



# City of Richmond

## Report to Committee

**To:** Public Works and Transportation Committee  
**From:** Lloyd Bie, P.Eng.  
 Director, Transportation  
**Re:** Review of Requirement for Bike Bells

**Date:** January 19, 2026  
**File:** 10-6500-01/2025-Vol  
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### Staff Recommendations

1. That Option 3 as described in the report titled "Review of Requirement for Bike Bells" dated January 19, 2026, from the Director, Transportation be approved; and
2. That the Traffic Bylaw No. 5870, Amendment Bylaw No. 10718, to include the provision of bicycle bells, be introduced and given first, second and third readings.

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

REPORT CONCURRENCE		
ROUTED TO:	CONCURRENCE	CONCURRENCE OF GENERAL MANAGER
RCMP	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Community Bylaws	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Law	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
<b>SENIOR STAFF REPORT REVIEW</b>	INITIALS: 	<b>APPROVED BY CAO</b> 

## Staff Report

### Origin

At July 23, 2025, Council meeting, the following motion was endorsed by Council.

*That staff look at the options for bells or other noise-making devices on bicycles, e-bikes, scooters, and other micro-mobility devices.*

This report responds to this 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.*

### Analysis

The BC Motor Vehicle Act (MVA) governs regulations for cyclists, including e-bikes and e-scooters. Cyclists are generally subject to the same rules as drivers, including having to yield to pedestrians. The MVA requires e-scooters to be equipped with a bell or horn so riders can use a consistent and courteous method to communicate their presence to others compared to verbal notification to warn others. However, the MVA does not require the same for bicycles or e-bikes. This creates inconsistencies, as e-scooter riders must have a bell, but cyclists are not legally required to have one.

To address this inconsistency, municipalities can adopt bylaws requiring bells on bicycles.

#### Options to Encourage Use of Bicycle Bells

Bike bells serve as an effective warning device to alert pedestrians and other users of an approaching bike, particularly in busy areas when cyclists are passing from behind.

The City's Traffic Bylaw currently includes safety equipment requirements for bicycles, such as brakes and reflectors. Bells are referenced in the Traffic Bylaw, however, the bell-related regulation is outdated, as it only addresses excessive use, not the requirement for a bicycle to be equipped with a bell. There are several options to promote the use of bells, or similar noise-emitting devices, by cyclists to warn pedestrians when approaching or passing.

#### *Option 1 - Status Quo*

Option 1 relies on the existing courtesy signs on shared pathways in the City that include messaging for cyclists to yield to pedestrians, as well as cyclists' voluntary use of bike bells. Staff have not received concerns or requests from the public regarding the lack of bell use or other audible warning by cyclists on shared pathways. Option 1 does not propose any bylaw changes.

*Option 2 - Enhanced Education*

Option 2 includes amplifying messaging related to appropriate use of ringing a bell, or other device, to alert pedestrians when cyclists are passing as part of the City's ongoing cycling education campaigns. Option 2 does not propose any bylaw changes.

*Option 3 - Bylaw Amendment and Enhanced Education (Recommended)*

Option 3 involves introducing Amendment Bylaw No. 10718 to Traffic Bylaw No. 5870 which includes the requirement for bicycles to be equipped with bells to align with the regulations of the MVA for e-scooters. This option recommends bylaw amendments to enhance safety and courtesy on roads and multi-use pathways with the requirement of a bell to warn pedestrians of a cyclist's approach. This would be consistent with other cities in the Lower Mainland, including Vancouver, WhiteRock and Coquitlam, that have bylaw requirements for bicycle bells.

With the rising popularity of e-scooter and e-bikes, establishing the bylaw requirement of bike bells creates a uniform expectation across all devices and addresses the inconsistency in the MVA. Introduction of this proposed bylaw amendment would be timely given the expansion and popularity of the City's shared pathway system that creates many interactions amongst various users. For example, the Railway Greenway averages over 1,200 users a day and as of December 15, 2025, data from the 18 existing bike counters on shared pathways have registered over 2,000,000 users in 2025.

As the bylaw can only require devices to be equipped with a bell, complementary education is important to reinforce its appropriate use. As part of this option, messaging related to appropriate usage of ringing a bell to alert pedestrians when cyclists are approaching or passing would be included as part of the City's ongoing cycling education campaigns.

*Enforcement*

The Richmond RCMP advises that targeted enforcement of the requirement for bike bells, similar to other cycling requirements, will occur when the opportunity is afforded. The RCMP is also committed to enforcement of higher priority violations such as "hotspots" in the City, identified as a result of high collision statistics through intelligence led data analysis that they prioritize. The City will continue to monitor and analyze cycling data and collaborate with the RCMP to mitigate violations when and where applicable.

**Financial Impact**

None.

**Conclusion**

Staff recommend updating the City's Traffic Bylaw to require all bicycles to be equipped with bells to enhance safety between cyclists and other road users as the use of a bell will signal the presence of an approaching bicycle.

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Amendment Bylaw No. 10718 to the Traffic Bylaw No. 5870 further clarifies and establishes that bicycle bells be required when operating bicycles, e-bikes and e-scooters. Ongoing and enhanced education efforts will continue in collaboration with the Richmond RCMP and other stakeholders to reinforce the appropriate use of bells by cyclists to warn pedestrians when passing.



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Traffic Bylaw No. 5870
Amendment Bylaw No. 10718

The Council of the City of Richmond enacts as follows:

- 1. Traffic Bylaw No. 5870, as amended, is further amended by deleting Section 28.2 and replacing it with the following:
28.2 Every bicycle, e-bike or e-scooter when operated upon a street, bicycle lane or designated shared pathway shall be equipped with reflectors in good condition, and it shall be unlawful for any bicycle, e-bike or e-scooter to be equipped with a siren or whistle.
2. Traffic Bylaw No. 5870, as amended, is further amended by adding a new Section 28.3 as follows:
28.3 No person shall ride a bicycle, e-bike or e-scooter upon a street, bicycle lane, or designated shared pathway unless the bicycle, e-bike or e-scooter is equipped with a bell, or similar device, capable of being used as a warning.
3. This Bylaw is cited as "Traffic Bylaw No. 5870, Amendment Bylaw No. 10718".

FIRST READING

SECOND READING

THIRD READING

ADOPTED

Four horizontal lines for signatures corresponding to the reading stages.

Approval stamp: CITY OF RICHMOND, APPROVED for content by originating dept. (with signature), APPROVED for legality by Solicitor (with signature BRB).

MAYOR

CORPORATE OFFICER