

**Subject: Speed Reduction on Earl Armstrong Road from River Road to Limebank Road**

**File Number: ACS2025-OCC-CCS-0064**

**Report to Public Works and Infrastructure Committee on May 22 2025 and Council May 28 2025.**

**Submitted on May 12 2025 by Councillor S. Desroches, Ward 22 Riverside South-Findlay Creek**

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**Objet : Réduction de la vitesse sur le chemin Earl Armstrong, entre les chemins River et Limebank**

**Dossier : ACS2025-OCC-CCS-0064**

**Rapport au Comité de l'infrastructure et des travaux publics le 22 mai 2025 et au Conseil le 28 mai 2025**

**Soumis le 12 mai 2025 par Conseiller Steve Desroches, Quartier 22 Riverside-Sud-Findlay Creek**

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**Quartier : Riverside-Sud-Findlay Creek (22)**

## **REPORT RECOMMENDATION(S)**

That the Public Works and Infrastructure Committee recommend that Council approve the reduction of the speed limit on Earl Armstrong Road from River Road to Limebank Road to 60 km/h.

## **RECOMMANDATION(S) DU RAPPORT**

Que le Comité de l'infrastructure et des travaux publics recommande au Conseil d'approuver une limite de vitesse abaissée à 60 km/h sur le chemin Earl Armstrong, entre les chemins River et Limebank.

## **BACKGROUND**

Earl Armstrong has been an arterial road for many years and since then the area has seen continued growth in housing, school and retail space. Progress has been made to continue to enhance active transportation in the area. More people walk to Limebank Station and the new retail plaza at the corner of Earl Armstrong Road and Limebank Road. It is not uncommon to have lower speed limits on streets like these, especially given the proximity of Earl Armstrong to the new Riverside South High School.

## **DISCUSSION**

Several major and positive city-building events have taken place in Riverside South since Earl Armstrong Road was upgraded more than 10 years ago, such as:

- Significant housing growth in the surrounding area.
- New retail development.
- The opening of the Vimy Memorial Bridge as a major connection for south Ottawa.
- The planned opening of a new high school at Spratt Road and Earl Armstrong.

What was once a largely vacant and undeveloped corridor is now thriving with ongoing and planned development to respond to the housing crisis.

The proposed speed limit reduction is in response to community feedback highlighting how the road's character has evolved over the past decade. Many residents have noted that similar urbanized roads throughout the city have lower speed limits.

Traffic calming options on this stretch are limited given the road profile and a speed display board that has been installed to assist with speed compliance. Further options will be considered; however, the possibilities are limited due to the road's engineering.

The new high school is scheduled to open in September 2025, and both the nearby retail and Limebank station are already operational. Parents and the local school board trustee have raised safety concerns with the ward councillor.

While the City has launched a thorough review of its speed limit policy, the review will not be completed before the school opens in September 2025. Originally, according to the Road Safety Action Plan - 2024 Implementation Plan, the new policy was to be in effect as of Q1, 2025.

Given the school's upcoming opening well ahead of the policy review, there is a real need for the City to be responsive and proactive to address local community concerns.

Accordingly, this speed reduction will remain consistent with other urbanized areas of the city.

## **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no financial implications associated with the report recommendation.

## **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

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

## **COMMENTS BY THE WARD COUNCILLOR(S)**

As Ward Councillor, I have heard from many residents and stakeholders regarding safety concerns along Earl Armstrong Road. The current speed limit does not reflect the urban growth in this area and the need to promote safety for road users who are travelling to school, the new Trillium Line, and local retail.

## **CONSULTATION**

Feedback has been received since 2022 from pedestrians and road users requesting a reduction of the speed limit. The local school board trustee has also raised the matter.

### **Transit Services Departmental Comment**

Transit Services does not anticipate travel time impacts to bus service during peak periods, where higher levels of congestion limit bus speeds to operations that remain at or below 60 km/h, on average. During the weekday off-peak periods, and on weekends, lower levels of congestion and less frequent vehicle stopping currently result in bus speeds that typically approach 70 km/h. During these off-peak periods, it is anticipated that travel times would increase by approximately 15 per cent should the speed limit be reduced to 60 km/h along this segment. This translates to an additional 15-30 seconds of travel time per trip, depending on the travel direction and time of day, during off-peak and weekends periods only.

### **Public Works Department Comment**

Through this report, Councillor Desroches is recommending that Council approve reducing the speed limit to 60 km/h on Earl Armstrong Road from River Road to Limebank Road.

Staff are in the process of updating the City's Speed Zoning Policy to align with the principles of a Safe Systems Approach to road safety. Staff anticipate that the report will be presented to Council in the second half of 2025. As such, staff recommend awaiting the outcome of the Speed Zoning Policy update prior to implementing any speed limit changes as the new policy will likely affect many speed limits.

At this time speed limit setting is still subject to the criteria in the City of Ottawa's Council-approved Speed Zoning Policy (speed policy). As per the current speed policy, the 85th percentile speed criterion is one of the main factors used as the basis for establishing speed limits. The 85th percentile speed is the speed at or below which 85 per cent of the drivers travel on a road segment.

A speed survey conducted on November 1, 2023, on Earl Armstrong Road between Brian Good Avenue and Spratt Road showed an operating speed of 80 km/h. The operating speed aligns with the existing posted 80 km/h speed limits on Earl Armstrong Road, and as such, staff do not have delegated authority to change the speed limit. Due to Earl Armstrong Road being classified as an arterial roadway, most temporary measures under the Temporary Traffic Calming Program are not feasible for this roadway. In addition, the roadway does not meet the Council approved criteria for the Neighbourhood Traffic Calming Program which focuses on local and collector residential streets only as traffic calming solutions on arterials are complex, costly, and sometimes not appropriate.

Should Council approve the report recommendation, the Public Works Department will replace the existing speed limit signs along Earl Armstrong Road from River Road to Limebank 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 ~\$2,500 plus HST.

## **DISPOSITION**

If carried at Committee, this motion will be submitted to City Council for consideration on 28 May 2025.

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