

Motion on Neighbourhood Zero Emission Vehicles
HIRRA Oct 10th, 2012
Moved by Gary Manzer

Background.

- A. In 2008 the British Columbia Government created a low-speed vehicle classification, called the Neighborhood Zero Emission Vehicle (NZEV);
- B. ICBC has established a rate class for insuring NZEV's;
- C. A groundswell of interest in communities of all sizes (including our own) in creating eco-friendly and sustainable transition transportation infrastructures in a post-oil world is encouraging;
- D. An example of this groundswell is the large number of municipalities that have taken advantage of Section 24.06 (2)(b) of the Motor Vehicle Regulations (the Regulations) that states, "A person may operate a Neighbourhood Zero Emission Vehicle in a municipality if authorized by bylaw of the council of the municipality, on a highway or class of highway that has a speed limit of over 40 km/h but no more than 50 km/hr", to pass bylaws permitting NZEV's 50 km/hr municipal roads;
- E. Hornby is not a municipality and since it is not a municipality, it can't pass bylaws. The change for "unorganized areas" (non-municipal rural BC) has to come through a change to the Motor Vehicle Regulations within the Ministry of Transportation & Infrastructure (MOTI);
- F. A partial list of municipalities allowing NZEV's include: Vancouver, Victoria, Burnaby, Richmond, Delta, New Westminster, Coquitlam, Port Coquitlam, West Vancouver, North Vancouver (District), City of North Vancouver, Port Moody, Maple Ridge, Whistler, Hope, Kelowna, Oliver, Vernon, Victoria, Esquimalt, Colwood, Sooke, Comox, Oak Bay, Qualicum Beach, Campbell River, Tofino, Ucluelet, Port Hardy, and Alert Bay;
- G. Hornby Islanders pioneered the recycling movement in British Columbia more than 30 years ago, and no less than formal municipalities that can enact bylaws, are actively seeking a transition transportation infrastructure that will support the well being of our residents and seniors;
- H. The current speed limit on Hornby Island is 50 km/hr unless otherwise posted. Three 60 km/hr signs exist indicate a higher speed limit. At a minimum it appears that a reduction of the speed limit to 50 km/hr would be required to allow NZEV's to operate on Hornby;

Two ways forward:

1. Lobby MOTI for a change to the regulation to allow NZEV's on all 50 km/hr provincial roads:
 - a. Section 24.06 (1)(a) of the Regulations states: "A person may operate a Neighbourhood Zero Emission Vehicle in an unorganized area of British Columbia on a highway or class of highway that has a speed limit of 40 km/hr or less". Perhaps the time has come for MOTI to increase the speed limit in this Section of the Regulations to "50 km/hr or less".
 - b. Such a change would support the groundswell of community interest in NZEV's in rural areas, and help the business sector manufacturing and distributing NZEV's throughout all of BC;
2. Pursue MOTI to designate Hornby as a NZEV safe zone:
 - a. On Mayne Island the maximum speed limit has always been 50 km/hr. In 2009 Mayne Island, after a MOTI road assessment, and became the first unorganized area in British Columbia to allow NZEV's on all roads. However, technically, NZEV's can only be driven on Mayne roads if the NZEV owner applies for a permit from MOTI. MOTI has agreed to quickly issue permits at no charge for residents of Mayne Island. This more bureaucratically complicated approach may indeed be a faster way to get NZEV's on Hornby than the process of increasing the speed limit from 40 km/hr to 50 km/hr in Section 24.06 (1)(a) of the Regulations;
 - b. On May 31st, 2012 the North Pender Island Local Trust Committee passed Resolution NP-LTC-64-12 directing Staff to prepare an application for a MOTI road assessment for NZEV's to be used on the whole of North Pender Island;
 - c. Hornby's Local Trust Committee recently directed Staff to prepare a similar application for a MOTI road assessment on Hornby with respect to reducing the speed limit on Hornby Island roads from 60 km/hr to 50 km/hr to accommodate NZEV's.
 - d. Last year the previous MOTI Area Manager made an unofficial statement with respect to reducing speed limit on Central Road for electric vehicles (NZEV's)
 - i. "Speed limits are established based on several factors including road design, accident history, traffic volumes, area development and prevailing speed of traffic. The majority of motorists drive at a speed they consider reasonable and safe for road, traffic, and environmental conditions. Posted limits that are set to be higher or lower than that dictated by roadway and traffic conditions, are ignored by the majority of motorists. Reducing a speed limit on a road, or a portion of road

specifically to allow use of NZEV's is unlikely, as it is not practical for enforcement purposes or safe for such vehicles, given the prevailing speed of traffic would probably not change."

The Neighbourhood Zero Emission Vehicle Motion

RESOLVED that the HIRRA Executive is instructed to:

1. Write an email letter expressing our support to our Local Trust Committee with respect to their spearheading the initiation of a Ministry of Transportation & Infrastructure (MOTI) road assessment on Hornby with respect to allowing NZEV's to operate on the whole of our island. In this letter we need to affirm our interest in coming up with a plan where we as a community will work to change community culture and driving practices to support adherence to a lowered speed limit.

This letter of support, interest include should be sent to:

- i. David Graham - Local Trust Committee Chair – dgraham@islandstrust.bc.ca
 - ii. Tony Law - Local Trust Committee - tlaw@islandstrust.bc.ca
 - iii. Alex Allen - Local Trust Committee - aallen@islandstrust.bc.ca
 - iv. Bob O'Brien - MOTI Operations Manager Vancouver Island District - bob.obrien@gov.bc.ca
 - v. Sonja Zupanec - Island Planner (Gambier and Hornby Island Local Trust Committees) - szupanec@islandstrust.bc.ca
 - vi. Michael Pearson – MOTI, District Transportation Engineer - Michael.Pearson@gov.bc.ca
2. Write and email a letter expressing our support for amending the speed limit phrase in of Section 24.06 (1)(a) of the Motor Vehicle Regulations from "40 km/hr or less" to "50 km/hr or less". This change would allow Neighbourhood Zero Emission Vehicles (NZEV's) to operate on all 50 km/hr roads with no distinction as to whether the roads fell within incorporated municipalities or in rural areas. (The current wording of Section 24.06 (1)(a) states: "A person may operate a Neighbourhood Zero Emission Vehicle in an unorganized area of British Columbia on a highway or class of highway that has a speed limit of 40 km/hr or less".)

A change to "50 km/hr or less" would reflect the groundswell of public interest in NZEV's, as evidenced by the growing number of municipalities that have passed by-laws allowing NZEV's, reduce bureaucracy, and allow NZEV's in rural communities. Such a change would have the side-benefit of sending an encouraging message to businesses involved in the manufacture and distribution of NZEV's throughout BC.

This letter should be addressed to:

Mary Pollack - Minister Ministry of Transportation & Infrastructure -
Minister.Transportation@gov.bc.ca

Grant Main - Deputy Minister Ministry of Transportation & Infrastructure -
Grant.Main@gov.bc.ca