Submitted: Fri, 03/13/2026 - 10:25

Public hearing participation

Identify the item and your position

Public hearing item
Item 3 under the Report of the Standing Policy Committee on Public Works dated March 4, 2026, the Reduced-Speed Neighbourhood Pilot and the City's Default Speed Limit

Position on the proposed development
Opposition

How would you like to participate?

Participation options
Submit comments in writing

Comments
I am writing to express my opposition to the recommendation of a default speed limit of 40 kph indicated in the report for the Reduced-Speed Neighbourhood Pilot and the City's Default Speed Limit. While the Standing Committee Recommendations are at this time only calling for "That Council request the Province of Manitoba amend the Highway Traffic Act to allow the City of Winnipeg to set the default speed limit through a by-law" I would encourage the Executive Policy Committee to reject the recommendation of a 40 kph default speed limit.

A default speed limit of 40 kph represents a half measure and to be honest a compromise on safety. Study after study and report after report clearly show that 30 kph is the truly safe speed. It is why we adopt it in school zones. If 30 kph is the safe speed in school zones, why would it not also be the safe speed on all residential streets where we hope to make them calmer, safer and more liveable.
These are just 2 of the many charts that illustrate the difference between 30 kph and 40 kph. (See attached)

The City of Winnipeg has a goal to reach 50 percent of trips taken by transit, bike, foot, carpool, and ride-share by 2050. To do this we need to provide Winnipeggers with safe streets to walk and bike. This especially holds true for making it possible for school age children not to require their parents to drive them to school, but also to every activity.

At this point you likely feel you have read enough, but I encourage you to read on as the following provides some direct comment on the report itself.

The 40 kph half measure recommendation is said to be both more acceptable to Winnipeggers and promote better compliance. I would argue that regardless of the chosen limit, neither will be true. Whether the default is set to 30 or 40 kph, the administration will receive the same amount of kickback from drivers. We all know that people don't like change and regardless of the level of change, they will have their say. Why not choose the truly safe speed in the first place.

As for compliance, based on the report it would appear that if you want more people to follow a reduced speed limit, 30 kph might be a better option. The Neighbourhood Pilot Executive Summary it indicates "Speeds dropped significantly in most areas, especially in neighbourhoods with a 30 km/h limit. Richmond West did not see much change, even after the speed limit was reduced to 40." A reduction to 40 kph does not represent a significant change and clearly will result in at best marginal compliance, which in turn means even more unsafe speeds.

In the Neighbourhood Pilot Executive Summary it indicates that "when asked if they would accept longer travel times due to the speed limit changes, most people were unwilling to deal with even a 60-second increase in travel time" and "most people in the survey said Winnipeg should keep the speed limit for residential streets at 50 km/h." Again, we know people don't like change. Its clear that most people do not understand or accept that the delay to their travel time is a matter of mere seconds. Even though a trip calculator was provided on the city's website (which few people tried) Winnipeggers still equate a lower speed limit with a significant delay in their travel time. This represents a failure on the part of the city to truly educate people on the true impacts and even more the benefits of slower speeds. Essentially the pilot got exactly what most anyone could have expected and it seems clear that the 40 kph recommendation is a way to try and meet people half way.

There are also some concerning/confusing items in the administrative report.

In the 40 km/h Default Speed Limit Discussion it indicates "Broader Applicability: It can be implemented across more streets immediately, offering greater safety benefits in the short term compared to a 30 km/h limit." How is that 40 kph can be implemented across more streets immediately? If the default speed is reduced to 30 or 40 it could and should apply to "more streets" and as for greater safety, 30 kph is clearly safer.

In the 40 km/h Default Speed Limit Discussion it indicates "Reduced Signage Requirements: A 40 km/h default minimizes infrastructure costs; since only exceptions to the default require signage, fewer new signs would be needed across the residential network." How does this make sense? Regardless of which “default” speed is chosen "only exceptions to the default require signage."

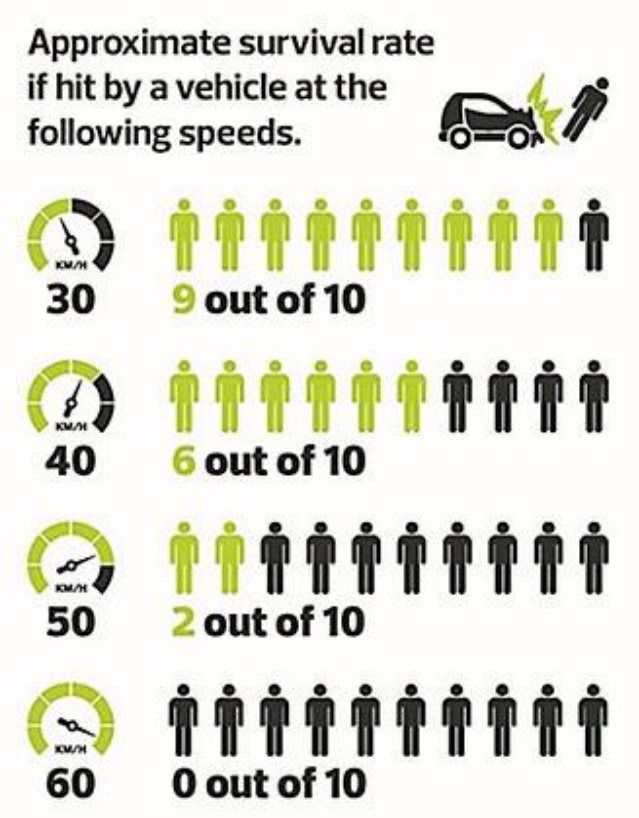
Further to this, the report indicates that designated neighbourhoods could still have a speed limit of 30 kph. If the default speed limit is reduced to 40 kph, all those “30 kph designated neighbourhoods” would require the signage based on the HTA. This would in fact increase signage requirements, create even more visual clutter and confusion over applicable speed limit. Based on current school zone complaints, this would likely lead to even more complaints of a “cash grab.”

In the 30 km/h Default Speed Discussion it indicates "A city-wide 30 km/h speed limit is less practical because it is applicable to fewer streets, specifically for collector streets where safety benefits are most needed." This clearly assumes that the report writers feel that some collectors could be reduced to 40 kph but not 30. Firstly, slowing speeds on wide collectors will take more than reduced speed limits and will require some forms of traffic calming. Regardless, if these are “streets where safety benefits are most needed” then why not reduce them to the truly safe speed of 30 kph.

The report also indicates that 40 kph ensures school zones remain distinct from the 40 km/h default speed. The report indicates that compliance in school zones is not great so how is having school zones being "distinct" of any benefit? They are currently “distinct” and as indicated, compliance is not acceptable. I would argue that the inconsistency between a default speed limit of 40 kph from school zones (and designated neighbourhoods and neighbourhood greenways) only further reduces drivers’ confusion and compliance. As indicated previously, it will likely result in even “cash grab” complaints.

At a recent Public Works meeting it was stated it would be a “big effort” to inform Winnipeggers and even people that drive into Winnipeg about any change. If we are going to this level of effort, why not make it for what is the true “safe speed” and avoid potentially having to do it again in the future.

Submission for hearing body



Personal information

Full name
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