



## Report to Council

Department: Infrastructure Services

Division: Operations

Date: January 16, 2023

Prepared by: Kevin Girard, P.Eng., MBA  
Director of Infrastructure Services

Report Number: Operations-2022-09

Subject: Gesto Side Road Speeding Complaints

Number of Pages: 6

### Recommendation(s)

**That** Operations – 2022-09 entitled, "Gesto Side Road Speeding Complaints" prepared by Kevin Girard dated January 16<sup>th</sup>, 2023 be received;

**That** Council direct administration to implement a speed radar signage program as outlined in this report; and

**That** Council approve the expenditure to PD-22-0002 of approximately \$8,000 for the purchase of two speed radar signs.

### Purpose

This report has been prepared in response to the Council Resolution R21-10-398 presented on October 18<sup>th</sup>, 2021.

**That** Council discuss Gesto Side Road and that Administration be directed to review and report back as to recommendations for traffic calming measures for Gesto Side Road.

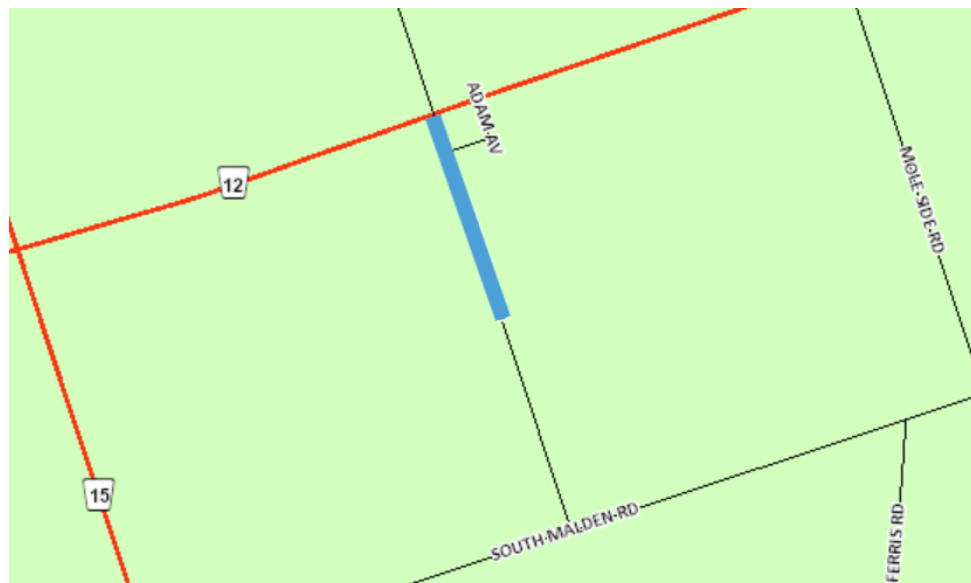
**Moved by** Councillor Verbeek

**Seconded by** Deputy Mayor Meloche

## Background

The Town of Essex has a road network that is large and diverse, with varying conditions that include multiple road users, topography, surface types, road conditions, and land uses. The network consist largely of both rural and urban sections. Every year the Town receives numerous complaints of speeding and/or requests for speed limit changes on its various roadways.

***Figure 1: Study Area***

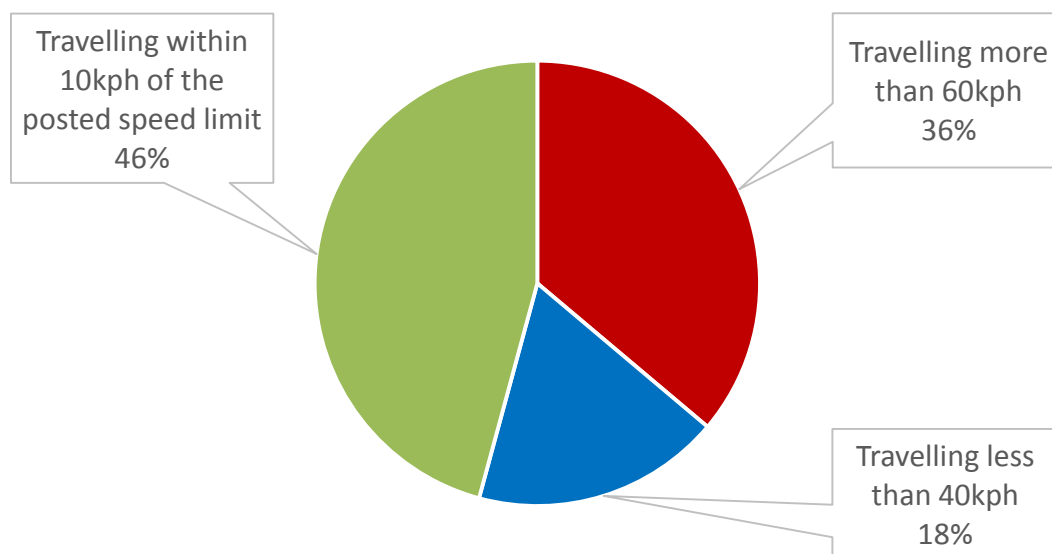


Gesto Sideroad is a municipally owned rural road within the Town of Essex. It is located in the community of Gesto. The relevant section of the Gesto Sideroad that has been discussed is from South Malden Road to County Road 12 (Malden Road), specifically the perceived observation of speeding by residents in the 50kph zone from Malden Road to approximately 1,055m to the southeast shown in Figure 1.

## Discussion

In the fall of 2022, the Town's Operations Department conducted a traffic study on Gesto Sideroad, south of County Road 12, using the Town's Blackcat Radar Recorder, which collects traffic data such as speed and vehicle type without being visual to the public. This traffic study was completed to determine the severity of speeding. After review of the traffic data, Figure 2 was developed to show the speed distribution along Gesto Sideroad which has a maximum speed limit set in accordance with the Highway Traffic Act of 50kph.

**Figure 2: Speed Distribution**



As shown in Figure 2, it was observed that approximately 36% of traffic was travelling in excess of 10kph of the posted speed limit, which would indicate a trend of enforceable speeding in this stretch of road and an increased need for enforcement measures.

As part of any Town of Essex traffic study the Town also calculated and reviewed the 85<sup>th</sup> percentile speed in the study area. The 85<sup>th</sup> percentile is the speed at which 85 percent of drivers are observed to travel at under free flowing conditions past a monitored point, which is

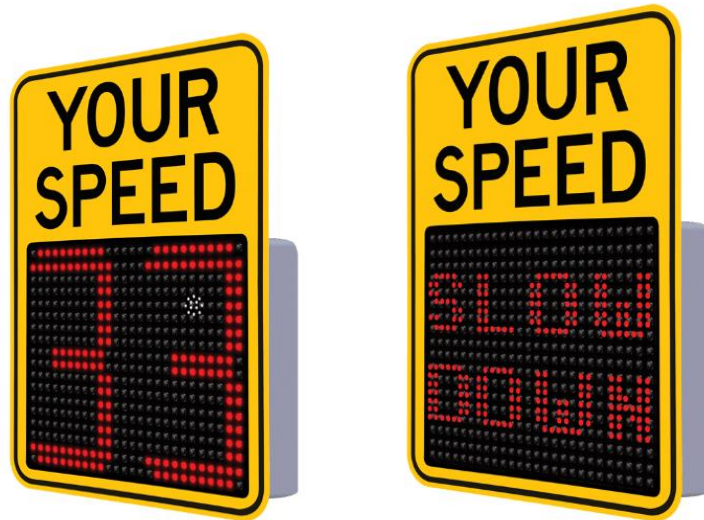
commonly called the 'prevailing speed'. The prevailing speed is the speed at or below which 85 percent of the drivers will operate with open roads and favorable conditions. The assumption underlying the 85th percentile speed is that most drivers will operate their vehicle at speeds they perceive to be safe. Speed limits set above or below the 85th percentile speed will create unsafe conditions due to speed differential as some drivers adhere strictly to the law while others drive the naturally-induced speed. Through completion of the traffic study, the prevailing speed was calculated at 69kph.

Through this analysis, it can be assumed that vehicles are speeding due to the perceived safety of the road, based on geometrics, road width, and right-of-way obstructions. As Council is aware through recent adoption of the policy for Establishing Speed Limits (Policy No. 038), the mere reduction of posted speed limits, without changing the characteristics of the roadway to encourage reduced speeds has been shown to have a minimal impact on vehicle operating speeds. In addition, the posting of additional signage and/or adjusting the posted speed limit of a roadway are generally not considered to be traffic calming measures. Alternatively, and preferably, road safety should be enhanced through the posting of credible speed limits that match the expectation of drivers for a given roadway and its surrounding area. Since the prevailing speed of this road was determined to be 69kph, it can be assumed that this road segment was likely 80kph, in alignment with the Highway Traffic Act, and at some point, was changed to 50kph. Therefore, it is recommended that prior to the future capital replacement of this section of Gesto Sideroad, Infrastructure Services make changes to the characteristics of the roadway design to fit the existing 50kph speed limit.

In order to address Council Resolution R21-10-398, extensive research was completed and it was determined that there are very few opportunities and strategies for traffic calming in rural areas. However, in an attempt to bring awareness and education to speeding in the area, speed radar signs could be installed. As shown in Figure 3, these signs are slightly different than the speed radar trailers that the Town currently owns, as these can typically be installed much closer to the road to make them more visible as they are more compact and don't require the flat stable ground that the trailers do. Since these signs can be pole mounted, they have the capability to

be temporarily installed in problematic areas that require additional speeding awareness and can be moved through the municipality on an ongoing basis, as required.

**Figure 3: Speed Radar Signs**



In addition, it is recommended that enforcement measures be increased to bring awareness to the 50kph speed limit. Infrastructure Services will ensure the OPP are provided a copy of this report and the associated speed study data which will include details of when speeding typically occurs and when enforcement is most needed. This will allow the OPP to have a more effective presence during times of speeding violations.

## **Financial Impact**

As recommended herein, Infrastructure Services will make changes to the characteristics of the roadway design of Gesto Sideroad to fit the existing 50kph speed limit as part of the future capital replacement of this stretch of road, however, any design modifications that occur as part of the capital replacement would be communicated through future budget deliberations.

Should Council wish to proceed with the speed radar sign program, it is estimated that this would have a capital cost of \$4,000 per sign and the Operations Department would require two signs, one for each direction of travel, for a total capital cost of \$8,000 including applicable HST. In the approved 2022 Capital budget, Council approved \$20,000 for PD-22-0002 to purchase speed radar systems for additional BlackCat devices. The Town purchased two at a cost of approximately \$12,000. Therefore, Administration recommends that the additional \$8,000 remaining in PD-22-0002 be used to cover the cost of two speed radar signs.

## **Consultations**

Norm Nussio, Manager, Operations/Drainage

Kate Giurissevich, Director, Corporate Services/Treasurer

## Link to Strategic Priorities

- ☒ Manage, invest and plan for sustainable municipal infrastructure which meets current and future needs of the municipality and its citizens.
- ☐ Create a safe, friendly and inclusive community which encourages healthy, active living for people of all ages and abilities.
- ☐ Provide a fiscal stewardship and value for tax dollars to ensure long-term financial health to the municipality.
- ☐ Manage responsible and viable growth while preserving and enhancing the unique rural and small town character of the community.
- ☐ Improve the experiences of individuals, as both citizens and customers, in their interactions with the Town of Essex.

## Report Approval Details

Document Title:	Gesto Sideroad Speeding Complaints - Operations-2022-09.docx
Attachments:	
Final Approval Date:	Jan 9, 2023

This report and all of its attachments were approved and signed as outlined below:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Doug Sweet', with a stylized flourish extending from the end.

**Doug Sweet, Chief Administrative Officer - Jan 9, 2023 - 10:44 AM**