



CITY COUNCIL REPORT

TITLE:

DEFAULT SPEED CHANGE IN THE CITY OF BRANDON

PRESENTER:

Sam van Huizen

DEPARTMENT:

Engineering

ATTACHMENTS:

DATE:

4/10/2026

CLEARANCE / APPROVALS:

Ryan Nickel General Manager

Dave Wardrop City Manager

RECOMMENDATION(S):

That City Council request the Province of Manitoba amend the Highway Traffic Act to allow the City of Brandon to set the default speed limit through a by-law.

BACKGROUND:

Residents in the City of Brandon have raised concerns to members of Council and Administration regarding speed limit compliance in local neighbourhoods. A pilot project to address speed, traffic volumes due to shortcutting and compliance commenced in December 2021 with a reduction to the speed limit on Durum Drive to 40 km/h between Aberdeen Avenue and 26th Street. This pilot project was expanded to incorporate neighbourhoods, other local collectors and areas of elevated concern, such as playgrounds. In June and July of 2023 the speed limit reduction study was expanded to reduce the speed limit to 40km/h in the Parkdale neighbourhood, Riverheights neighbourhood and along Princess Avenue East between 1st Street and 13th Street East. The speed limit was also reduced to 30 km/h around Rideau Park. The results of this pilot was presented to Council in September 2024. That report can be found attached as Appendix I. Speed limits from the pilot have remained in place.

ANALYSIS:

Administration has continued to collect data in order to gain a better understanding of how reduced speeds is affecting travel patterns. The trends are indicating that as time passes, compliance decreases without intervention through enforcement and/or traffic calming. Nevertheless, having a discussion on reducing speed limits for the benefits that reduced speed limit have on road safety will allow the City to move forward to further reduce risk for serious injury or fatality. Some of the safety benefits that other municipalities have

seen with reduction include a 25 percent reduction in overall collisions and a 31 percent reduction in injuries and fatalities caused by collisions in the two years that followed the change.

Changing the speed limit is currently within the ability of the City of Brandon to do, however, the current regulation 30/2019 Traffic Authority Speed Limits Regulation within the Highway Traffic Act requires traffic authorities to affix signage for speeds less than 50km/h at the point where the speed limit begins and within 200 meters after each intersection within a roadway other than a back lane. If the City of Brandon would implement a change of speed on local roads, there would be significant costs associated with the placement of signs costing tax payers an estimated **\$2,250,000** for the purchase and installation of signs. The time requirement for this installation would be a two person team completing about 24 locations per day for 1.5 construction seasons. Additionally, having signage at every intersection lowers the efficacy of such signage. Road signs are meant to inform road users of regulatory or warnings on the roadways and when they are overused, their impact is diminished.

A default speed limit change gives the municipalities to blanket cover the City with a reduced speed limit to 40 km/h and keep roadways at elevated speeds where appropriate. Roadway characteristics will determine if a road segment should be 40 km/h or remain at the current default rate of 50 km/h. Characteristics of a 40km/h speed limit roadway would include:

- Residential Land use
- Residential Frontage
- Sidewalks/Multi-use pathways
- Narrow roadway width
- On-street parking presence

Characteristics for maintaining 50 km/h speeds could include:

- Wider roadway widths
- Limited accesses
- Wide rights of way with good sight lines
- Divided roadways

These roadways would be mapped out as a part of the work associated with the City's Movement Plan for discussion with the public and stakeholders.

Moving forward with this work, the City would provide a formal request to the Minister of Municipal and Northern Relations to formally request amendments to the Highway Traffic Act. This action has been adopted and moved by the City of Winnipeg, who has completed similar pilot projects with concurring recommendations. A meeting with officials with Manitoba Transportation and Infrastructure also recommend that the City formally make a request to consider this change.

LEGISLATIVE REQUIREMENTS:

Administration will draft a letter to the Minister of Municipal and Northern Relations in accordance with the Municipal Act and work with the administrations of these bodies to ensure this request moves along. Any amendments to the Traffic By-law or other City requirements will come before Council for consideration as necessary.

STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT:

The entire subject of speed limit reduction stems from the principles of Vision Zero – the philosophy that the number of fatalities and serious injury that occur within the right of way can approach zero with the use of speed limit reduction and infrastructure design that separates vulnerable road users from vehicle traffic.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

The City has approved funds in the 2026 budget to continue public engagement and planning under the Movement Plan project. Discussions on speed limits in the City of Brandon will occur as a part of this work. No additional funds are expected in 2026, however, costs associated with the decision of the Province will be considered for 2027 and beyond.

RISK ASSESSMENT:

While the City of Brandon continues to have low collision rates resulting in fatality and serious injury of vulnerable road users. However low, vision zero prioritizes that we can do better to utilize and reduce this risk by way of implementing a safe systems approach via road design, traffic calming and pedestrian crosswalk enhancements.

COMMUNICATION STRATEGY:

Communication will occur through Council bulletins and reports to Council. As mentioned, discussions and communication on speed reduction will be incorporated in the Movement Plan project through public engagement and stakeholder conversations. Additional communication that focuses on advertising and the development of educational resources for the public to learn more about Road Safety initiatives will be developed and implemented.

CONCLUSION:

That City Council request the Province of Manitoba amend the Highway Traffic Act to allow the City of Brandon to set the default speed limit through a by-law.

Recommendations:

That the update report on the City of Brandon Speed Limit Reduction Pilot Project be received.

Background:

Residents in the City of Brandon have raised concerns to members of Council and Administration regarding speed limit compliance in local neighbourhoods. While residents concerns originate from all wards within the city, a large concentration arose from the Parkdale neighbourhood and specifically along Durum Drive. A pilot project to address speed, traffic volumes due to shortcutting and compliance commenced in December 2021 with a reduction to the speed limit on Durum Drive to 40 km/h between Aberdeen Avenue and 26th Street. This pilot set out to test if speed limit reduction with posted signage alone would be able to adequately change the behaviours of motorists.

After a full year of data collection, Administration concluded that there was general compliance with a posted speed limit but not as much on stretches of roadway designed for speeds higher than what is posted. The City concluded that the pilot should be expanded to incorporate neighbourhoods, other local collectors and areas of elevated concern, such as playgrounds.

In June and July of 2023 the speed limit reduction study was expanded to reduce the speed limit to 40km/h in the Parkdale neighbourhood, Riverheights neighbourhood and along Princess Avenue East between 1st Street and 13th Street East. The speed limit was also reduced to 30 km/h around Rideau Park. The pilot was set to be in place for at least one year to monitor speed compliance before and after the change as well as in situations where traffic calming measures were implemented to assist with compliance.

Analysis:

Traffic counts were monitored at a variety of locations within the study area both before and after the speed limit reduction came into effect. Discrete radar data collection was the primary source for speed data collection but digital speed radar boards that shows real-time speed to motorists was also included in the traffic analysis. Data collected before the implemented reduced speed limits were completed with discrete radar counters. Counts were completed to monitor if there was compliance before and after the speed limit change. The charts below summarize the counts and speeds before and after the speed limit reductions:

Location	Average Annual Daily Trips (AADT)			85 th Percentile Speed (km/h)		
	Spring 2023	Summer / Fall 2023	Summer 2024	Spring 2023	Summer / Fall 2023	Summer 2024
3700 Centennial Blvd.	727 / 808	N/A	891 / 1109	50 / 50 (50 km/h)	N/A	48 / 51 (40 km/h)
70 E Fotheringham Drive	525 / 441	457 / 358	486 / 386	50 / 48 (50 km/h)	48 / 45 (40 km/h)	49 / 47 (40 km/h)
400 Lorne Avenue East	350 / 402	512 / 397	619 / 455	49 / 49 (50 km/h)	50 / 48 (30 km/h)	48 / 47 (30 km/h)

30 Parkdale Drive	218 / 196	154 / 133	176 / 145	45 / 45 (50 km/h)	45 / 47 (40 km/h)	43 / 44 (40 km/h)
200 Princess Avenue East	542 / 1008	524 / 1076	487 / 712	56 / 55 (50 km/h)	54 / 54 (40 km/h)	54 / 54 (40 km/h)
500 Princess Avenue East	454 / 940	389 / 770	415 / 766	56 / 56 (50 km/h)	53 / 52 (40 km/h)	53 / 53 (40 km/h)
900 Princess Avenue East	235 / 512	251 / 468	315 / 463	56 / 55 (50 km/h)	54 / 52 (40 km/h)	54 / 51 (40 km/h)
3500 Rosser Avenue	1200 / 1087	1066 / 901	1189 / 1385	54 / 55 (50 km/h)	50 / 50 (40 km/h)	51 / 53 (40 km/h)
4500 Rosser Avenue	305 / 254	290 / 227	210 / 187	53 / 54 (50 km/h)	49 / 49 (40 km/h)	48 / 49 (40 km/h)

The attached table indicates average annual daily trips (AADT) and the 85th Percentile recorded speed. The colours of the numbers in the chart indicate various levels of compliance with the posted speed limit:

- Green values indicate that the 85th percentile is travelling at or below the posted speed limit
- Orange values indicate that the 85th percentile is travelling above the posted speed limit and
- Red values indicate that the 85th percentile is traveling above the posted speed limit and trending faster than previously observed

Observed data indicates across the various locations that initially there is some reduction to speed limits, however, the 85th Percentile is still closer to the original speed limit. This indicates that while initially, a speed limit reductions with signage alone may initially cause speeds to reduce, however, long term compliance is not evident. Data collected a year after a reduced speed limit is showing a greater number of vehicles are driving based on the conditions rather than the posted signage. Roadways within the City of Brandon are developed with an operating speed of the default speed limit (currently 50 km/h). Motorists operate their vehicle at speeds with a certain comfort level. When factors that change this comfort level are present, motorists will naturally change their driving habits. These factors are known as traffic calming and including elements of traffic calming can help reduce speeds when the design of a roadway do not encourage drivers to operate at a lower speed.

Due to lower compliance rates for the reduced posted speed limit, the incorporation of traffic calming was installed at two locations in December 2023

Location	October 2022 (50 km/h)	June 2023 (50 km/h)	Sept 2023 (40 km/h)	February 2024 (40 km/h)	July 2024 (40 km/h)
Princess Ave E	1203 / 57 km/h	747 / 56 km/h	719 / 52 km/h	704 / 40 km/h	819 / 51 km/h

AADT/85th Percentile

On Princess Avenue East, the data does indicate a decrease in speeds at the 85th percentile when the posted speed was reduced, however it is still in the range of requiring enforcement. A mini-roundabout

was chosen for Princess Avenue E at Douglas Street to measure its effect on the long corridor that has no stop control. Douglas was chosen as this intersection sees the highest cross traffic volumes along the Princess Avenue East corridor. The corridor saw a reduction in speed at the 85th percentile after installation, however, following up at later times of the year, it appears that speeds have rebounded to their previous rates. This indicates that the mini-roundabout temporary traffic calming option may not be as effective as initially proposed and that other traffic calming options should be considered to assist in bringing the 85th percentile closer to the posted speed limit.

Other traffic calming measures that have been taken include speed radar board deployment. These traffic calming devices both measure speeds but also provide reminders to would be speeders to check their speeds and adhere to the speed limit. Speed boards can be effective in the short term, however, independent studies conducted across North America indicate that while speed radar boards show an effective reduction in traffic speed, the success of this traffic calming measure reduces over time.

Public Engagement

A public engagement survey was conducted prior to the implementation of reduced speed zones. Surveys were open to all residents in the City of Brandon and classified them based on address. Questions focused on gauging the public opinion of residents on a speed limit reduction and traffic calming. A total of 176 responses were collected. Some of the key findings are listed below:

- 84% of all respondents believe that the default speed limit of 50 km/h should not be lowered
- Responses were split between agreement and disagreement regarding speed reduction near parks
- 53% of all respondents would change their route to avoid a reduced speed zone
- 68% of all respondents do not want to see image capture speed limit enforcement in the City of Brandon
- 64% of all respondents do not believe that speed limit reduction will cause roadways to be safer for non-vehicle traffic

A complete summary is included in the appendix to this report. [City of Brandon 2023 Speed Study Survey - Summary](#)

These results are not a complete reflection of the City of Brandon as a whole and further engagement should be taken to better understand where residents stand on the issue of speed limit reduction. The findings also indicate that there is a disparity between the facts about road safety resulting from studies in other jurisdictions and what public opinion is on the topic. Further public engagement is necessary so as to better communicate the justification behind why the City wants to foster for safer roads.

Public engagement has also come in the form of residents reaching out to provide feedback and ask questions on the subject of speed reduction. Over the past year, the City took calls from 14 different residents in all wards asking if speed reductions could be considered in their neighbourhoods and parks.

Conclusions

The past year of study on the effects of speed limit reduction has resulted in a few key conclusions:

- Speed limit reduction with signage alone may not be enough for compliance

- Traffic calming does improve speed limit compliance, but perhaps only for a short period of time and only at the point of installation
- Traffic calming can be seen as a negative improvement when users are not properly consulted on its purpose
- Survey results indicate gaps in communication on the purpose of Road Safety improvements

These conclusions indicate that there is more work to be done to improve road safety in the City of Brandon. Some next steps have been formulated by Administration as a baseline for continuing this project:

- Maintain the reduced speed limit areas and temporary traffic calming already established
- Develop an Enforcement Strategy that utilizes collected data to target enforcement at high concentration points of observed non-compliance.
- Explore new temporary traffic calming locations that tests the efficacy of different methods at point and corridor locations of observed non-compliance with a posted speed limit
- Consider areas where speed limit reduction can be expanded within the City of Brandon that focus on the priority for road safety improvements identified by the Vision Zero Task Force
- Create and implement a comprehensive advertising and educational resources strategy that focuses on increasing awareness of the initiatives of Road Safety, Vision Zero, the benefits of Speed Limit Reductions and Traffic Calming and the Safe Systems approach to road design.
- Utilize the analysis of temporary traffic calming and enforcement strategy to develop a Traffic Calming Strategy that incorporates permanent infrastructure improvements at warranted locations.
- Advocate for changes to provincial legislation that allows municipalities the ability to change default speed limit and incorporate other enforcement options within our jurisdiction.\

While much of these next steps have already begun, much of this work will continue in the next year. Updates on these initiatives related to the reduced speed limit will continue to be provided to the Vision Zero Task Force and Council as data is collected and analyzed and as conclusions are derived observed.

Legislative Requirements:

Administration will utilize the proper legislative requirements to communicate and establish any changes to speed limits within the City of Brandon, including amendments to the Traffic By-law and compliance with any Provincial acts and regulations. ran into an issue with the legislative requirements for reducing speed limits within the city limits. As a part of the next steps, Administration will explore options on the changes to legislation that may be necessary in amending default speed limits within a municipality and alternative enforcement options, including image capture devices.

Strategic Alignment:

The entire subject of speed limit reduction stems from the principles of Vision Zero – the philosophy that the number of fatalities and serious injury that occur within the right of way can approach zero with the use of speed limit reduction and infrastructure design that separates vulnerable road users from vehicle traffic.

Financial Impact:

The City has budgeted \$50,000 for Vision Zero Initiatives and some of these funds have been expended to support this project. Proceeding with further speed limit reductions and temporary traffic calming measures will have capital requirements that may necessitate additional funding based on the brevity of the scope of changes. Funds for these initiatives will continue to be captured under the Vision Zero Initiatives budget until a traffic calming strategy and pedestrian crosswalk enhancement strategy are created that incorporate additional funding requests separate from this project.

The City does not collect traffic data counts for non-vehicle traffic. Procurement of bicycle and pedestrian counters is currently being evaluated and funding will be directed from the Vision Zero initiatives funding source.

Risk Assessment:

The City of Brandon did not observe any serious injury nor fatality occur within the areas that had a speed limit reduction, however, since this time last year, the City of Brandon has seen two fatalities of vulnerable road users within our right of ways. While these instances are high in comparison to other years data, the fact remains that there is still a risk for serious injury and fatality of vulnerable road users within the right of way. Every effort must be utilized to reduce this risk by way of implementing a safe systems approach via road design, traffic calming and pedestrian crosswalk enhancement to provide as much prevention to avoid reaction.

Communication Strategy:

As mentioned in the conclusions of our analysis, a communication strategy that focuses on advertising and the development of educational resources for the public to learn more about Road Safety initiatives will be developed and implemented. An additional focus will be used to communicate the change process and why speed limit reduction and temporary traffic calming is an integral part of creating safer roads in Brandon. Various methodologies for consulting the public will be explored and used as a part of the City's communication on reduced speed limit and traffic calming initiatives.

Conclusion:

That the update report on the City of Brandon Speed Limit Reduction Pilot Project be received.