



June 13, 2023

Her Worship  
Mayor Barbara Desjardins  
Township of Esquimalt  
1229 Esquimalt Road  
Esquimalt BC V9A 3P1

Reference: 316182  
Your file: 0550-01

Dear Mayor Desjardins:

**Re: Municipal Speed Limits**

Thank you for your letter of February 27, 2023, requesting the provincial government amend the Motor Vehicle Act (MVA) to enable municipalities to change the default speed limits on different types of municipal streets or enable pilot projects to do so. I appreciate your commitment to improving road safety in your community.

As you know, the MVA establishes the default speed limit of 50 km/h on municipal roads, unless otherwise posted. This default speed limit model balances variations in road networks and traffic across rural and urban communities and has been widely adopted across Canada.

As you mention, the MVA provides local governments with the authority to lower the speed limit on municipal roads as they see fit through their bylaws and by posting signs to indicate speed limits. While I appreciate that the costs involved with sign installation as required under the MVA can be significant, the need for signage and associated costs would remain for a speed limit reduction implemented through a pilot project.

Any proposal for a pilot project to change the default speed limit would need to include a detailed rationale that explains the challenges with the existing municipal authority to alter speed limits and the need for a provincial pilot. The ministry has not received such a proposal from any community but would gladly consider one if provided.

If you would like to discuss this matter, please feel free to contact the ministry's Executive Director of the Transportation Policy and Legislation Branch, Jeremy Wood. He can be reached at 778 698-5191 or [Jeremy.Wood@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Jeremy.Wood@gov.bc.ca) and would be pleased to hear from you.

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Additionally, implementing lower speeds without added enforcement or other measures to reinforce driver compliance can lead to reduced safety, as not all drivers will obey lower posted speed limits, especially if they do not appear to match a road's characteristics, such as its width or sightlines. We continue to encourage local communities to pursue approaches to speed limits that best meet local needs and the conditions on their streets, which can vary widely. To support driver compliance with reduced speeds, municipalities can opt to redesign some roads to be narrower or to have narrower lanes, while on other roads traffic calming devices such as chicanes and speed humps may work best. More information on roadway designs that help protect all road users is available in the [B.C. Community Road Safety Toolkit](#).

The ministry is committed to supporting road safety. We look forward to discussing any findings or data communities wish to share about their community-initiated pilot projects to lower speeds, including any recommendations for the provincial government to support safety of vulnerable road users and increased active transportation.

Should the Township of Esquimalt want to advance a specific project to improve active transportation in the community as defined under the program criteria of the ministry's [Active Transportation Infrastructure Grants Program](#), the costs of new signs as part of the project could be considered.

Thank you again for taking the time to write.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Rob Fleming". The signature is fluid and cursive, written over a light grey background.

Rob Fleming  
Minister

Copy to: Reg Bawa, Assistant Deputy Minister  
Policy, Programs and Partnerships Division

Jeremy Wood, Executive Director  
Transportation Policy and Legislation Branch