



COUNCIL REPORT

Report Date: April 29, 2025
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Meeting Date: July 9, 2025
[Submit comments to Council](#)

TO: Standing Committee on Policy and Strategic Priorities
FROM: General Manager of Engineering Services
SUBJECT: Safer Slower Streets

Recommendations

- A. THAT Council approve, in principle, amendments to the Street and Traffic By-law to reduce the speed limit on all minor streets to 30 km/h, and incorporate existing 30 and 40 km/h speed limits on major roads generally in accordance with Appendix A.
- B. THAT Council instruct the Director of Legal Services to bring forward for enactment a by-law generally in accordance with Appendix A.
- C. THAT Council approve the implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of 25 neighbourhood slow zones using speed limit gateway signage.
- D. THAT Council approve a change to the Annual Speed Hump Program to remove the requirement for consultation.
- E. THAT Council direct staff to report back with policy recommendations for setting speed limits on arterial and collector streets.

Purpose and Executive Summary

This report responds to [Council's April 2024 direction](#) to bring forward recommendations to reduce the speed limit to 30 km/h on all local streets that do not have a painted centre line and are in a residential area. It provides clarity on the Motor Vehicle Act (MVA) speed limit reduction and sign frequency requirements, information on introducing an amended City by-law, and implementation strategies. To facilitate the ability to enforce speed limits, the report proposes a phased signage rollout, beginning with gateway signage in 25 select neighbourhoods.

This report also recommends incorporating existing 30 and 40 km/h speed limits on major streets as part of the proposed Street and Traffic By-law amendments.

Council Authority/Previous Decisions

The [Transportation 2040 Plan](#), approved by Council in 2012, set a target of at least two-thirds of all trips to be made on foot, by bike, or by transit by 2040—a target since accelerated to 2030 through the [Climate Emergency Action Plan](#) (2020). It also includes directions to protect vulnerable road users through street design, regulation, education and enforcement, and sets a goal to eliminate traffic-related fatalities, later amended to include the elimination of serious injuries.

In 2016, Council received the [Moving Towards Zero Action Plan](#) (now referred to as the Vision Zero Action Plan) to support the City's transportation safety targets. A major [update in 2020](#) provided additional safety-related directions, including working with the Province to test blanket reduced speed limits, delivering 30 km/h slow zone pilot neighbourhoods, creating a Neighbourhood Traffic Management (NTM) program, upgrading existing 30 km/h policies for local school and playground zones to be in effect at all times, and improving the speed hump program. In April 2024, Council directed staff to report back with recommendations and a delivery strategy to reduce speed limits on local streets citywide.

Currently, staff are working on an update to the Vision Zero Action Plan, including developing policy around speed limit reductions.

City Manager's Comments

The City Manager concurs with the foregoing recommendations.

Context and Background

The City of Vancouver Vision Zero road safety strategy aims to eliminate traffic-related fatalities and serious injuries. A component of this strategy is slowing motor vehicle speeds, which can dramatically improve safety for people walking and cycling. Research shows that lowering vehicle speeds from 50 km/h to 30 km/h can reduce pedestrian fatality rates from 80% to 15% in the event of a collision, while also reducing collisions in the first place, since stopping distances are reduced by nearly 50%. Other benefits of slower vehicle speeds include significantly quieter streets and improved air quality.

Several municipalities in North America and Europe have reduced speed limits on local streets. Studies have evaluated the safety benefits of these initiatives (see summary in Appendix B).

Currently, the blanket speed limit for all streets within the City of Vancouver is set by the Province of British Columbia at 50 km/h unless otherwise posted. Municipalities have the authority to reduce speed limits on individual streets by adopting a by-law and erecting proper signage. Vancouver has a longstanding policy of setting lower speed limits (30 km/h) for local street greenways, school zones and playground zones.

In 2020, Council directed staff to test reduced speed limits, starting with two 30 km/h Neighbourhood Slow Zone pilots. These were implemented in Grandview-Woodland using speed limit signs on every local street block, and in Strathcona using gateway signage (i.e. limited signage where drivers enter local streets from arterials). The pilots resulted in modest speed reductions and the lessons learned can be applied to expanding the program to all local streets.

In addition to local streets, Council has set lower speed limits of either 30 km/hr or 40 km/hr on select arterial and collector streets (such as Hastings Street, Cornwall Avenue, Victoria Drive, 29th Avenue, Prior Street, Beach Avenue and various school zones). Staff are currently implementing speed limit reductions adjacent to arterial school zones at remaining schools. Staff are also working on updating our Vision Zero Action Plan to continue moving towards zero traffic related fatalities and serious injuries. This includes developing policy around speed limit reductions on major streets, such as setting criteria on appropriate conditions for lower speed limits. Staff are proposing to bring those criteria for Council consideration in early 2026.

Discussion

Enforcement and the Need for Signage

In early 2022, correspondence from the Minister of Transportation to the Union of British Columbia Municipalities (UBCM) indicated that municipalities are permitted to alter or reduce speed limits, but this must be done in a manner that is lawfully enforceable, and that it was best practice to obtain advice from legal counsel and police regarding enforceability.

Legal Services and the Vancouver Police Department (VPD) have indicated that clear, recurring and visible speed limit signage is required for VPD officers to reference when providing education or issuing a violation ticket.

Phased Signage Implementation Strategy

Given the size of Vancouver's local street network and the available budget, it is not currently feasible to install signage on every local street block (see cost estimates in Appendix C). Staff recommend a phased approach that would start with 30 km/h gateway signage in 25 'slow zone' neighbourhoods across the city (see list and map on Appendix D), to be installed over the next three years.

Once complete, gateway signage in remaining neighbourhoods could be considered as a next step as budget allows.

Neighbourhood Selection and Monitoring

Designing streets for slower speeds can support reduced speed limits. The 25 neighbourhoods—defined as an area of local streets surrounded by arterial streets—have been prioritized since they have (or will have) complementary design measures to encourage slower driving. Neighbourhoods were selected for slow zones if they ranked highly in the Neighbourhood Traffic Management Framework - which ranks neighbourhoods based on collisions, vulnerable road user populations, traffic volumes, and community amenities.

Seventeen of the neighbourhoods already have some traffic calming in place, with most traffic already operating below 30 km/h. The remaining eight neighbourhoods have speeding concerns and are planned to have complementary traffic calming measures implemented through the City's Neighbourhood Traffic Management (NTM) Program.

If approved, monitoring of slow zones would consist of resident safety perception surveys and public feedback, as well as limited speed spot-checks. Additional tools could be considered if speeding concerns remain, such as paint stencils at select neighbourhood entries or additional speed limit signage in key locations (e.g. adjacent to community amenities).

Enforcement and Education Strategies:

Staff are working with the VPD on the possibility of providing special attention during the initial program launch. However, this could be a challenge given limited resources and the priority of the VPD to focus enforcement at locations where most traffic-related fatalities and serious injuries occur. The Community Policing Centres (CPCs) have agreed to provide further support through the Speed Watch program. This program is a volunteer-led initiative, so the extent of the support will depend on volunteer availability at each local CPC.

Public awareness is key to a successful speed reduction program. Speed limit changes would be paired with a small-scale public education campaign targeting drivers via social media, and notification letters would be sent to residents in impacted neighbourhoods. In addition, 'slow down' lawn signage would be offered to residents to help reinforce the message.

Complementary Engineering Strategies:

Previous interventions to reduce vehicle speed limits to 30 km/h on local streets have shown that signage alone results in a modest speed reduction. Complementary infrastructure is required to support specific locations where speeding concerns remain. Staff will continue to use the following existing programs to reduce vehicle speeds on local streets:

1. Speed Hump Program

Since 1998, the City of Vancouver has been installing speed humps to decrease speeds on local residential streets. To prioritize improvements, and to ensure that measures are effective, current City policy outlines that to be eligible for speed humps, streets must have an 85th percentile speed¹ of at least 55 km/h for streets with a 50 km/h speed limit and 40 km/h for streets with a 30 km/h speed limit.

At present, most local streets have 50 km/h speed limits, so relatively few meet the speed hump criteria. Under the new 30 km/h regulation, many more local streets could qualify for speed humps, as the observed 85% percentile speeds would need to be 40 km/h instead of 55 km/h. Staff will monitor the number of citizen requests that meet this criterion and may adjust the criterion if needed (i.e. closer to the 30km/h speed limit).

Installation of speed humps on each street segment requires at least 30% of adjacent residents to respond to a survey and an approval rate greater than 50%. In 2020, Council directed an exemption from requiring community consultation for school and playground zones.

¹ The 85th percentile speed is the speed at or below which 85% of drivers travel on a road segment.

Speed humps are an effective and popular method of reducing vehicle speeds without changes to access or parking. Since 2020, every location that met the warrant for speed humps and proceeded to the consultation stage has been approved by adjacent residents. To support the new 30 km/h speed limit with self-enforcing infrastructure, staff recommend removing the requirement to survey adjacent residents before installing speed humps. Staff would notify adjacent residents before installation and work to address any issues that arise.

2. Neighbourhood Traffic Management (NTM) Program

The NTM program implements traffic calming measures to address speeding and shortcutting on local streets, with a goal of addressing two neighbourhoods per year.

Traffic calming is implemented on a neighbourhood-wide scale to systematically look at traffic issues in neighbourhoods, rather than simply addressing an issue and inadvertently moving the traffic from one local street to another. Where speeds are greater than 40 km/h, speed reduction measures are proposed to reduce speeds. Staff use self-enforcing measures such as speed humps, chicanes, and roadway narrowing to reduce vehicle speeds. To date, 30 km/h gateway signage has been one of the tools available pending community support.

3. School Travel Planning Program (STP)

Since 2012, the School Travel Planning Program has worked with three to six schools every year to identify transportation-related challenges and opportunities, improve safety through localized street upgrades, and increase the number of children walking and cycling to school. To date, 45 schools have participated in the program.

Complementing this program, the Street and Traffic By-law was amended in 2020 to remove time of day and time of week restrictions for 30 km/h school and playground zones, making them effective 24 hours per day, seven days a week, provided signage is in place.

Financial Implications

Council allocated \$250,000 from the Growing Communities Fund to support 17 neighbourhood slow zones to be completed in the next three years. This includes \$230,000 for signage and \$20,000 for education and monitoring. The remaining eight neighbourhood slow zones will be delivered through the Neighbourhood Traffic Management program (NTM).

Additional traffic calming measures will be funded through existing programs, including the Speed Hump Program, Neighbourhood Traffic Management Program (NTM) and School Travel Planning Program (STP).

Legal Implications

If the recommendations in this report are adopted, Council will enact by-laws that result in reduced speed limits on certain streets.

Conclusion

This report recommends a strategy to advance slower, safer streets. Following Council direction and subsequent amendments to the Street and Traffic By-law to reduce the speed limit on all local streets to 30 km/h, signage would be installed in an initial rollout of 25 neighbourhood slow zones, using gateway 30 km/h speed limit signage, which would be completed within the next three years. Remaining neighbourhoods would be considered subject to future budgets. Staff would also continue to implement design measures to encourage slow speeds, for example through the Speed Hump, Neighbourhood Traffic Management, and School Travel Planning Programs. Subject to Council approval, staff will also report back with policy recommendations for setting speed limits on arterial and collector streets.

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APPENDIX A PROPOSED STREET & TRAFFIC BY-LAW AMENDMENT

BY-LAW NO. _____

A By-law to amend the Street and Traffic By-law No. 2849 regarding speed limits

THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF VANCOUVER, in public meeting, enacts as follows:

1. This by-law amends the indicated provisions of the Street and Traffic By-law No. 2849.
2. Council inserts a new section 47 as follows:

“SPEED LIMITS ON MINOR STREETS AND OTHER ROADS

47. No person shall operate a vehicle on a minor street at a speed greater than 30 kilometres per hour.

47A. Despite any other provision of this By-law, no person shall operate a vehicle on any street or part of a street named in the table below at a speed greater than the speed indicated in Column A:

Corridor	Column A
East 29 th Avenue (Slocan Street to Atlin Street)	30 km/h
Yukon Street (West 5 th Avenue. to West 12 th Avenue)	30 km/h
Keefer Street (Taylor Street to Carral Street)	30 km/h
Victoria Drive (Kitchener Street to Grant Street)	30 km/h
Victoria Drive (East 3 rd Avenue to East 6 th Avenue)	30 km/h
Victoria Drive (East 13 th Avenue to East 19 th Avenue)	30 km/h
Prior Street (Hawks Avenue to Raymur Avenue)	30 km/h
East Hastings Street and West Hastings Street (Abbott Street to Jackson Street)	30 km/h
Beach Avenue (Park Lane to Burrard Street)	30 km/h
Southwest Marine Drive (West 70 th Ave to Granville Street)	30 km/h
Anderson Street (Lamey's Mill Rd/West 2nd Avenue to Granville Island)	30 km/h
Champlain Crescent (Matheson Crescent to East 54 th Avenue)	30 km/h

Corridor	Column A
East 16th Avenue (Midblock 200 East 16th Avenue to Sophia Street - Tea Swamp Park)	30 km/h
Arbutus Street (West 7 th Avenue to West 8 th Avenue)	30 km/h
West Hastings (Broughton Street to Jervis Street)	30 km/h
Champlain Crescent (Three Cedars Drive to Langford Avenue)	30 km/h
Blenheim Street (West 41 st Avenue to West 43 rd Avenue)	30 km/h
Victoria Drive (East 3 rd Avenue to East 4 th Avenue)	30 km/h
Elliott Street (East 46 th Avenue to Waverley Avenue)	30 km/h
West 57th Avenue (Laurel Street to Heather Street)	30 km/h
East 54th Avenue (Doman Street to Tyne Street)	30 km/h
Argyle Street (East 60 th Avenue to East 61 st Avenue)	30 km/h
Elliott Street (East 51 st Avenue to East 54 th Avenue)	30 km/h
East 54th Avenue (Clarendon Street to Elliott Street)	30 km/h
Victoria Drive (Adanac Street to Venables Street)	30 km/h
400 Victoria Drive (East Hastings Street to East Pender Street)	30 km/h
West 33 rd Avenue (Oak Street to Willow Street)	30 km/h
East Boulevard (West 37 th to West 41 st Ave)	30 km/h
Grandview Hwy N (McClean Drive to Woodland Drive)	30 km/h
Slocan Street (Ward Street to Euclid Street)	30 km/h
West 16th Avenue (Ontario Street to Columbia Street)	30 km/h
West King Edward Avenue (Crown Street to Wallace Street)	30 km/h
Cornwall Avenue (Cypress Street to Trafalgar Street)	40 km/h
Commercial Drive (East 14 th Avenue to East 15 th Avenue)	40 km/h
Rupert Street (East 44 th Avenue to East 45 th Avenue)	40 km/h
West 49th Avenue (Ash Street to Tisdall Street)	40 km/h
Cornwall Avenue (Cypress Street to Trafalgar Street)	40 km/h
Expo Boulevard (Carrall Street to Abbott Street)	40 km/h
East 12th Avenue (Guelph Street to St. George Street)	40 km/h
Rupert Street (East 22 nd Avenue to Anzio Drive)	40 km/h
East 22nd Avenue (Cassiar Street to Rupert Street)	40 km/h
Renfrew Street (East 17 th Avenue to East 19 th Avenue)	40 km/h
West 4th Avenue (Trimble Street to Wallace Street)	40 km/h
West King Edward Avenue (Granville Street to Marguerite Street)	40 km/h
West King Edward Avenue (Collingwood Street to Blenheim Street)	40 km/h
Rupert Street (Price Street to Wellington Street)	40 km/h
Great Northern Way (Brunswick Street to Carolina Street)	40 km/h
West 16th Avenue (Balaclava Street to Mackenzie Street)	40 km/h
Joyce Street (Crowley Street to Euclid Street)	40 km/h

Corridor	Column A
West 16th Avenue (Wallace Street to Discovery Street)	40 km/h
West King Edward Avenue (Oak Street to Laurel Street)	40 km/h
Beatty Street (Robson Street to West Georgia Street)	40 km/h
East 49 th Avenue (Lanark Street to Knight Street)	40 km/h
Victoria Drive (Newport Avenue to Brigadoon Avenue)	40 km/h
Burrard Street (West Broadway to West 10 th Avenue)	40 km/h
Nelson Street (Burrard Street to Hornby Street)	40 km/h
Hornby Street (Smithe Street to Nelson Street)	40 km/h
Hornby Street (Pacific Street to Drake Street)	40 km/h
East 49 th Avenue (Lancaster Street to Killarney Street)	40 km/h
West 49 th Avenue (Laburnum Street to Maple Street)	40 km/h
Renfrew Street (Venables Street to Parker Street)	40 km/h
West 12th Avenue (Trafalgar Street to Larch Street)	40 km/h
N Renfrew Street (Oxford Street to Dundas Street)	40 km/h
East 12th Avenue (Quebec Street to Main Street)	40 km/h
Main Street (East 32 nd Avenue to East 33 rd Avenue)	40 km/h
East King Edward Avenue (St. George Street to Carolina Street)	40 km/h
Denman Street (Haro Street to Barclay Street)	40 km/h
Fraser Street (East 39 th Avenue to East 45 th Avenue)	40 km/h

3. A decision by a court that any part of this by-law is illegal, void, or unenforceable severs that part from this by-law, and is not to affect the balance of this by-law.

4. This by-law is to come into force and take effect on the date of its enactment.

ENACTED by Council this day of , 2025

Mayor

City

APPENDIX B

RESULTS FROM PEER CITIES

City	Initiative	Year	Results
London, UK	30 km/h neighbourhood slow zones	1998	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Crashes reduced by 42% Fatal and serious injuries reduced by 53% No crash migration to adjacent neighbourhoods Average reduction in speeds of 14 km/h
New York, USA	30 km/h neighbourhood slow zones	2012-2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 10 to 15% decrease in speeds. 14% reduction in crashes resulting in injury. 31% reduction in crashes resulting in injuries for vehicle occupants
Portland, USA	30 km/h on all residential streets	2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Drivers going over 40 km/h reduced from 24% to 23% Probability of drivers travelling over 40 km/h reduced to 16%
Calgary, AB	40 km/h on most residential and collector streets, excluding downtown	2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Less than 10 km/h reduction in vehicle speeds
Edmonton, AB	40 km/h on most residential streets and downtown	2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Substantial reductions on average speed and 85th percentile speed, lowering speeds at 53% of surveyed locations Substantial reductions in collisions, injuries and fatalities
Surrey, BC	30-40 km/h neighbourhood slow zones	2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2 to 4% decrease in mean speed compared to control zones with no speed reduction. Similar decrease in speeds regardless of whether it was a 30 or 40 km/h slow zone

APPENDIX C COST OF SIGNAGE ALTERNATIVES

Signage Options	Signage Included	Cost Estimate	Comments
Progressive gateway signage installation (25 neighbourhood slow zones to start)	Per neighbourhood entry: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ One 30 km/h sign ○ One neighbourhood slow zone sign 	\$350k	Additional neighbourhood slow zones would be advanced in future years
Gateway signage in all neighbourhoods		\$3.1 m	
Sign every residential street	Per block: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Two 30 km/h signs 	\$14 m	

APPENDIX C EXISTING & RECOMMENDED NEIGHBOURHOOD SLOW ZONES (NSZ)

**Numbers do not reflect implementation order.*

No.*	Neighbourhood	Bounded By	Program
1	Grandview Woodland 1	Clark Drive, E 1 st Ave, Commercial Drive, N Grandview Highway	Slow Zone Pilot (Complete)
2	Strathcona 1	Gore Avenue, E Hastings St, Prior/Venables St, Clark Drive	NTM 2023 (Complete)
3	Hastings Sunrise – Adanac Overpass Area	Renfrew St, E Hastings St, Boundary Rd, E 1 st Ave	NTM 2024-2025 (Complete)
4	Hastings Sunrise – Clinton Park Area	Nanaimo St, E Hastings St, Renfrew St, E 1 st Ave	NTM 2024-2025
5	Killarney North East	Kingsway, Ruperts/Kerr St, Boundary Rd, E 49 th Ave	NTM 2025-2026
6	Clark Park Area	Kingsway, Victoria Drive, E 12 th Ave, Fraser St	NTM 2026-2027
7	Trout Lake Area	Kingsway, Nanaimo St, E 12 th Ave, Victoria Drive	NTM 2026-2027
8	Joyce	E 29 th Ave, Boundary Rd, Kingsway, Rupert St	NTM 2026-2027
9	Sunset – Moberly Park Area	Fraser St, E 57 th Ave, Argyle St, SE Marine Drive	NTM 2026-2027
10	West End 1	Denman St, Beach Ave, W Georgia St, Stanley Park	Gateway signage only
11	West End 2	Denman St, Burrard St, Robson St, Nelson St	Gateway signage only
12	West End 3	Denman St, Burrard St, Nelson St, Davie St	Gateway signage only
13	West End 4	Denman St, Burrard St, Davie St, Pacific/Beach Ave	Gateway signage only
14	St George's	Camosun St/29 th Ave, 33 rd Ave, King Edward Ave, Dunbar St	Gateway signage only
15	Southlands	SW Marine Drive, Granville St/Milton St, Musqueam 2, Fraser River	Gateway signage only

No.*	Neighbourhood	Bounded By	Program
16	DTES/Strathcona 2	E Hastings St, Main/Gore Avenue, Clark Drive, Prior St, Malkin Ave, Hawks Ave	Gateway signage only
17	Mount Pleasant North East	Main St, E Broadway, Great Northern Way, Clark Drive	Gateway signage only
18	Woodland Park	Victoria Drive, Clark Drive, E Hastings St, Venables St	Gateway signage only
19	Pandora Park	Dundas St, E Hastings St, Victoria Drive, Nanaimo St	Gateway signage only
20	Grandview Woodland 2	E Hastings St, 1 st Ave, Victoria Drive, Nanaimo St	Gateway signage only
21	Grandview Woodland 3	Commercial Drive, Victoria Drive, N Grandview Highway, E 1 st Ave	Gateway signage only
22	Fraserview	Kerr St, E 54 th Ave, Elliott St, SE Marine Drive	Gateway signage only
23	Everett Crowley Park	Kerr St, E 54 th Ave, Champlain/Matheson Cres, SE Marine Drive	Gateway signage only
24	Champlain Heights	E 49 th Ave, Boundary Rd, SE Marine Drive/Marine Way, Champlain Crescent/Matheson Cres	Gateway signage only
25	River District	SE Marine Drive/Marine Way, Boundary Rd, Argyle St, Fraser River	Gateway signage only

