

REPORT

Engineering Services

To: Mayor Johnstone and Members of Council
Date: June 26, 2023

From: Lisa Leblanc
Director of Engineering Services
File: 05.1035.10
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Item #: [Report Number]

Subject: Report Back on School Zone Enforcement Hours

RECOMMENDATION

THAT Council receive this report for information.

PURPOSE

To provide Council with an update on its motion of February 27, 2023 to consider extended school speed zone enforcement hours.

SUMMARY

In response to the motion supported by Council on February 27, 2003, staff have raised the topic at the Regional Transportation Advisory Committee, convened by TransLink, as a point for future discussion requiring some regional coordination. This discussion has not yet advanced. Staff are expecting further discussion to occur later in 2023 and to subsequently report back to Council in early 2024.

BACKGROUND

On February 27, 2023, the following motion was supported by Council:

WHEREAS it is important to prioritize pedestrian, cyclist, and mobility users' safety on our roads;

WHEREAS school facilities are increasingly being used in the mornings and evenings for before and after-school care and other community-based activities; and,

WHEREAS other municipalities have extended the school zone speed limit beyond the current standard of 8am – 5pm in an effort to prioritize safety around schools.

BE IT RESOLVED that Council direct staff to bring a report back to Council for approval on how to extend the speed zone enforcement hours including a discussion on:

- The length of the extension i.e. 24 hours, or 7am – 10pm;
- Potential impacts to:
 - o Neighbourhoods;
 - o Transit;
 - o Enforcement; and
 - o Traffic Management;
- Any budget Implications; and,
- Other concerns arising.

Per the terms of Council Procedure Bylaw No. 6910, respecting Notices of Motion, any motion arising out of a Notice of Motion must not take effect unless the following conditions are met:

- a) The Chief Administrative Officer, in consultation with senior staff, has submitted a report within three Council meetings on the feasibility of that motion considering any budget and work plan implications including but not limited to staff capacity, financial, policy, administration, feasibility, operational, legal, etc.;
- b) Council has considered the budget and work plan implications of the motion in light of any strategic plan adopted by Council; and
- c) Council has passed a motion to authorizing the budget and work plan set out in the Chief Administrative Officer’s report.

DISCUSSION

In conjunction with the Notice of Motion regarding the potential extension of school zone enforcement hours, staff provided an Information Report to Council on the February 27, 2023 agenda. That report outlined recent work to address school zone traffic safety at public and private schools across New Westminster, public engagement related to this work, and what some other municipalities in the region have implemented with respect to school zone speed limits.

The report noted staff’s intention to communicate with other regional municipalities on this topic, as staff are of the opinion that the most appropriate approach is to coordinate on approaches to school zone speed limits and enforcement hours across the region.

Transportation staff participate in the Regional Transportation Advisory Committee (RTAC), a committee of transportation staff convened by TransLink and representing municipalities across the region, as well as several other transportation agencies operating within Metro Vancouver. Through this forum, staff have requested that the topic of school zone speed limits and enforcement hours be added as a 2023 topic of discussion for the group. There is general consensus on the need to coordinate municipal approaches to speed management, including in school zones. It was agreed that the topic would be addressed in 2023, but it has not yet been discussed further at the committee.

NEXT STEPS

Through summer and fall of 2023, staff will continue to pursue information from other local municipalities on their experiences with modified enforcement hours.

Furthermore, staff will continue to request that speed management – including school zone hours – be included on a future RTAC agenda. It is anticipated that this could occur in late 2023.

With this additional information, staff expect to be able to report back on this topic in early 2024.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

One objective of traffic calming and reduced speed limits in school zones is to encourage parents and students to choose sustainable modes of transportation, consistent with the City’s transportation and sustainability goals.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Staff are not yet able to fully assess the financial implications of a change to school zone enforcement hours. As noted in the February 27, 2023 report, any changes would require replacement of or modifications to signage in approximately 37 school zones across the city, as well as additional resources for Police enforcement.

Additional resources are not required at this time, and the work related to supporting a regional approach can be undertaken within existing work plans.

INTERDEPARTMENTAL LIAISON

Engineering staff collaborate frequently with New Westminster Police and Engineering Operations staff on road safety matters and will continue to do so.

OPTIONS

The following options are presented:

1. THAT Council receive this report for information.
2. THAT Council provide other direction to staff.

Staff recommend Option 1.

CONCLUSION

Staff will continue to liaise with our regional counterparts on the topic of school zone enforcement hours in the interest of regional coordination. Once further discussion occurs, staff will report back to Council with further information.

APPROVALS

This report was prepared by:
Mike Anderson, Manager of Transportation

This report was approved by:
Lisa Leblanc, Director of Engineering Services
Lisa Spitale, Chief Administrative Officer