

Report

Date March 18, 2026
Subject Traffic Safety Review for the Sherman Road/Ryall Road Intersection

File: CFS #44793

PURPOSE

To present findings of a traffic engineering review undertaken for the Sherman Road and Ryall Road intersection in response to a delegation to Council on November 19, 2025.

BACKGROUND

A delegation from the Sherman Road/Ryall Road area attended the regular Council meeting to express their traffic safety concerns and to request a prohibition on street parking as well as the implementation of traffic calming measures. The speaker also followed up with additional calls and inquiries regarding these issues. A traffic engineering review of the Sherman Road/Ryall Road intersection has since been completed. This report summarizes the findings of that review.

Site Location

Figure 1 shows the location of the subject intersection of Sherman Road and Ryall Road. It is an unsignalized, four-leg intersection where Sherman Road has through priority and Ryall Road is stop controlled. Ryall Road is a local road on the northside of Sherman Road without any alternative egress point. A driveway to a townhouse complex on the south side forms the fourth leg opposite Ryall Road.

Figure 1: Site Location – Sherman Road/Ryall Road Intersection



Sherman Road is an arterial road running east-west and has a single travel lane in each direction. It has wide lanes, and a total pavement width of 13 m. Parking is permitted on both sides near Ryall Road. The posted maximum speed limit on Sherman Road is 50 km/h. Bus stops are located just east of Ryall Road on both sides of Sherman Road.

A 30 m section of Ryall Road just south of Westview Street is currently unconstructed. As a result, the southerly section of Ryall Road is only accessible from Sherman Road. Due to this limited road network connectivity, most Ryall Road residents do not have a suitable alternative to making a left turn from Ryall Road onto Sherman Road.

Resident Concerns

The delegation at the November 19 Council expressed safety concerns at the intersection of Sherman Road/Ryall Road. The speaker requested that visibility at the intersection be improved by prohibiting street parking on Sherman Road near Ryall Road. Parked cars may be obstructing visibility and making it difficult to assess gaps in the Sherman Road traffic stream. This makes it challenging to perform left turn movements from Ryall Road onto Sherman Road. Concerns were also expressed about speeding on Sherman Road, and a lowering of the speed limit was also requested.

In response to the resident's earlier requests in early 2025, the Engineering team conducted a field review and implemented changes in the spring of 2025. Additional lengths of curb along Sherman Road were painted yellow and designated as 'no parking' zones. These recent changes are shown in Figures 2 & 3, where parking is now prohibited for considerable lengths of curb along Sherman Road on both sides of Ryall Road. The delegation requested a further parking prohibition for 50 m (7 car lengths) on Sherman Road west of Ryall Road, which would double the recently extended 'no parking' zone on this side.

Figure 2: Existing Intersection Visibility – Looking west along Sherman Road at Ryall Road



Figure 3: Existing Intersection Visibility – Looking east along Sherman Road at Ryall Road



DISCUSSION

Analysis

To address concerns raised, a traffic engineering review has been completed. The findings are as follows.

- a) Visibility: Sherman Road currently has a posted maximum speed limit of 50 km/h; however, the 85th percentile operating speed that captures most of the drivers was recorded to be higher at 60 km/h. This higher speed requires additional 'clear sight distance' or unobstructed visibility for safer turning movements at the intersection of Sherman Road/Ryall Road. Prohibiting street parking and clearing vegetation are ways to achieve unobstructed sight lines. The sight line analysis for the subject intersection was conducted using the Transportation Association of Canada's (TAC) methodology and the recently extended 'no parking' zones. Also, the higher operating speed of 60 km/h was used to determine the 'clear sight distance' requirements looking in both directions from the stop position. The analysis found that the currently available sight distance is adequate and well above the TAC requirements.
- b) Intersection Performance: The operational performance of the Sherman Road/Ryall Road intersection was also analyzed. The intersection performance was found to be satisfactory under the existing lower traffic volumes on Ryall Road.
- c) Crosswalk Warrants: At this intersection, pedestrians cross Sherman Road primarily to access bus stops located on both sides of Sherman Road just east of Ryall Road. The demand is currently too low to warrant a marked or 'zebra' crosswalk.
- d) Collision Data: ICBC collision data for the Sherman Road/Ryall Road for the most recent five-year period was also reviewed. The database consists of only five collisions reported over this period. This equates to only 1 collision per year compared to 3 or more, which typically indicates a need for traffic safety intervention.
- e) Master Transportation Plan (MTP) Recommendations: The MTP recommended a high-priority, protected two-way bike lane along Sherman Road between Canada Avenue and the Cowichan Valley Greenway, extending through Somenos Road. The said protected bike lane would provide a safer connection between the Friendship Trail running along Canada Avenue and the

Cowichan Valley trail west of the Somenos Road – Sherman Road – Cowichan Lake Road roundabout. This is suggested to be achieved by narrowing existing wide lanes and removing parking from one side of Sherman Road. Such localized removal of parking at select sections would save the cost of road widening to support active transportation works. An opportunity to apply for a grant for this initiative was deferred in February 2025 due to concerns about parking loss near the soccer field. The benefit of such a protected cycling facility would not only improve safety and provide alternative travel options in this higher-density area, but also narrow the existing wide lanes to deter speeding.

- f) Lowering of Speed Limit: A lower speed limit sign alone will not be effective without any physical changes to the road design, as drivers will continue to operate at speeds based on the same geometric conditions. Increased speed enforcement also may not be feasible due to limited resources. Typical traffic calming measures, such as speed humps, would be inappropriate on arterial roads like Sherman Road under TAC guidelines.
- g) Traffic Control Modifications: Transportation modelling suggests the nearby intersection of Sherman Road/Lane Road, located 270 m to the west, requires all-way stop control. Currently, traffic on Sherman Road does not have to stop at Lane Road. With the all-way stop control introduced, the distance of uninterrupted eastbound traffic flow on Sherman Road will be reduced from 925 m to 270 m before reaching Ryall Road. This measure will have the indirect benefit of deterring speeding near Ryall Road.
- h) Driver Behaviour: The visibility concerns expressed by the delegation may be indicative of improper vehicle position away from the edge of Sherman Road. Moving closer to an intersection is often necessary to get a better view of traffic arriving from both directions on the main road. This situation, in the case of Sherman Road, is exacerbated when a pickup truck or other larger vehicle is parked on the north side, just west of Ryall Road.
- i) Alternative Route Options: Due to a missing connection between two segments of Ryall Road, Ryall Road residents do not have a suitable alternative route or egress out of the neighbourhood. An alternative route via Westview Street/Lane Road would help residents avoid making a left turn from Ryall Road onto Sherman Road. As an alternative, the traffic could instead make a right turn onto Sherman Road and then a 'U'-turn via Truesdale Street, George Street, and Mary Street, which would add an extra 600 m of travel distance. That would also require several additional turning movements and increase traffic on other local streets in another residential area. Completing the gap would allow Ryall Road traffic to use Westview Street and then Lane Road and make a safer left turn onto Sherman Road, utilizing the recommended 'all-way' stop control at the Sherman Road/Lane Road intersection.

Recommendations

- a) To address concerns of larger vehicles blocking sight lines, further extend the recently extended 'no parking' zone on the north side of Sherman Road west of Ryall Road by another 6 m and implement this as part of the annual road maintenance work in the spring/summer.
- b) Narrow the existing wide travel lanes on Sherman Road by implementing the high-priority, protected cycling infrastructure on Sherman Road as recommended in the MTP. The project must explore strategies to offset any loss of on-street parking and use cost-effective construction methods such as precast concrete curbs.
- c) Implement 'all-way' stop control at the nearby intersection of Sherman Road/Lane Road. This is recommended for inclusion in the 2026 Capital Program, subject to resource availability.

- d) As part of the 2027 Capital Program develop plans to construct the missing 30 m section of Ryall Road. This would be for longer term implementation to provide safer and alternative route options for Ryall Road residents to access Sherman Road via the 'all-way' stop control at Lane Road.

OPTIONS

1. **(Recommended Option)** THAT Council approves:
 - (1) Extending the 'no parking' zone on the north side of Sherman Road west of Ryall Road by 6 m to increase visibility and implement this as part of the annual road maintenance work in 2026;
 - (2) Narrowing of the existing wide travel lanes on Sherman Road by introducing protected cycling infrastructure on Sherman Road using cost-effective construction methods and with measures to offset any loss of street parking; and,
 - (3) Implementing an 'all-way' stop control at the intersection of Sherman Road/Lane Road as part of the 2026 Capital Program, subject to availability of resources.
2. THAT Council does not support further extension of the 'no parking' zone or removal of street parking.

IMPLICATIONS

Implementing the recommended extension of the 'no parking' zone will require a minor allocation of operational resources. The 'all-way' stop control will require some changes, including signs and road markings, and can be completed as part of the 2027 Capital Program. The construction of the protected cycling infrastructure will, however, need a capital budget of approximately \$1 million. This project is currently in the Engineering Capital Plan for 2028, and grant opportunities will need to be explored to offset capital costs. The project is ultimately subject to Council approval.

By not proceeding with the recommendations, North Cowichan will likely continue to generate concerns from the community, affect already-constrained staff resources, and potentially affect long-term safety. Without physical speed deterrence measures, a lower speed limit sign will not be effective, and ongoing RCMP speed enforcement would not be feasible as an alternative to address such concerns.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT Council approves:

- (1) Extending the 'no parking' zone on the north side of Sherman Road west of Ryall Road by 6 m to increase visibility and implement this as part of the annual road maintenance work in 2026;
- (2) Narrowing of the existing wide travel lanes on Sherman Road by introducing protected cycling infrastructure on Sherman Road using cost-effective construction methods and with measures to offset any loss of street parking; and,
- (3) Implementing an 'all-way' stop control at the intersection of Sherman Road/Lane Road as part of the 2026 Capital Program subject to availability of resources.

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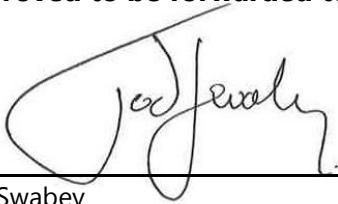
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