



The Corporation of the City of Courtenay

Briefing Note

To: Council

File No.: 5400-13

From: Director of Operational Services

Date: April 24, 2024

Subject: 40km Speed Reduction Program - 2024 Implementation Plan

ISSUE:

The purpose of this briefing note is to update Council on the 2024 Implementation Plan for the 40km Speed Limit Reduction Program.

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 order to ensure equability of the program, Council resolved to introduce and 40km/hr speed reduction across all residential roads, with the exclusion of all roads classified as either arterial, commercial-industrial/commercial, or local industrial/commercial or designated truck routes. Further, staff were directed to prioritize school adjacent areas.

KEY CONSIDERATIONS:

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.

Additionally, any municipality wishing to permanently amend the default speed from 50km/hr to 40km/hr, it must clearly identify such road segments within its own Traffic Regulation Bylaw. This can be accomplished in several ways, including the addition of the provision of 40km/hr speeds and a map of the imposed locations. In light of these requirements, staff will be bringing forth a recommended bylaw amendment to the City’s Traffic Regulation Bylaw for the introduction of permanent speed reductions on all local road segments. This impending amendment will not negate the City’s requirement on signage installation, however, it will ensure the future enforceability of the 40km/hr speed outside of any trial or pilot program.

Staff have communicated with the local RCMP detachment on the City’s intent to introduce a reduced speed limit, and they are actively aware of this project.

NEXT STEPS:

Given the positive feedback and satisfaction with the impacts from this one-year pilot study, staff have developed a preliminary roll out plan for a broader speed reduction initiative. The transition of speed reductions from 50km/h to 40km/h are proposed to only be applied to residential neighbourhoods, with new signs and posted speed limits within each neighbourhood. **Attachment 1** highlights the multi-year transition plan by area.

The cost and count of signs required to implement the program are summarized in the **Table 1**. The summary provided for each school area are not mutually exclusive as several of the school areas overlap when applying a 500m radius for estimating costs. Therefore it is estimated that the funding allocation of \$75,000, as contained in the 2024 Financial Capital Plan, will suffice for the 2024 implementation period.

Table 1: Speed Reduction Program Implementation by School Area

Area	Sign Count	Install Costs
Arden Elementary School (500m radius)	13	\$ 3,744
Courtenay Elementary School (500m radius)	138	\$ 39,744
Glacier View Secondary School (500m radius)	66	\$ 19,152
Lake Trail Community School (50km radius)	87	\$ 25,056
Mark R. Isfeld Secondary School (500m radius)	78	\$ 22,608
Ecole Puntledge Park Elementary School (500m radius)	70	\$ 20,304
Queneesh Elementary School (500m radius)	37	\$ 10,800
Valley View Elementary School (500m radius)	82	\$ 23,616
Vanier Secondary School (500m radius)	17	\$ 4,896
All School Areas (500m radius)	588	\$ 96,480

The 5-year Implementation Plan for the new 40km/hr Speed Reduction Program is shown in **Attachment 1**. 2024 will see focused installation around all schools (500 metre radius) with the following years divided evenly by residential dwelling unit count by area. In conjunction with sign installations, staff will begin notifying the public of the upcoming change in the speed limit in the coming weeks.

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