

# Proposed Amendments to City Policy C514

## Implementation of Speed Limits Around Schools

### Recommendation:

That Transportation Committee recommend to City Council:

1. That the implementation of 30 km/h school zones at schools with elementary school grades within the city of Edmonton, except on arterial roadways as outlined in the July 9, 2014, Transportation Services report CR\_1255, be approved.
2. That the implementation of 30 km/h school zones at schools with elementary school grades, except on arterial roadways, be funded from the automated enforcement fine revenues.

### Report Summary

**This report recommends implementation of 30km/h speed zones for the schools with elementary grades by September 2, 2014, and suggests further reviews to consider application of 30 km/h at other schools and playground zones after the implementation of elementary grade schools. This report also provides the proposed implementation strategy, funding strategy, communication plans and enforcement impacts.**

### Previous Council/Committee Action

At the April 9, 2014, Transportation Committee meeting, the following motion was passed:

That Administration, in consultation with stakeholders, review policy C514 and provide a report with proposed amendments to institute a 30 km/hour speed limit for schools with elementary students and playground zones, including information on cost, timeline, required bylaw amendments, communication plans and expected enforcement requirements.

### Report

#### Elementary Schools

The current City Policy C514, Guidelines for the Implementation of Safety Measures around Schools, provides current City direction for the implementation of safety measures around schools and references following guidelines such as the Alberta Transportation Guidelines for School and Playground Zones and Areas developed in 2003 and updated in 2007.

The revised 2007 guideline incorporated additional flexibility for the consideration of implementing of 30km/h speed zones or maintaining school areas when compared to the earlier versions. Transportation Services conducted a check of the assessments completed at all Public and Catholic elementary schools in 2006 using the revised 2007

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Provincial guidelines. The result of the review indicated that up to 95% of the schools could be considered for 30 km/h schools zones. The updated Provincial guideline indicates that when a school can be considered for a school zone or an area, possible mitigation measures that may help maintain school area should be considered prior to consideration of a 30 km/h school zone. Within the Provincial guidelines there is flexibility to consider 30 km/h speed zones for the schools that can be considered for either a school area or zone when justified. With 95% of these schools meeting the requirement to consider 30 km/h school zones moving forward with school zones at all schools with elementary grades would be reasonable on collector and local roadways and provide consistency on this across the City for these types of schools. The guidelines do not recommend going to 30 km/h school zones when schools front arterial roadways as they can appear to motorists as contradicting the roadway function. These would be the only exceptions proposed as part of this approach for Edmonton and appropriate mitigations would be reviewed and recommended as required for arterial road locations rather than implement 30 km/h zones at these locations. Based on reviews of existing Policy C514 the recommendation can advance without changes to the current policy.

Time periods specified in the current *Alberta Traffic Safety Act* for school zones are 8 a.m. to 9:30 a.m., 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. and 3 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. for the days that school is held. However, according to the *Act*, a municipality can set the time periods when the speed limit in school zones is in effect. The majority of the elementary schools in Edmonton start after 8 a.m. and end between 3 p.m. and 3:30 p.m. Transportation is therefore recommending one time period from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. to cover the time expected when activity is occurring for school start and end times as well as throughout the day.

Amendments to Speed Bylaw 6894 will be required to identify the roadways and limits of all 30 km/h school zone roadway. These amendments will be brought to Transportation Committee for consideration and to City Council for formal approval. Transportation Services have the authority through the Traffic Bylaw 5590 to install the 30 km/h school zones in advance of formal Speed Bylaw 6894 amendment approval by City Council and recommends this approach. Transportation Services also propose the recommendations in this report reviewed and approved by City Council to ensure all of Council has the opportunity to consider moving forward with school zones as proposed.

Both the Public and Catholic School Boards were contacted to establish if they agreed with the approach of starting with 30 km/h in elementary grade schools for September 2014, and if they agreed with the hours of operations from 8 a.m. until 4:30 p.m. Both school boards agreed with this approach and in addition to this a letter of support to the Mayor and Councillors from the Chair of the Board of Trustees for Edmonton Catholic Schools has been received supporting the City in moving forward with the 30km/hr school zones.

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If approved, Transportation Services can complete the roll out of this for September 2, 2014. Ongoing follow-up work will include formal Speed Bylaw 6894 amendments for City Council's approval and an ongoing communication plan. The Speed Bylaw 6894 amendments will be developed and brought to Transportation Committee for consideration and to City Council for formal approval by the end of 2014.

### Junior High, High Schools, and Playground Areas

Transportation Services contacted the City of Calgary as part of our reviews and has found that they also generally follow the Alberta guidelines for school and playground areas and this has led them to primarily have elementary schools with 30 km/h school zones except for arterial roadways, primarily not having 30 km/h school zones at junior high and high schools across their city. For playground areas some do have 30 km/h zones while some do not based again on guidance from the Alberta guidelines.

Administration recommend implementing 30 km/h at schools with elementary grades as the first stage and then monitoring how this change is working over 2014/2015 school year. After this an updated report on these outcomes and recommendations for junior high schools, high schools and playground areas will be provided for Council's consideration.

### Enforcement

Currently, the Office of Traffic Safety has approximately 80 established photo enforcement sites that are in the vicinity of a school. Because of the hours of operation of school zones, Office of Traffic Safety would be required to maintain the current sites for off hours and create new sites for the time(s) established for school zones. As this requires only reallocation of resources, there are no additional resources required at the initial stage of the program.

At the present time, Edmonton Police Service deploy enforcement resources to identify areas of concern through their Traffic Complaints Coordinator for specific complaints, high collision/violation corridors identified by the Office of Traffic Safety and to identify areas of concern in high traffic/crime areas. Their deployment is prioritized based on these guidelines. Edmonton Police Service indicated that they generally support safety improvement efforts in school areas, however have constraints on how much dedicated resources can be applied to this within existing resources.

### Communication Plan

Given that Edmonton has not had 30 km/h school zones for decades, an extensive public education campaign beginning mid-August of 2014 including television, radio newspaper and social media is proposed. This should include a media event in August, a few weeks prior to the first day of school to remind public of the changes being put in place for September 2014 and should convey the key safety messages and provide information about enforcement plans. As this progresses, liaison with the Edmonton Police Service and the Alberta Motor Association (via their school safety patrol program)

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is planned to ensure consistency of messaging, and coordinate the distribution of school information to the parents of elementary students via both the Edmonton Catholic and Public school boards in time for orientation/first day of school. The City website will also be amended to include information on new zones, articles provided to members of Council, 311 scripts will also be developed, and ongoing key message updates through to June 2015 in order to maintain level of public awareness and reiterate safety messaging.

### **Corporate Outcomes**

This report aligns with “*The Way We Move*” through supporting road safety and community building of transportation mobility and access through improving neighbourhood design to encourage community friendly traffic behaviour.

### **Budget/Financial Implications**

Preliminary reviews of the sign manufacturing and installation for the proposed elementary grade schools are expected to cost from \$200,000 to \$250,000.

The communication plan costs are also expected to cost from \$200,000 to \$250,000 to cover the elements proposed. A total cost to complete this work and communications is therefore expected to require between \$400,000 and \$500,000.

As this is a traffic safety initiative, an appropriate source of funding would be from the automated enforcement fine revenue.

### **Justification of Recommendation**

1. Transportation Committee requested that Administration review moving forward with implementation of 30 km/h school zones and its implications to current City Policy. The review identified no City Policy changes are required to proceed with implementation of 30 km/h school zones at schools with elementary school grades except on arterial roadways and has therefore recommended moving forward with the implementation.
2. The proposed funding source supports the Council approved strategic direction of enhancing road safety within City communities which aligns with the strategy of utilization of automated enforcement fine revenue for road safety initiatives.

### **Others Reviewing this Report**

- L. Rosen, Chief Financial Officer & Treasurer