

# ACT NOW for a BC Road Safety Act

Modernizing our Motor Vehicle Act will help BC reach the targets of the Provincial Government's Road Safety Strategy and Vision Zero. It will reduce collisions, injuries and death and help control ICBC premiums that have recently skyrocketed. The legislation, reframed as the Road Safety Act, would protect all road users, including our most vulnerable: those walking and cycling.



The BC Road Safety Law Reform group represents over 50,000 British Columbians who want to better protect vulnerable road users and provide safe options for transportation. We have compiled a detailed list of recommendations to modernize the Motor Vehicle Act, which can be found in full at [bikehub.ca/mva](http://bikehub.ca/mva)

Two important changes are the Safe Passing Law and the Safe Neighbourhood Speeds Law, outlined here.

## SAFER PASSING Law

### Protecting people cycling, walking and using wheelchairs



Cycling and walking are popular activities enjoyed by the majority of people in British Columbia. Almost 70% of adults in BC ride a bicycle at least once a year, 42% at least once a month and 25% at least once a week. All British Columbians walk or roll at some point in their day.

Much needs to be done to create safe walking and cycling networks that connect our communities. This work will take a number of years but we can act now: a Safer Passing Law would immediately improve safety and make cycling and walking more comfortable for everyone in BC.

We are recommending a Safe Passing Law that would **require a motor vehicle to pass a vulnerable road user (a person cycling, walking, using a wheelchair or riding a horse) by at least 1.5 metres**. If there is more than one lane for traffic in the same direction, the driver would have to change into the next lane to pass, further improving road safety.

A Safe Passing Law would educate people driving in BC, as many of us have never been told what is an appropriate passing distance. In the current Motor Vehicle Act, there is no designated passing distance to direct people in safe road use, nor to hold people accountable for unsafe road use.

BC is behind with such legislation - safe passing distance laws exist in over 27 jurisdictions in North America, including Ontario and Nova Scotia, and New Brunswick is likely to introduce it after the recent death of cyclist Ellen Watters. Ontario police enforce this law using sonar devices that measure distances.

We ask that you support this recommendation and help increase road safety for all.

## SAFER NEIGHBOURHOOD SPEEDS Law

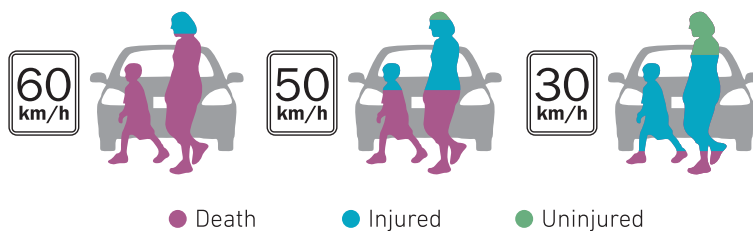
### Making our neighbourhoods safer for the most vulnerable

Setting default neighbourhood speed limits at 30km/hour will dramatically improve safety in our communities. It is widely recommended by health agencies, including the World Health Organization and BC's Provincial Health Officer. Most people want slower speeds in their neighbourhoods: in a 2013 survey by the Canadian Automobile Association, 94% of respondents reported that speeding on residential streets was a serious threat to their personal safety.

We are recommending a Safe Speeds Law that would **require all vehicles to travel at a maximum 30km/hour on neighbourhood streets (streets without a centre line)** as the default speed limit. Exceptions would need to be specified with a sign on each block.

### Evidence & Support

In London, the introduction of 20 miles/h (32 km/h) zones was associated with a 42% reduction in road casualties. There was no evidence of casualty migration to areas adjacent; in fact, casualties also fell there, by an average of 8%.



Similar benefits have been found in Denmark, Germany, and the Netherlands for people walking and cycling. In a Vancouver and Toronto cycling safety study, the injury risk at intersections with traffic speeds up to 30 km/h was half that at higher speed intersections.

We ask that you support this recommendation and help increase road safety for all.

### About the BC Road Safety Law Reform Group

The BC Road Safety Law Reform Group is made up of the Trial Lawyers Association of BC, the British Columbia Cycling Coalition, HUB Cycling, and health researchers. Our organizations represent approximately 50,000 supporters across B.C. Read the group's vulnerable road user safety improvement recommendations, including jurisprudence, case studies and recommended legislation language changes to the BC Motor Vehicle Act at [bikehub.ca/mva](http://bikehub.ca/mva)

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