



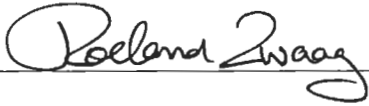


To: Public Works and Transportation Committee **Date:** February 17, 2026
From: Lloyd Bie, P.Eng.
Director, Transportation **File:** 10-6500-01/2025-Vol
01
Re: **Proposed Approach to Lowering Speed Limits**

Staff Recommendations

1. That Council approve Option 3 to lower the posted speed limit to 30 km/h as described in the report titled “Proposed Approach to Lowering Speed Limits”, dated February 17, 2026, from the Director, Transportation;
2. That staff bring forward bylaw amendments to facilitate the speed limit reduction, as described in Option 3 in the report titled “Proposed Approach to Lowering Speed Limits”, dated February 17, 2026, from the Director, Transportation;
3. That Council approve Option B for the public education plan as described in the report titled “Proposed Approach to Lowering Speed Limits”, dated February 17, 2026, from the Director, Transportation; and
4. That staff bring forward amendments to the Traffic Calming Related Measures - Policy 7018, as described in the report titled “Proposed Approach to Lowering Speed Limits”, dated February 17, 2026, from the Director, Transportation.

Lloyd Bie, P.Eng.
Director, Transportation
(604-276-4131)

Att. 1

REPORT CONCURRENCE		
ROUTED TO:	CONCURRENCE	CONCURRENCE OF GENERAL MANAGER
RCMP	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Law	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Public Works	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Communications	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Finance	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
SENIOR STAFF REPORT REVIEW	INITIALS:	APPROVED BY CAO
		

Staff Report

Origin

At the Regular Council meeting of December 17, 2025, staff received direction to look at the possibility of reducing speed limits on non-arterial roads to 30 km/h.

This report responds to this referral.

At the July 9, 2024, meeting of Community Safety Committee staff received the following direction regarding Vision Zero:

(1) That a Target in Richmond's Official City Plan that Envisions Zero Pedestrian Deaths in the Future be set and report back.

This report responds to the above referral.

This report supports Council's Strategic Plan 2022-2026 Focus Area #3 A Safe and Prepared Community:

Community safety and preparedness through effective planning, strategic partnerships and proactive programs.

3.4 Ensure civic infrastructure, assets and resources are effectively maintained and continue to meet the needs of the community as it grows.

Analysis

Background

The default speed limit on municipal roads is 50km/h as set by the BC Motor Vehicle Act (MVA). The MVA does permit 30 km/h speed zones on roads fronting schools and parks with signage. Municipalities have the authority to set lower speed limits on municipal roads through local bylaws.

Current Process for Lowering Speed Limits

The City has set 30 km/h speed limits on many local roads and within five residential neighbourhoods (Hamilton, Steveston, Burkeville, Barnes /Flury and Princess/London). Implementation of the lower speed limit has been in response to community requests, review of road operations, resident surveys and Council approval of bylaw amendments.

Benefits of Reducing Speed Limits

Research shows that lowering vehicle speeds from 50 km/h to 30 km/h can reduce pedestrian fatality rates from 85 per cent to 10 per cent in the event of a collision and reduce the number of collisions in the first place.

Vision Zero and the policy direction for the region as outlined in TransLink's Transport 2050 plan advocate for 30 km/h on local roads. Slower speeds in residential areas support quieter, more livable neighbourhoods and enhance the environment for cyclists and pedestrians.

Several municipalities in North America have reduced speed limits on local roads. In 2025, the City of Vancouver adopted, in principle, a blanket 30 km/h speed limit on all minor streets to be implemented in phases. Vancouver is the only Metro Vancouver municipality to have taken this approach to date. The cities of Victoria and Saanich on Vancouver Island have also adopted a 30 km/h speed limit for local residential roads.

Roads Suited to 30 km/h

A review of City roads was undertaken to determine suitability for a 30km/h speed limit. Road classification plays a key role in setting appropriate speed limits. Roadways are classified based on their functional needs for mobility (moving traffic efficiently) and property access. Arterial roads are designed to prioritize high volumes of through traffic, making a 30 km/h speed limit on these thoroughfares operationally inefficient. In contrast, the majority of the City's local and collector road network is designed for residential access and are good candidates for a 30 km/h speed limit.

Attachment 1 identifies the roads within the City that support lowering the speed limit to 30 km/h as these roads:

- Are contained within a neighbourhood residential zone bounded by arterial roads;
- Carry low volumes of traffic travelling short distances;
- Have narrow pavement widths with typically no centreline;
- Provide access to single-family residential land uses;
- Generally, permit on-street parking;
- Have a 30 km/hr speed limit in place on roads fronting schools and neighbourhood parks.

Some local roads, such as Dyke Road and River Road along the perimeter dike, have the physical characteristics of a local road, however, carry higher through traffic and longer distance trips. The perimeter roads and roads within City Centre that front a mix of higher intensity land uses, are not proposed for reduced speed limits.

Proposed Approach to Lowering Speed Limits

Currently, speed limit reductions on local roads are implemented on a neighbourhood-by-neighbourhood basis in response to resident requests and the outcome of engagement with area residents. To establish a 30 km/h speed limit, Council approval of bylaw amendments is sought, and installation of signage is required for enforcement. This process has been successful at implementing 30 km/h speed limits in the City.

Should Council wish to consider advancing a 30 km/h speed limit in all the residential neighbourhoods identified in Attachment 1, there are options for public engagement and implementation of a city-wide program.

Public Engagement Options

Option A: Public Consultation

Currently, when requests for lowering the speed limits on local roads are received, staff survey the neighbourhood to assess the level of support by the affected residents. Staff could undertake consultation with the community to seek the level of support for a 30 km/h within the residential neighbourhoods identified in Attachment 1. As there are over 40,000 unique addresses fronting the proposed roads and approximately 50 neighbourhoods, engagement at this scale would take approximately six months.

Based on community feedback from past engagements, a central theme has been that a 50 km/h speed limit is too high for neighbourhood roads. Based on over 3,000 direct interactions with community members in the Hamilton, Steveston and London Road/Princess Lane neighbourhoods, an average of 70 per cent of respondents have been in favour of 30 km/h speed limits. In all areas of the City where 30 km/h speed zone have been implemented, staff have not received negative feedback from the public. Staff believe a broader engagement would yield similar results.

Option B: Public Awareness Campaigns (Recommended)

An alternative to public consultation is an accompanying education and awareness program. This option would implement a targeted paid digital advertising campaign to reach Richmond residents, most likely to be impacted by the changes. The campaign will use geographically targeted ads on platforms such as Facebook, Instagram and Google to promote key messages, direct residents to the project webpage, and encourage participation in the engagement process. This approach will help ensure information is broadly accessible, improve reach beyond organic communications and support transparency by providing residents with timely and consistent updates. The estimated cost for Option B is \$5,000.00. Funding is available within the existing operating budget.

Implementation Options

To implement 30 km/h speed zones in all residential neighbourhoods, appropriate signage and bylaw amendments are required. As there are approximately 500 lane kilometres of local and collector roads within 50 residential neighbourhoods, there are options available for implementation. The options were developed in consideration of the number and cost of signage. Without signage notifying drivers of a 30 km/h speed limit, the default speed limit of 50 km/h as set by the MVA would apply. Bylaw amendments would need to be enacted for each option.

Option 1: Phased Implementation – Select Neighbourhoods

Given the size of Richmond's local road network (approximately 500 lane kilometres), this option would implement this initiative through a phased approach. Bylaw amendments and signage would be implemented initially in eight neighbourhoods using the funds available within the Council approved 2026 Traffic Calming Program approved capital funds of \$200,000. The

remaining 42 neighbourhoods will be included in future capital submissions for Council's consideration in the annual budget process.

Bylaw amendments would have to be brought forward as part of each future phase of implementation. This patch work approach could cause confusion as not all residential neighbourhoods would have a consistent speed limit.

Option 2: City-wide Implementation - Sign Every Street

This option involves implementing 30 km/h speed zones in all residential neighbourhoods identified in Attachment 1 through installation of signs on every road. This has been the approach in the existing neighbourhoods where a change to a 30 km/h speed limit has been made. For the proposed roads in Attachment 1, approximately 5,000 new signs would be required at a cost of approximately \$250.00 per sign or \$1,250,000 total. The amount exceeds the available funding in the approved 2026 capital budget. If Council direct staff to undertake this option, additional funding would need to be approved by Council, and the Consolidated 5 Year Financial Plan would need to be amended. Bylaw amendments would be brought forward once funding is secured for this option.

This option would ensure the public is aware of the speed limit on each street, however, with the increased number of signs, this approach may also lead to sign clutter.

Option 3: City-wide Implementation - Gateway Signs (Recommended)

Similar to Option 2, this approach involves city-wide implementation of 30 km/h speed zones in the proposed residential neighbourhoods. However, this option would install signs at key locations to inform drivers. The total number of signs would be reduced compared to Option 2 through placement where drivers enter local roads from arterials. On this basis, approximately 700 new signs (approximately 15 per neighbourhood) would be required. School zones within these areas would also have 30 km/h signs. This option balances the number of signs to raise public awareness of the 30 km/h speed limit within a neighbourhood while maintaining the public realm objectives. The cost for this option is approximately \$175,000, which can be funded from the Council approved 2026 Traffic Calming Program. Staff would bring forward the associated bylaw amendments for Council consideration and the anticipated timeframe to implement the new signs is three months following bylaw adoption.

Should requests for additional signage by residents be received or hot spot locations arise from an enforcement perspective, additional signs may be added to reinforce the lower speed limit. Funding for any spot locations of additional signage will be from the remaining funds in the capital budget.

Enforcement

Should Council approve lowering the speed limit on the proposed residential neighbourhood roads, staff will work with the Richmond RCMP on providing special attention during the initial program launch as resources permit. Richmond RCMP advise this could be a challenge given their priority is to focus enforcement at locations where most traffic-related fatalities and serious injuries occur.

Proposed Complementary Traffic Calming Process

Speed limit reductions are more effective when combined with physical traffic calming measures (traffic circles, speed cushions, etc.).

Consistent with the City's current traffic calming program, should residents express speeding concerns following the lowering of the posted speed limit, they will be able to request complementary traffic calming infrastructure. Staff will review requests and develop speed mitigation measures in consultation with area residents.

Current City Policy 7018 permits the Director, Transportation to implement traffic calming on local roads if a majority of affected residents support the project. Previous traffic calming surveys typically yield a response rate of 30 to 40 per cent, which makes achieving majority support of affected residents difficult. Typically support by 50 per cent of respondents to a traffic calming survey is achieved. In anticipation of increased requests for traffic calming to support the 30 km/h speed limit, staff recommend changes to the existing policy. The proposed changes would authorize the Director, Transportation to implement traffic calming measures, if engagement with residents immediately adjacent to the proposed traffic calming measure results in at least 50 per cent support of survey respondents. This would improve staff's ability to address resident speeding concerns in a timely manner.

Should Council support the proposed approach to implementing traffic calming on local roads, staff will bring forward the policy amendments for Council approval. Funding for the complementary traffic calming process will be included in the future year capital submissions for Council consideration as part of the annual budget process.

Financial Impact

Option 3 of the proposed speed reduction program to reduce the posted speed limit within residential neighbourhoods to 30 km/h is estimated to cost \$175,000 and can be funded through the Council approved 2026 Traffic Calming Program capital project.

The comprehensive public awareness campaign, as described in Option B of this report, can be funded through the existing operating budget.

Conclusion

Staff have identified residential neighbourhoods with local and collector roads that could support a 30 km/h speed limit (Attachment 1). The proposed approach to lowering speed limits on these roads, as described in Option 3 of this report, includes a strategic gateway signage plan. This approach will inform drivers of the new speed limit at the entry points to each neighbourhood to balance the enforcement requirements with the cost for signage.

A lower speed limit will support making these roads more comfortable for pedestrians and cyclists. This initiative advances Vision Zero and road safety by moving from the City's current

approach of targeted speed limit reduction interventions to a comprehensive and consistent speed limit for residential neighbourhoods in the City.

Research on vehicle speeds and road safety show strong correlations between lower speeds and improved safety. Speed limit reductions are also effective in reducing actual speeds for local roads.

Should Council approve this approach to lowering speed limits, staff will bring forward the associated bylaw amendments.

A comprehensive public awareness campaign, as described in Option B of this report, would accompany the proposed approach to lowering speed limits.



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Att. 1: Proposed 30km/h Residential Neighbourhood Speed Zones

