



The Corporation of the City of Courtenay

Staff Report

To: Council

File No.: 5335-20

From: Director of Operations

Date: April 2, 2025

Subject: Traffic Regulation Amendment Bylaw 1926 (for speed reduction)

PURPOSE:

To consider amendments to Traffic Regulations Bylaw No. 1926, 1996, required to enforce reduced speed limits throughout the City.

BACKGROUND:

Reducing speed limits provides many benefits, including reducing vehicle operating speeds, improving road safety, and improving neighbourhood liveability. Reduced speed limits can have safety benefits in terms of fewer collisions and less severe collisions which in turn improves comfort for those traveling on foot, bike, or with mobility aids. Currently the B.C. Motor Vehicle Act (MVA) sets a default speed limit of 50 km/h on municipal streets when a different speed limit has not been posted by signs.

In 2023 the City launched a Crown Isle Speed Limit Reduction Pilot Project. Generally speaking, the Crown Isle Speed Limit Reduction Pilot Project was successful following one year of data. Awareness of the pilot project was very high with 96% of respondents being aware that their community was participating in the Crown Isle Speed Limit Reduction Pilot Project. The realized benefits from the pilot project are focused most predominantly on the community perception of traffic safety with limited impacts to speed and traffic reductions. A total of 38%-46% of respondents to the satisfaction survey indicated they feel safer today than before. The 85th percentile speeds for roads in the pilot project were observed to fall between 2% and 7% compared to speeds before the pilot project.

With the success of the pilot project, October 25, 2023, Council resolved:

“THAT Council direct staff to retain the 40km/h speed reduction for the trial area located within the Crown Isle neighbourhood and;

THAT staff be directed to expand the speed reduction program to include all residential neighbourhoods within the City of Courtenay’s jurisdictional boundary, with the exclusion of all roads classified as either arterial and industrial or designated as a truck route, as time and resources allow and;

FURTHER THAT staff be directed to prioritize the implementation of an expanded speed reduction program with installation focused on the Safe Active Schools Program and the Cycling Network Plan.”

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DISCUSSION:

With council's direction, staff launched the 5-year Implementation Plan for the new 40km/hr Speed Reduction Program and public notifications. Implementation has been very successful, with staff optimising resources and will have the project completed by summer 2027. To accommodate this success and deliver the projects intent of speed reduction, enforcement of the new speed reduction program is required.

POLICY ANALYSIS:

Municipalities have the authority to regulate the use and enforcement of traffic on roads through Bylaw under the context of the "parent" provincial legislation, primarily the MVA. Reducing speed limits below those set by the MVA can be achieved under the City's current authority anywhere within its boundaries through the use of signage on each individual street provided that signage is posted on every block. This requirement would necessitate the installation of an abundance of new signs throughout the defined area.

Staff investigated models to implement the necessary speed reduction bylaw amendments to the Traffic Regulation Bylaw through a bylaw review of other participating municipalities across British Columbia. This can be accomplished in several ways, including the addition of the provision of 40km/hr speed signs throughout the intended road segment, including a road by road descriptor in the subject bylaw or the inclusion of a map of the imposed locations. Upon consideration to our complex transportation network, staff recommended the speed reduction language be added into the bylaw, accompanied by reduction signage and a map for guidance.

To permanently amend the default speed from 50km/hr to 40km/hr, an amendment to the Traffic Regulation Bylaw No. 1926, 1996 (attached to the report) is required. The language under a new section 27.1 and the map titled Appendix D detail the recommended regulations.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES REFERENCE:

Under the Council Strategic Priorities 2023-2026, Streets and Transportation (Page 7);

This initiative addresses the following strategic priorities:

- Streets and Transportation - Develop traffic calming plans, related policies, and specific implementation when and where, speed limits, school zones, cycling education/awareness

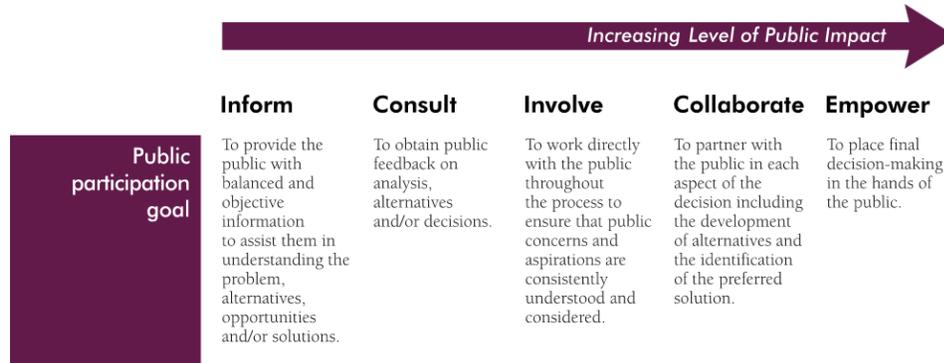
PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT:

In September of 2024, the City launched the first phase of reduced speeds from 50km/h to 40km/h, by posting new 40 km/h regulator speed signs on roads within a 500-metre radius around all School District No. 71 schools in the City. A media release was initiated as well as a dedicated webpage was developed for those interested in finding out more about this important initiative and it includes an [Interactive City Map](#) or [40km/h Roadways Map \[PDF - 3 MB\]](#) depicting current and future phased speed limit reductions.

Staff will inform the public of the changes to the bylaw based on the IAP2 Spectrum of Public Participation by updating the information on the City's website. Additionally, this information will be included in a Bylaw

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Good Neighbour brochure for vehicle operators which is anticipated to be available for public distribution later this year.



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OPTIONS

1. THAT Council give first, second and third reading to “Traffic Regulation – Amendment Bylaw No. 3172, 2025”.
2. THAT Council provide alternative direction to staff.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Schedule D – 40km Speed Zones
2. Traffic Regulation – Amendment Bylaw No, 3172, 2025
3. Traffic Regulation Bylaw 1926, 1996

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