

2 June 2024

Mayor and Councillors
Vancouver, British Columbia.

Dear Mayor and Councillors,

Re: Building healthier communities and reducing intersection crashes in the City of Vancouver

The HUB Cycling Vancouver-UBC Local Committee is the local grassroots chapter of a not-for-profit advocacy group with a mission to create healthier, happier, and more connected communities. HUB Cycling does this through education, research, events and advocacy.

We seek the council's help addressing the pressing issue of enhancing safety at our intersections. One such measure involves the thoughtful reconsideration of allowing right turns on red lights.

Numerous studies have demonstrated that removing right turns on red lights can significantly decrease the number of crashes, particularly between people driving and people walking, rolling or cycling.

According to ICBC, approximately 60% of crashes occur at intersections - removing right turns on red lights is one more way alongside other measures that can reduce injuries and fatalities at intersections..

The evidence is clear. Right turn on red lights prohibitions save lives:

- In BC, an average of over 250 people have died, and over 3,000 have been hospitalized, every year due to road crashes, costing the province \$312 million in health care costs.¹
- In Washington State, the Department of Transportation found that 20% of collisions involving a driver hitting a pedestrian or cyclist occurred on a right turn.²
- Right turn on red has been identified as the most dangerous maneuver by people driving against vulnerable road users at intersections, with a crash rate about three times higher than the level of exposure.³
- In 2018, Washington, D.C., banned right turns on red at 100 intersections. Data showed red-light conflicts between vehicles and pedestrians were all but eliminated.⁴

In areas where right turns on red are allowed, people driving tend to prioritize watching for oncoming traffic from their left, often overlooking people walking, cycling or using a wheelchair to cross the intersection on their right. An advance walk signal for people walking and cycling can help mitigate this..

¹ BC Injury and Prevention Unit, <https://injuryresearch.bc.ca/injury-priorities/transport-related-injuries/>

² [Seattle Times, May 4, 2023](#) *Seattle to Expand bans on right turn on red*

³ SAFETY EFFECTS OF RIGHT TURN ON RED: A META-ANALYSIS: ClaudeDussault

⁴ [The Columbian, Feb 26, 2023](#), *Right turns on red would be limited in Washington under bill*

Other municipalities across Metro Vancouver, including the City of North Vancouver and the City of Burnaby, have adopted motions or are exploring motions to remove right turns on red lights at high-crash intersections in their cities. Furthermore, Montreal does not allow right turns on red at any intersections. HUB Cycling is urging the City of Vancouver to take similar measures, while ensuring people cycling are exempt from right turn on red restrictions (see Appendix for details).

The recent legislative development in Bill 23 - the 2023 Motor Vehicle Amendment Act, specifically Part 13, pertains to Pilot Projects⁵. Section 305 (1) of this Act authorizes municipalities to establish pilot projects for the purposes of researching, testing or evaluating any matter relating to this Act. We urge you to direct staff to explore the feasibility and potential benefits of launching such a pilot project to prohibit right turns on red in your municipality, with an exemption for people on bikes. By leveraging the provisions outlined in Bill 23, we have a unique opportunity to prioritize the safety of vulnerable road users and create a more inclusive and sustainable transportation environment for all residents.

Please note that HUB Cycling is also advocating for province-wide legislation prohibiting right turns on red as part of its Motor Vehicle Act Reforms. More information can be found at bikehub.ca/mva

Together, we can work towards improving safety for all road users.

Sincerely,

Anthony Floyd
Jeff Leigh
HUB Cycling Vancouver-UBC Local Committee Co-Chairs

⁵ [Bill 23 - Motor Vehicle Amendment Act, 2023, 4th Session, 42nd Parliament](#) (2023) (Page 19)

Appendix

City of North Vancouver motion. Carried unanimously, Nov 6, 2024

Moved by Councillor McIlroy, seconded by Councillor Valente

WHEREAS in 2022 Council unanimously approved the City's Mobility Strategy with the vision of having healthy streets that work for everyone with specific actions outlined, including those in part 5C:

Supporting enforcement that reduces dangerous behavior and prioritizes protection for vulnerable road users;

WHEREAS in 2020 Council unanimously approved the City's Safe Mobility Strategy, with a vision of safe streets for everyone, as places where people of all ages and abilities can move safely and comfortably without risk of harm, no matter where they are going or how they get around;

WHEREAS people in the City often experience the behaviour of some drivers that exceed the posted speed limits and intersection requirements found in the Motor Vehicle Act that may result in negative noise and safety impacts;

AND WHEREAS ICBC data indicates that there are more than 60 intersections in the City of North Vancouver that have had 20 or more casualty crashes between 2018 and 2022;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT staff be directed to investigate and report back to Council on the implementation of no right turn on red lights at all intersections where there were over 20 casualty crashes during 2018 to 2022;

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the Mayor write to the Provincial Government to request that speed and red light cameras be installed at all locations in the City of North Vancouver where there were over 20 casualty crashes during 2018-2022, or that it allow BC municipalities to install speed and red light cameras at their own cost and collect fines.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

CITY OF BURNABY: IMPROVING TRAFFIC SAFETY - COUNCILLOR GU AND COUNCILLOR SANTIAGO

PURPOSE: To request the Mayor to write a letter to the Provincial Government to request improvements in traffic safety at intersections with high casualties and fatalities, and to explore the feasibility of implementing no right turn on red lights at high pedestrian crash intersections.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the Mayor write a letter to the Provincial Government to request the installation of speed and red light intersection safety cameras in the City of Burnaby, prioritizing intersections with 50 or more crashes that resulted in injuries or fatalities from 2018-2022 and provide all revenue from additional speed and red light cameras to municipalities as grants to be invested in traffic safety

improvements; and,

THAT staff be directed to explore the feasibility of implementing pedestrian safety measures such as no right turn on red lights at all intersections where there were over 5 or more casualty crashes involving pedestrians from 2018-2022.

BACKGROUND

In 2021, Council unanimously approved the City's Transportation Plan, which included a target of zero serious injuries and zero deaths by 2050. These goals are inclusive of motorists, cyclists, and pedestrians.

ICBC data shows that in the City of Burnaby during the period of 2018-2022, there were 16,108 casualty crashes (crashes resulting in injury or fatality), which averages to be 3,222 per year or 8.8 per day. Most crashes in British Columbia happen at intersections, and speed was the number one contributing factor in fatal crashes in British Columbia and the Metro Vancouver region between 2018 and 2022. Speed cameras are shown to rank among the most cost-effective interventions, with warning signs to let drivers know that the intersection has cameras. Stopping for red lights and observing speed limits help to prevent collisions, and reduce the severity of injuries and fatalities if collisions occur. These cameras can be quickly implemented, reduce preventable vehicular injuries and deaths, and provide revenue that could be directed towards more road safety initiatives, such as addressing neighbourhood road safety infrastructure requests, including but not limited to sidewalks, pedestrian-controlled crossing signals, and flashing beacons. Allowing right turns on red lights also increases the risk to vulnerable road users such as pedestrians, cyclists, seniors, and People with Disabilities. The City of Burnaby can explore the feasibility of changing these rules where intersection casualty crashes are high.

FINANCIAL IMPACTS

None.

DISCUSSION

Under the Motor Vehicle Act, the Provincial Government has authority over moving vehicular traffic. However, municipalities are at the frontlines of and bear the costs of responding to vehicular collisions (i.e. fire, police) as well as infrastructure improvements in preventing incidents from occurring. Advocacy towards the Provincial Government to ensure municipalities have the adequate tools to prevent serious injuries and fatalities is necessary.

Disallowing right turns on red lights is in the jurisdiction of municipalities, and is one immediate step that the City of Burnaby can take towards reducing the risk to vulnerable road users.

Respectfully submitted,

COUNCILLOR GU AND COUNCILLOR SANTIAGO