerting residents to the change in speed and reminding residents that the speed change has taken place due to the requests by the community and given the high number of accidents along this stretch. Signs alerting the residents to the change can be posted.

Speed Limit Policy:

In 2009, City Council approved the City of Ottawa Speed Zoning Policy which defines the process for establishing speed limits along City roadways. The policy states that the speed limit along an arterial roadway should be posted at or close to the 85th percentile speed (i.e. the speed at or below which 85% of all the vehicles travel).

Roadway Attributes – March Road:

- Roadway Classification Major Arterial
- Median divided with 2-lanes in each direction
- Separate left and right turn lanes provided at major intersections
- Traffic signals controlling traffic at major intersections
- Rail crossing
- Adjacent land uses along March Road are largely commercial
- Placement of sidewalks-on both sides of the street

ADVISORY COMMITTEE(S) COMMENTS

This has not been considered by Advisory Committee.

CONSULTATION**Public Works Department Comment:**

Engineering best practices support that it is important to maintain consistent, uniform speed limits on any roadway to provide all users including pedestrians, cyclists, adjacent residents and motorists with a correct representation of the actual speed of traffic on that roadway. The provision of speed limits considers the roadway function and its design. Implementing a speed limit that does not align with these considerations may result in enforcement difficulties and increases in traffic hazard.

Posting a 60 km/h speed limit on a roadway where the operating speed is much greater, such as in the case of March Road, from Teron Road to Carling Avenue/Station Road, may increase the collision risk. Some drivers will choose to comply with the 60 km/h speed limit while others will continue to drive the higher speed at which they feel comfortable travelling. The varying difference in operating speeds between individual vehicles may increase the risk of collision as the potential for interactions or conflicts between vehicles is greater.

Lowering the speed limits on City streets without consideration of the physical configuration of the road will have minimal impact on driver behaviour. In such cases where a posted speed limit is below operating speeds, most motorists will continue to drive at speeds they feel are reasonable and prudent unless continual police enforcement is present. The visual and physical cues a driver uses to determine the appropriate travel speed should be consistent with the posted speed limit.

Furthermore, the Council-approved City of Ottawa *Speed Zoning Policy* states that the speed limit along an arterial roadway should be posted at or close to the 85th percentile speed (i.e. the speed at or below which 85% of all the vehicles travel). The speed survey conducted on March Road, between Teron Road and Carling Avenue, on March 31, 2023, showed operating speed of 76 km/h. The operating speed aligns with the existing posted 80 km/h speed limit.

The Public Works Department does not expect the existing operating speeds along March Road, from Teron Road to Carling Avenue/Station Road, to be significantly reduced with the implementation of 60 km/h speed limit signs, unless considerable police enforcement occurs on an on-going basis. Currently within the City, there are no programs or tools available in the Temporary Traffic Calming Measures Program, nor the Neighbourhood Traffic Calming Program that will achieve a reduction of close to 20km/h.

Should Council approve of the report recommendation, the Public Works Department will replace the existing 80 km/hr speed limit signs along March Road between Teron Road to Carling Avenue/Station Road with 60 km/h signs. The cost to replace the signs will be funded by Traffic Services' general maintenance budget. The estimated cost to replace the signs is approximately \$1,500.00, plus HST.

ACCESSIBILITY IMPACTS

No specific Accessibility Impacts have been identified in the preparation of this report; staff will be in attendance at Committee to respond to questions, as required.

RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

No specific Risk Management Implications have been identified in the preparation of this report; staff will be in attendance at Committee to respond to questions, as required.

RURAL IMPLICATIONS

No specific Rural Implications have been identified in the preparation of this report; staff will be in attendance at Committee to respond to questions, as required.

TERM OF COUNCIL PRIORITIES

No specific Term of Council Priorities have been identified in the preparation of this report; staff will be in attendance at Committee to respond to questions, as required.

DISPOSITION

The Public Works Department will take appropriate action based on the recommendations made by the Committee and Council.