

The Corporation of the District of Central Saanich

REGULAR COUNCIL REPORT

For the Regular Council meeting on Monday, May 26, 2025

Re: Central Saanich Speed Reduction Considerations and Discussion Items

PURPOSE:

This report is to address directives from Council regarding speed reduction and traffic safety as outlined below.

BACKGROUND:

Council provided the below resolutions to be incorporated into this report:

- 1. On January 27 during the Regular Council Meeting, Council directed engineering to attach road accident statistics to the report when the Central Saanich Speed Reduction Bylaw, referenced in this report, comes back to Council.
- 2. That in relation to item #11.3 of the January 27, 2025 meeting, the District request that the District of Saanich provide their experience with the speed reduction pilot, in regards to speed, road rage, accidents, and serious accidents, to date.
- 3. On February 10 during the Regular Council Meeting, council requested that [the letter titled Corr Blankenborg, V re Central Saanich Speed Reduction Project - January 28, 2025] be referred to the speed reduction project.

Staff have also included a short section using several low speed municipal roads as a case study.

DISCUSSION:

Crash Statistics 2014-2024

The data from the ICBC Traffic Accident System (TAS), shown in Appendix A, offers insights that can help inform decisions around speed limits and road safety. With over 1,100 collisions between 2014 and 2023—398 involving bodily injury and 7 resulting in fatalities in Central Saanich —it's clear that there are opportunities to reduce risk, particularly through preventative measures like speed reduction. Lower speeds have been consistently shown to reduce both the likelihood and severity of collisions, especially for vulnerable road users using our walking and rolling networks.

Many of these collisions have occurred during daytime hours and in high-conflict areas like intersections, driveways, and parking lots—locations where lower speeds can make a significant difference. By implementing targeted speed reductions, particularly in areas with a high concentration of incidents or pedestrian activity, municipalities can proactively address the conditions that lead to serious crashes rather than relying solely on reactive enforcement or infrastructure changes after the fact. Importantly, over half of these incidents occurred along the major corridors highlighted in our speed reduction

rollout priority list, reinforcing the need for focused safety interventions in these areas. See Bylaw 2227, submitted for Council Review as part of the May 26, 2025 Regular Council Meeting, for the list of priority corridors.

Saanich Speed Reduction Feedback

The District of Saanich has reported that speed reduction has been successful within its first stages of the rollout. Lower speeds of 40km/h in more rural areas challenging to enforce but have helped to lower the overall speeds of the area and reform driver behavior.

Other nearby municipalities have already implemented speed reductions, recognizing that slower speeds save lives. In some cases, "NEW" signage tabs were initially overlooked and then added later to improve driver awareness. Saanich has recommended that these signs are included during the initial rollout. Saanich also introduced traffic calming features such as speed humps, raised crosswalks, and road narrowing tools in areas with persistent speeding, helping to reinforce the lower limits and change driver behavior over time.

Success of traffic calming can be measured not only by speed reduction experienced, but also by a reduction in traffic volumes along a corridor. The example given was Oldfield Road where Saanich installed a series of speed humps in 2024. The Speeds have been somewhat reduced, but with a noticeable reduction in vehicular volumes.

Traffic Safety on Wallace Dr. (West Saanich to Bayside School)

On January 28, 2025, a resident from Wallace Drive wrote in with suggestions for traffic safety improvements along the corridor. On February 10, 2025, Council asked Engineering to address those comments in this report. The letter is attached in Appendix B.

Key points from the letter are outlined below:

- 1. Raise crosswalks at the schools to increase pedestrian visibility and traffic calming
- 2. Make Wallace Drive and Marchant Road a 4-way stop for traffic to slow down drivers
- 3. Increase law enforcement along this corridor
- 4. Increase speed reader signs
- 5. Lower speed limits are inconvenient and do not address the minority of speeders

Staff have addressed these points below:

- 1. Staff are weighing the benefits of raising crosswalks along this corridor versus placing strategic speed humps at intermediate locations to help spread the traffic calming effort more evenly along the corridor.
- 2. Staff are reviewing meaningful changes for this intersection that fit within the context of the road use and classification and that meet standards set out by The Transport Association of Canada Manual (TAC) and BC Active Transportation Design Guideline (BCATDG). The TAC Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) *directly states that all-way stops are not to be used as a speed control device and, if used inappropriately, can increase the number of collisions at an intersection*. As previously shared, Staff are working with a consulting engineer to create a study of the intersection to determine the best long-term solution. This study may include small pilot projects for data collection and to observe the function and safety of the intersection during peak times.

- 3. Central Saanich Police Services regularly monitor this corridor in both marked and unmarked police vehicles at times when people are most vulnerable and throughout the day. Their observations are that the majority of drivers are obeying speed limits and exhibiting good driver behavior. On top of regular area enforcement, they have spend additional time reviewing concerns of poor driving behavior, and drive through on both weekdays and weekends to observe the area. Police are working to balance their resources to provide enforcement services to all the deserving areas of the municipality and plan to continue their presence along this corridor.
- 4. There is an existing speed reader board, located on Wallace Drive southwest of Marchant. Due to constrained budgets, boards are prioritised based on persistent speed violations, road volumes, proximity to school or institutions, resident requests, and enforcement input. Staff are reviewing possible locations for an additional speed reader board along Wallace Drive and building it into the prioritization list.
- 5. When a vehicle strikes a pedestrian at 50 km/h, the likelihood of fatality is about 80%. At 30 km/h, that risk drops drastically. The goal of speed reduction is not to penalize rule-abiding drivers, but to create safer conditions overall, regardless of who is obeying the rules and who isn't.

Even with additional traffic calming, which the District intends to implement, the excessive speeding behavior exhibited by a subset of drivers will continue to be a challenge to curb. Traffic calming can be measured in speed reduction and vehicular volume reduction and should align with driver behavior for a given area.

Central Saanich Low Speed Case Study

Appendix C, attached, outlines traffic data from a sample of low-speed roads within Central Saanich. the outline includes the posted speed limit, average traffic speeds, average speeding, and the locations of the traffic tubes. Note that the highest speeds produced by outliers has not been included. In British Columbia, the default speed limit is 50km/h unless otherwise posted within a Municipality. The purpose of this section of the report is to show that, in general, lower speed limits result in lower speeds. It increases the fines for those who choose to drive over the posted speed limit, which helps to discourage dangerous driving behaviour.

CONCLUSION:

The insights and discussions provided in this report reflect Council's direction and the District's ongoing commitment to improving road safety for all users. By incorporating a reduction in speed limits, as outlined in proposed Bylaw 2227, evaluating crash data, learning from neighbouring municipalities like Saanich, and considering resident feedback, this initiative aims to proactively address traffic-related risks rather than react to them after the fact.

Reducing speeds—particularly in areas with pedestrian and cyclist activity—is a proven, data-supported strategy for minimizing the severity of collisions and creating safer, more livable streets. The proposed changes, along with complementary traffic calming measures, represent a balanced approach that prioritizes safety while respecting community context and enforcement realities.

The District will continue to monitor the effects of these interventions and collaborate with residents and regional partners to ensure outcomes align with both safety goals and public expectations

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ATTACHMENTS:

Appendix A: ICBC Traffic Accident System Statistics Appendix C: Letter from Wallace Drive Resident Appendix B: Lower Speed Limit Case Study Data