



## Policy EIS – 03 Speed Watch Program Policy

Approval Date: June 11, 2024  
Approval Authority: Council Resolution  
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Revision Date/s: NA

### **Purpose:**

To provide a guideline for Norfolk County to determine when it is appropriate to deploy new Speed Watch Signs.

The purpose of the Speed Watch Program is to reduce the incidence of speeding in the municipality by making drivers aware of their speed as it relates to the posted speed limit. Drivers are often unaware when they are speeding due to inattentiveness or other factors. The objective of the Speed Watch Program is to improve road safety by alerting drivers to their travel speed and encourage compliance of the posted speed limit.

The policy will provide a standardized procedure for the analysis and evaluation of requests for additional speed watch signs to be placed in Norfolk County. These signs when deployed correctly can provide a level of traffic calming.

This policy document outlines procedures for review, approval, and implementation of Speed Watch signs to address traffic safety concerns related to speeding in Norfolk County.

### **Policy Statement:**

Norfolk County staff will recommend that Speed Watch Signs be installed on roads when validated by the criteria established in this policy.

Speeding is one of the most frequent concerns expressed to The Norfolk Road Safety Committee (NRSC). The inquiries request measures such as increased enforcement or installing stop signs to reduce speeding. Research shows that there are other measures that are often more effective than adding more stop signs. The purpose of a stop sign is to assign the right-of-way at an intersection, not to control speeding. Overuse of stop signs reduces their effectiveness and, if installed where not warranted, the sign may be ignored by motorists who tend to speed up between stop sign controlled intersections rather than slow down. Norfolk County has an approved policy PW-14 for All Way Stop installations which defines guidelines and criteria for stop sign installation.

The Speed Watch Program is a public awareness program to address speeding on Norfolk County roads. Often, drivers that speed are unaware of the effect their actions have on the safety of the streets. The program will educate the driver on the posted speed limit of the street and make them aware of the speed they are travelling.

Any person requesting a Speed Watch sign measures shall submit a request to the NRSC.

To avoid a proliferation of their use and a dilution of their effect on drivers, Speed Watch Signs should only be used for speed management where there is evidence that they would be beneficial.

**Background:**

There are currently 18 Speed Watch signs deployed in Norfolk County. The locations are shown in the Table at the end of this document.

Council approved Policy EIS-02 Traffic Calming defines the procedure required for staff to initiate a traffic calming evaluation for a neighborhood which requires local support of 75% of the residents. The approved traffic calming measures would be a permanent on road feature such as raised crosswalks, curb extensions, speed tables, chicanes, etc. The use of Speed Watch signs can provide a degree of traffic calming but are more suited to specific linkage and community entry roads and therefore should be evaluated separately.

The Program will also assist the Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) in prioritizing locations requiring speed limit enforcement. Often, speeding on roads is more perception than reality. The speed display devices provide immediate awareness to both the motorist and resident of vehicle operating speeds. When street sections are found to have legitimate speeding problems, the NRSC will request the OPP to conduct speed limit enforcement. However, all parties involved must be cautiously aware that the OPP must be strategic in the deployment of their resources therefore enforcement may focus on the following priority areas:

- Areas with a statistically higher number of collisions
- Areas of high pedestrian volume
- School zones
- Community Safety Zones

## **Speed Display Devices**

Speed display devices are typically pole-mounted signs equipped with a radar speed detector and a LED display. The signs can detect the speed of an approaching vehicle and display it back to the driver. The signs are triggered for all drivers, not just those exceeding a certain speed. When combined with a regulatory speed limit sign, a clear message is sent to the driver displaying the vehicle speed.

Speed display devices target excessive vehicle speeds by encouraging motorists to reduce their speed, if necessary.

The speed display device also functions as an educational tool for the residents. Many motorists are perceived to be travelling at an excessive speed when in fact their operating speed is within acceptable limits. Speed perception is impacted by various factors such as size, colour and sound of an approaching vehicle.

## **Evaluation Guidelines**

Upon receipt of a request for the installation of a speed display sign, staff will review the location and conduct a speed study for 48 to 72 hours. The speed study will be used to calculate the score as shown in Table 1. The purpose of the evaluation is to ensure that the speed display signs are installed on road sections where a combination of 85th percentile speeds, traffic volumes, roadside environment and collision statistics meet the minimum score required.

The 85th percentile speed is the speed at which 85% of the recorded vehicles travel at or below on a given street section.

The locations with a score of 14 and above and meeting the installation criteria will be recommended to have Speed Watch Signs installed.

## **Installation Criteria**

To be considered for a Speed Watch Sign the roadway must meet the following installation criteria;

- The location should not be on a road where permanent traffic calming measures are already present.
- The posted speed limit shall be 60 km/hr. or less.
- There must be a suitable location to install a Speed Watch sign.
- There should be a minimum 100 meters of clear sight distance for the motorist.
- The location cannot be close to a traffic control signal or stop sign.

## Rotation Schedule

Norfolk County currently has 18 locations where Speed Watch signs are currently deployed. Recommendations for new Speed Watch sign locations will be added to the inventory when approved during budget. To lessen the budgetary impact of the purchase of new Speed Watch signs, staff may provide an option for a rotation of the existing signs among the approved locations. Staff shall bring a report to Council prior to implementation of any rotational installations. The report will provide traffic data for the locations to be rotated as well as the rationale to support.

**Table 1: Speed Watch Sign Evaluation**

<b>Evaluation Criteria</b>	<b>Points</b>
<b>Traffic Speeds (85<sup>th</sup> Percentile)</b>	
Less than 5 km/hr. above posted speed limit	Does not qualify
5 to 9 km/hr. above posted speed limit	1
10 to 14 km/hr. above posted speed limit	3
15 km/hr. or greater above posted speed limit	5
<b>Average Annual Daily Traffic (AADT)</b>	
Less than 1000 vehicles per day	1
1000 to 2000 vehicles per day	2
2001 to 3000 vehicles per day	3
3001 to 4000 vehicles per day	4
4000+ vehicles per day	5
<b>Road Conditions (select all that apply)</b>	
No Sidewalks	1
Pedestrian or school crossing in zone	1
Hidden intersections/ driveways in zone	1
Paved shoulders or share the road signs	1
Significant roadway grade/alignment (i.e. curves)	1
<b>Proximity to Parks, Recreational facilities, or Schools</b>	
Greater than 500 meters	1
Between 250 and 500 meters	2
Within 250 meters	3
<b>Collisions in the past three years</b>	
0 to 2	1
3 to 5	2
Greater than 5	3

Maximum score is 21. To be considered for a Speed Watch sign a **minimum score of 14 is required.**

### **Funding**

Speed Watch signs will be implemented based on funding available through the capital budget process.

Recommended Speed Watch locations captured within the year shall be prioritized for current and future capital project budget plans and presented to Council as part of the Capital Budget process.

Funding for approved Speed Watch signs will be identified as specific projects within the annual operating and capital improvement budgets.

The existing 18 signs also have a life cycle and will have to be replaced as part of the Capital Budget approval process.

### **Implementation Procedure:**

Any person requesting installation of a Speed Watch sign may submit a request to the NRSC. The request can be completed by contacting service Norfolk or accessing the online platform for the Road Safety Committee.