



**DATE:** November 15, 2017

**TO:** Strathcona County Board

**FROM:** Trina Boymook, EIPS Board Chair

**SUBJECT:** School Zone Times

**ORIGINATOR:** Lisa Weder, Director of Transportation  
Christine Hogan, Safety & Compliance Coordinator

**REFERENCE:** <http://www.strathcona.ca/files/files/at-lls-arm-110628-report-10-2.pdf>  
[http://www.parachutecanada.org/downloads/injurytopics/ChildPed\\_Report\\_07:08.pdf](http://www.parachutecanada.org/downloads/injurytopics/ChildPed_Report_07:08.pdf)  
<https://visionzero.ca/policies-and-practice/>

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## RECOMMENDATION

In the best interest of student safety, EIPS recommends that Strathcona County Council give due consideration to the formation of a bylaw where speeds in all school zones are limited to 30 km/hr from 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

## BACKGROUND

*From Strathcona County Council Meeting June 28, 2011 Agenda Item #10.2:*

### SCHOOL AND PLAYGROUND ZONES AND AREAS

#### Introduction

Over the years, the Province has adopted and adapted guidelines to promote uniformity and consistency in the establishment of signing and marking school and playground zones and areas. These guidelines provide a systematic, objective and quantitative procedure for assessing the merits for school and playground zones and areas.

Section 107 of the Alberta Traffic Safety Act, revised in May 2003, prescribes a maximum speed limit of 30 kilometers per hour within school and playground zones, in both urban and rural environments. By bylaw, a municipality may prescribe a lower maximum speed limit than prescribed under the Act but the speed limit cannot be lower than 20 kilometers per hour. A municipality can also set the time periods when the speed limit in school zones is in effect. A municipality cannot modify the effective period established under the Act for playground zones.

Developmentally, children are at a disadvantage when they are in and around traffic. Their peripheral vision is two-thirds that of an adult, they have difficulty determining where sounds come from and it is difficult for them to judge the speed and distance of oncoming vehicles. These are a few of the reasons children require special protection when in and around traffic. Schools and playground zones and areas warn motorists of unexpected pedestrian movements.



Properly placed, warranted playground and school zones and areas also improve consistency with driver expectations i.e. when a driver sees a playground zone sign, he expects to see a distinguishable area where children would play.

On January 24, 2014 Strathcona County Council met with the EIPS Board, one of the items discussed was speed limits in school zones.

In working together to reduce risk and ensure we provide students within the County of Strathcona the safest possible environment we believe the speed limits should be reduced to 30 km/hr any time when vulnerable road users may be present.

## **Research Support for All Day School Zones**

According to Parachute Canada, children aged 10 to 14 years have the highest incidence of pedestrian-related injuries. Children aged five to 14 years are at the greatest risk for pedestrian-related deaths. Their number one recommendation to improve community safety is to reduce driver speed.

A student struck by a vehicle travelling at 50 km/h is eight times more likely to be killed than a student struck at 30 km/hr. Reduction of vehicle speeds is proven to be effective in reduction of serious injuries due to collisions.

Traffic safety experts indicate the following:

**5% of pedestrians will be killed in a collision at 30 km/hr**  
**55% of pedestrians will be killed in a collision at 50 km/hr**  
**90% of pedestrians will be killed in a collision at 60 km/hr**

## **Stopping distances**

- Under ideal conditions, a vehicle travelling at 50 km/h needs 24 - 28 meters to come to a complete stop
- A vehicle travelling at 30 km/hr only needs 11 - 13 meters to stop
- When the roads are wet or icy, you need 5 extra meters at 30 km/h and 10 extra meters at 50 km/h in order to stop safely

## **Vulnerable road users**

When children are struck by vehicles, their injuries often result in life threatening or permanent damage. The faster a vehicle is moving, the greater the impact and the more devastating the results.

- Children aged 5 to 14 years are at the greatest risk for pedestrian-related deaths
- Children aged 10 to 14 years have the highest incidence of pedestrian-related injuries
- The most common action that results in injury or death of a child is crossing at an intersection



## **Vision Zero**

Strathcona County's Traffic Safety Strategic Plan 2020 is guided by a Vision Zero philosophy: "No one is seriously injured or killed while travelling on Strathcona County's road network".

Vision Zero Canada recommends that speed limits be set at 30 km/h in places where pedestrians and cyclists mix with cars.

## **School Schedules**

Alberta Provincial school zone effective times do not align with four EIPS school bell schedules. Students are travelling to school before 8 a.m. and may dismiss classes before 3 p.m. Further, provincial school zone effective times do not provide safety for children on early dismissal days as EIPS schools are dismissed one hour earlier.