

Operational Services Briefing to
Community Development Committee
2023 June 28

ISC: UNRESTRICTED
CD2023-0737

Neighbourhood Speed Limit Preliminary Evaluation

PURPOSE OF BRIEFING

Mobility safety continues to be a top concern for Calgarians. In response to this, City Council directed Administration to lower the default speed limit to 40 km/h on neighbourhood roadways effective May 31, 2021. Administration was also directed at that time to provide a preliminary evaluation of the change no later than Q2 2023. More information about the neighbourhood speed limit change is available at [Calgary.ca/saferspeed](https://calgary.ca/saferspeed).

This briefing outlines how changes to the default speed limit are viewed by Calgarians, requests to review speed limits, the resulting changes to observed speeds and our planned next steps to report on safety outcomes.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

The default speed limit within the City of Calgary was reduced to 40 km/h on May 31, 2021. Collector classification roadways in Calgary largely remained at 50 km/h following the reduction of default speed limit. There were, however, a select number of collector roadways which were appropriate to lower the speed limit to 40 km/h based on slower observed speeds and roadway characteristics that fostered slower speeds.

In total, over 5,200 signs to support the change were planned, designed and installed between February 1, 2021 and May 31, 2021. This included 98 signs at 82 locations to notify motorists entering the city of the default speed limit, and signs on collector roadways to make it clear for motorists where it is 50 km/h and where it is 40 km/h. The default speed limit of 40 km/h applied to approximately 3,200 km of residential roadways while the majority of the 1,300 km of collector roadways remained at 50 km/h, with 340 km being reduced to 40 km/h.

Preliminary results indicate that Calgarians are supportive of the change, requests for changes have overwhelmingly been to reduce speeds, and observed speeds on both collector roadways and residential roadways have reduced 0.8 to 2.5 km/h. This may sound small, but it is a significant reduction in terms of the expected frequency and severity of collisions - it is a promising leading indicator of safer outcomes on neighbourhood roadways.

Additional post-implementation data is required for a meaningful review of the change in collisions. A preliminary review of change in collisions as a result of the speed limit change will be included with the Safer Mobility Plan 2023 annual report in Q4 2023. A final evaluation of the neighbourhood speed limit change including the full 2023 calendar year will be presented with the 2024 Safer Mobility Plan annual report in Q4 2024.

Council also directed Administration to develop new design standards for new construction and retrofit of existing roadways to support lower and safer speeds, and to develop a framework to reduce operating speeds on collector classification roadways. This work is ongoing. Design standards are being updated in alignment with revisions to the Complete Streets policy and

guide, underway as part of the City Building Program. In the meantime, improved retrofit designs to support reduced speed limits are being considered as part of other City road construction projects, where budgets allow.

An important aspect of the speed limit change is the support from the Calgary Police Service on education and enforcement of the reduced speed limit. Administration will continue to work with Calgary Police Service to gain a deeper understanding of these contributions to the speed limit change and include these findings as a part of the final evaluation of the change.

The City of Edmonton completed their change to a default speed limit of 40 km/h on August 6, 2021 and we will update on their future evaluations in our next report on this subject. No other municipality in Alberta has enabling legislation to change default speed limit but advancements will be monitored as we continue our work. The Town of Canmore reduced their speed limit using signage to 30 km/h on June 12, 2023, and we will connect to remain apprised of future evaluations. The City of Toronto has initiated work to revise all local residential roads to 30 km/h by 2025 through a systematic program using an area-based approach that is not possible within our City of Calgary Charter legislation; however, we will be monitoring evaluations of this ongoing effort. Similarly, several boroughs in Montreal have been continuing to reduce speed limits from 40 km/h to 30 km/h as a part of their Vision Zero initiatives and there has been recognition that roadway changes are an important part of that direction.

Future reporting will include updates to status of changing design standards, review of collisions with a larger post-implementation data set, an overview of enforcement activities to support the change, and updated evaluations of speed limit changes in other jurisdictions. Administration will report back to Council with a second preliminary report, including initial collision data analysis, as a part of the Safer Mobility Plan annual report in Q3 2023 and a final report as part of the same annual report in Q4 2024.

ATTACHMENT(S)

1. Attach 1 - Previous Council Direction
2. Attach 2 - Neighbourhood Speed Limit Preliminary Evaluation