

# **THE CORPORATION OF THE MUNICIPALITY OF MISSISSIPPI MILLS**

## **STAFF REPORT**

**DATE:** April 8, 2025  
**TO:** Committee of the Whole  
**FROM:** Cory Smith, Director of Public Works  
**SUBJECT:** Village of Blakeney Safety Improvements

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### **RECOMMENDATION:**

**THAT the Committee of the Whole recommend Council direct staff to amend By-law 98-97 to reduce the speed limit on Blakeney Road from Blakeney Bridge to Martin Street North (Lanark County Road 17) from 50 km/h to 40 km/h, ensuring consistency with the speed limit imposed by Lanark County related to the Blakeney Bridge.**

**AND THAT the Committee of the Whole receive the remainder of the report for information purposes.**

### **BACKGROUND:**

The Village of Blakeney is a vibrant community within the Municipality of Mississippi Mills. The primary portions of the village are bounded by the Mississippi River and Martin Street North, also known as County Road 16. Blakeney Road, owned by Mississippi Mills, serves as the main thoroughfare connecting County Road 16 and County Road 29. The Blakeney Bridge, owned by Lanark County, divides the road, with the east side passing through the village at 50 km/h and the west side transitioning into rural farmland at 80 km/h.

The bridge is currently undergoing reconstruction, and upon completion, Lanark County will reduce the speed limit on the bridge and its approaches to 40 km/h. Given this change, staff are recommending a corresponding speed limit reduction on Blakeney Road between the bridge and Martin Street North for consistency and enhanced safety.

Residents of Blakeney have been actively engaged in discussions regarding traffic concerns, road alignment, and pedestrian safety. Staff, Council, and residents have had ongoing dialogue to address these issues. Based on community feedback and staff review, three recommendations have been proposed:

1. Reducing the speed limit on Blakeney Road from Martin Street North to the bridge to align with Lanark County's reduction.
2. Installing a courtesy crosswalk at the intersection of Blakeney Road and Centre Street.
3. Reinstalling a digital display speed sign as part of traffic calming efforts.

## **DISCUSSION:**

### **1. Speed Limit**

By-law 98-97 currently sets the speed limit on Blakeney Road between Martin Street North and the bridge at 50 km/h. With Lanark County reducing the speed limit on the bridge and approaches to 40 km/h, maintaining a higher speed on the adjacent municipal road would create inconsistency. Given the road's geometry and surrounding residential context, a reduction to 40 km/h is reasonable. Council approval is required to amend By-law 98-97 accordingly.

### **2. Intersection Safety – Courtesy Crosswalk**

Residents have raised concerns regarding pedestrian safety, particularly at the intersection of Centre Street and Blakeney Road. While pedestrian and traffic volumes do not meet the warrants for a controlled crosswalk, a courtesy crosswalk is a viable option to enhance visibility and safety. Though not legally enforceable, a courtesy crosswalk, including signage and pavement markings, will alert drivers to pedestrian activity. The required signage and markings can be installed within the existing operational budget.

### **3. Digital Display Speed Sign**

In 2023, a pilot project evaluated the effectiveness of digital display speed signs, including one installed on Blakeney Road near the bridge. The results showed a reduction in prevailing vehicle speeds, and residents provided positive feedback on its effectiveness. Based on this, staff recommend permanently reinstalling the digital display speed sign in the same location. Sufficient funds are available in the approved traffic calming budget for this initiative.

## **OPTIONS:**

1. Direct staff to amend by-law 98-97 to reduce the Speed Limit from 50 km/h to 40 km/h, and receive the remainder of the report for information.
2. Request staff provide additional information.

## **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:**

All three recommendations involve minor costs that can be accommodated within the approved 2025 budget.

## **STRATEGIC PLAN**

This initiative aligns with multiple pillars of the Municipality's Strategic Plan:

- **Safe and Sustainable:** Enhancing road safety by reducing speed limits and improving pedestrian visibility.
- **Welcoming, Inclusive, Active, and Healthy Community:** Supporting active transportation and fostering a pedestrian-friendly environment.

- **Modern, Efficient, and Effective Municipal Operations:** Implementing practical and cost-effective traffic calming measures.
- **Accountable and Transparent Governance:** Incorporating public input into municipal decision-making and responding to community concerns.

## **PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT**

Extensive public engagement has taken place, including meetings, correspondence, and a delegation to Council. Residents have been actively involved in identifying concerns and recommending solutions.

## **SUMMARY:**

The proposed measures address longstanding traffic and safety concerns in Blakeney. The speed limit reduction requires Council approval, while the courtesy crosswalk and digital speed sign can be implemented at the staff level. Given the alignment with strategic priorities and available budget, staff recommend Option 1.

Respectfully submitted by,

Cory Smith,  
Director of Public Works

Reviewed by:

Ken Kelly,  
CAO

## **ATTACHMENTS:**

1. Draft By-law 25-XXX
2. Location Map