SUBJECT: Speed Limit Reduction - Cochrane Road - Lawrence Road to Greenhill Avenue (PW08065) - (Ward 5)

RECOMMENDATION:
That no action be taken on the request to lower the speed limit on Cochrane Road between Lawrence Road and Greenhill Avenue from 50 km/h to 40 km/h.

Councillor Chad Collins has received a petition signed by approximately 70 area residents requesting that the speed limit on Cochrane Road between Lawrence Road and Greenhill Avenue be reduced from 50 km/h to 40 km/h. There are no schools abutting Cochrane in this road segment and therefore, the approved standards for a reduced school zone speed limit of 40 km/h are not met. The street is signed with an “Alternate Side Parking” regulation between Lawrence Road and Greenhill Avenue. Cochrane is a neighbourhood collector roadway and designated HSR transit route such that traffic calming measures would not be appropriate on this street.

Recent speed enforcement conducted by the Police as well as speed studies conducted by Traffic Division staff did not confirm or identify any speeding problems. A review of data did not find any pedestrian collisions and only one collision of the type directly related to speed. Motorists should have a reasonable expectation of properly set speed limits. Lowering the speed limit to 40 km/h on Cochrane would only have a slight impact on reducing travel speeds, perhaps 2-3 km/h, which would not be noticeable to the
residents. However, this type of use of lower speed limits, while not justified, results in disrespect for lower speed limits at locations where they are truly justified, such as in school areas. Lowering the speed limit would also result in demands for additional police speed enforcement.

**BACKGROUND:**

The information/recommendation provided within this report primarily affects Ward 5. Staff received a petition from Councillor Chad Collins’ office, signed by approximately 70 area residents, requesting a reduced speed limit of 40 km/h on Cochrane Road between Lawrence Road and Greenhill Avenue. Currently the speed limit on this portion of Cochrane Road is 50 km/hr. The City’s Speed Limit Policy only recognizes the use of 40 km/h speed limits near schools. There are no schools abutting Cochrane in this road segment and therefore, the standards for a reduced school zone speed limit of 40 km/h are not met. The street is signed with an “Alternate Side Parking” regulation between Lawrence Road and Greenhill Avenue. Cochrane is a neighbourhood collector roadway and designated HSR transit route such that traffic calming measures would not be appropriate on this street.

Recent speed enforcement conducted by the Police as well as speed studies conducted by Traffic Division staff did not confirm or identify any speeding problems. Motorists should have a reasonable expectation of properly set speed limits. Lowering the speed limit to 40 km/h would only have a slight impact on actual travel speeds, perhaps by 2-3 km/h, but would likely result in disrespect for the lower speed limit at locations where they are truly justified, such as in school areas. Lowering the speed limit will lead to demands for additional police speed enforcement, which the Police are usually unable to provide on an ongoing, continuous basis.

There have been no reported pedestrian collisions nor has there been any identifiable collision pattern on Cochrane between Lawrence and Greenhill so that reducing the speed limit, even if effective, would not have a measurable safety effect. The only speed related collision happened under unusual circumstances such that a lower speed limit would have been unlikely to have prevented the collision. Based on the City’s Speed Limit Policy, the intent to maintain the credibility of speed limit signing, the likely effectiveness of the signing and the safety history, staff does not support the request for a 40 km/h speed limit.

**ANALYSIS/RATIONALE:**

The recommendation is in keeping with the approved speed limit policies.

**ALTERNATIVES FOR CONSIDERATION:**

The residents have advised they do not support stop signs as an alternative means of speed control. Staff share the same opinion as the residents on this matter. Stop signs are used to control the right-of-way at intersections, not the speed of traffic.

**FINANCIAL/STAFFING/LEGAL IMPLICATIONS:**

There are no financial implications concerning this recommendation.
POLICIES AFFECTING PROPOSAL:

The subject recommendation is in keeping with the policy for setting speed limits on City of Hamilton roads. However, it does not align with one of the Public Works Strategic Plan’s “Vision Drivers” in that it will not promote trust in our community for setting realistic/appropriate speed limits.

RELEVANT CONSULTATION:

Councillor Chad Collins is aware that staff does not support a 40 km/h speed limit on Cochrane Road. The Police are supportive of providing speed enforcement on streets that have appropriately set speed limits.

CITY STRATEGIC COMMITMENT:

By evaluating the “Triple Bottom Line”, (community, environment, economic implications) we can make choices that create value across all three bottom lines, moving us closer to our vision for a sustainable community, and Provincial interests.

Community Well-Being is enhanced. ☐ Yes ☑ No
Implementation of a lower speed limit may slightly reduce operating speeds by 2-3 km/h, but may result in the loss of respect for this speed limit where truly justified such as in school areas.
Public services and programs are delivered in an equitable manner, coordinated, efficient, effective and easily accessible to all citizens.
Participation in community life is accessible to all Hamiltonians.
The public are involved in the definition and development of local solutions.
Partnerships are promoted.

Environmental Well-Being is enhanced. ☑ Yes ☐ No
Human health and safety are protected.
Consumption of all natural resources is reduced.
Consumption of energy is reduced; alternative energy and co-generation are supported.
A sustainable transportation network provides many options for people and goods movement; vehicle-dependency is reduced.
The severity of vehicle collision impact is reduced at lower speeds.

Economic Well-Being is enhanced. ☐ Yes ☑ No

Does the option you are recommending create value across all three bottom lines? ☐ Yes ☑ No

Do the options you are recommending make Hamilton a City of choice for high performance public servants? ☑ Yes ☐ No
SUBJECT: Speed Limit Reduction - Cochrane Road – Lawrence Road to Greenhill Avenue (PW08065) - (Ward 5) - Page 4 of 4

LOCATION PLAN

REQUESTED SPEED LIMIT CHANGE:
Cochrane Road
Lawrence Road to Greenhill Avenue
CITY OF HAMILTON - Public Works Department

LEGEND

 SUBJECT ROAD
Requested 40 km/h Zone

SCALE NOT TO SCALE  DATE  2008-05-21
REFERENCE FILE NO: PW08XXX