
HALDIMAND COUNTY

Report RDS-01-2019 Heavy Truck Route By-law

For Consideration by Council in Committee on April 16, 2019



OBJECTIVE:

To obtain Council approval to enact a Heavy Truck Route By-law.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. THAT Report RDS-01-2019 Heavy Truck Route By-law be received;
2. AND THAT the Heavy Truck Route By-law attached to Report RDS-01-2019 be presented for enactment.

Prepared by: Wray Oakes, Manager of Roads Operations

Respectfully submitted: Philip Mete, P. Eng., General Manager Public Works Operations

Approved: Donald G. Boyle, Chief Administrative Officer

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

Haldimand County currently does not have a by-law regulating heavy truck routing and half-load season truck routing. This Heavy Truck Route By-law is proposed to identify roads within Haldimand County where heavy trucks are permitted. This will restrict the gross vehicle weight limit to five (5) tonnes per axle for road sections outside of the schedule identified in the truck by-law, unless they meet one of the exception requirements. The by-law will provide additional restrictions during the spring thaw period from March 1st to April 30th in each calendar year on a portion of the heavy truck routing. These seasonal restrictions, are identified in the Heavy Truck By-law. The proposed restrictions will have limited impact on existing traffic patterns and are not expected to have any major effect on any industrial or commercial activity.

BACKGROUND:

Roads Operations staff have noted traffic from heavy trucks on roadways throughout the County causing increased damages to the County's roadways. This is not generally due to day-to-day business activities and deliveries to locations on those roadways. Instead, it is a result of heavy trucks taking short cuts throughout the County and on roads that are not designed to carry the heavy loads.

Delivery contractors often contact the Roads Operations Division requesting copies of the truck route map, however the County currently does not have a traffic by-law that encompasses all the load restrictions for heavy vehicles. Aside from suggesting a preferred route of travel, heavy trucks drivers often chose preferred routing out of convenience without consideration for the negative effects on the County's infrastructure.

Haldimand County's road system currently consists of approximately 1,452 centerline kilometres of roadway. The roads identified as heavy truck routes make up approximately 425 km, of which; approximately 60 km is identified with spring thaw restrictions. The remaining roadway network of approximately 1,027 km have been constructed/built with limited vehicle loading capacity and generally fall under one of the two following categories:

- Roads consisting of gravel or low cost bituminous pavement (surface treatment).
- Roads with reduced base specification and asphalt surface thickness primarily designed for lower traffic volumes and/or residential with limited heavy truck loading capability.

Roadways that fall under the two categories above, do not have the capacity to carry heavy loaded commercial vehicles, and are subject to increased damages at anytime and especially during the spring thaw period. To avoid premature deterioration of roads and to protect the County's investment in the road network, a heavy truck load restriction is proposed to be implemented on all roads with the exception of the heavy truck route.

Additional restrictions have been identified on a portion of the heavy truck routing for the season during the spring thaw period which will limit heavy truck traffic when the roadway is particularly susceptible to damage as a result of heavy loading during this period.

Various exemptions are identified in the By-law such as local deliveries on non-heavy truck routes, water haulers, emergency services vehicles, County vehicles or vehicles providing a service on behalf of the County, various agricultural activities and commercial activities when the site is within a restricted road. However, the By-law will provide requirements for heavy trucks to design their routing to remain on heavy truck routes until they need to access a non-truck route, and at which time to take the shortest route to their destination.

Enforcement:

The Municipal Act authorizes Haldimand County Council to pass by-laws with respect to highways. The By-law would be enforced by the Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) through the Highway Traffic Act and persons guilty of violations are subject to fines approved by the Ministry of the Attorney General and prescribed under the Provincial Offences Act.

The Ministry of Transportation (MTO) is also granted enforcement rights through the Highway Traffic Act (HTA) for gross vehicle and axle weights. These enforcement rights apply to vehicles that are overloaded as described in the HTA, as well as vehicles traversing load posted.

ANALYSIS:

The legal load limit for vehicles travelling on any public road in Ontario is regulated under the Highway Traffic Act. The maximum allowable weight per axle permitted under this legislation is 10,000 kilograms (10 tonnes). The total vehicle weight can vary substantially with axle configurations.

Section 122(7) of the Highway Traffic Act permits a municipality to pass a by-law to designate when the legal load limit of a road can be reduced. The reduced load period limits a vehicle axle weight to 5,000 kilograms (five tonnes) per axle.

Without a weight restriction on the County's roadways, heavy truck usage could cause extensive damage to roadways with limited structural capacity. Remedial repairs could cost up to \$75,000 per lane kilometre. Heavy truck routes, mapping and corresponding by-laws are standard municipal practice to mitigate infrastructure repair costs.

During this process Roads Operations staff reached out to surrounding municipalities to ensure consistency and flow in regards to the truck routing, and the By-law preparation.

Mapping has been developed on the County's GIS system as shown in Attachment 2 which may be made available to the public. The Truck Route sign (RB-61) shown in Attachment 3 indicates the preferred route for heavy truck use and will be posted at key intersections along heavy truck routes. The notification of prohibited heavy truck routes sign (RB-62) shown in Attachment 3 may be posted in some areas where prohibited trucks have caused issues or damage in the past, or at any change from a truck route, to a non-truck route. Spring thaw load restriction signs will be placed on sections of the truck route that require reduced loading during the spring thaw period, and will be posted with the corresponding RB-61 sign.

FINANCIAL/LEGAL IMPLICATIONS:

The financial implications associated with this report will be driven primarily by the installation of truck route road signs on roadways identified in Schedule A, with additional half-load restriction signs installed on roadways identified in Schedule B. If Council approval is received, the sign installation costs during the implementation period of May to December 2019 will be accommodated within the current approved Tax Operating Budget. Further analysis of the program expenditures will be completed prior to the 2020 Tax Operating Budget review process. If it is determined that additional program expenses are required, they will be identified and brought forward as a new initiative in the 2020 Tax Operating budget. A legal review was completed on the By-law in May 2018.

STAKEHOLDER IMPACTS:

The Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) and the Ministry of Transportation (MTO) have been consulted in regards to the enforcement of the proposed by-law.

REPORT IMPACTS:

Agreement: No

By-law: Yes

Budget Amendment: No

Policy: No

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Proposed Truck Route By-law.
2. Map of proposed heavy truck route.
3. Proposed signage.