

The MVA should be amended to disallow right turns at red lights for motor vehicles as a default across the Province, with people cycling exempt.

Rationale

It's time to make our intersections safer. By restricting people driving vehicles from turning right on red lights, we can improve safety for vulnerable road users like people walking, rolling, scooting and using wheelchairs. Without such protections, allowing the right turn on red lights creates conflict between people who are driving, walking and cycling and increases the chances of collision. Allowing the right turn on red is particularly dangerous for children.

Turning right on red lights was not always permitted in British Columbia under the Motor Vehicle Act. Prohibitions on right turns on red lights exist in many countries, as well as the entire island of Montreal, and have been proven to enhance safety at intersections for drivers and vulnerable road users by reducing conflicts with right-turning vehicles. Moreover, since motor vehicles have grown in size over the last decade, prohibiting right turns on red is needed more than ever.

Please note that any prohibition of right turns on red should provide an exemption for people on bicycles, as they do not pose the same risk as motor vehicles do.

Evidence & Related Information

Numerous studies have demonstrated that prohibiting right turns on red lights can decrease the number of crashes, and reduce injuries to people walking, rolling and cycling. Evidence shows that allowing right turns on red increases the risk for vulnerable road users like people walking, rolling, scooting and using wheelchairs and the evidence is clear, right turn on red lights prohibitions save lives:

1. [North Shore Motion](#)
2. [Burnaby Motion](#)
3. 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. - [B.C. Injury and Prevention Unit](#).
4. 45% of pedestrian fatalities were seniors (65+). Approximately 50% of serious injuries and fatalities involved pedestrians or cyclists. Approximately 50% of pedestrian serious injuries

and fatalities occurred after dark. - [City of Vancouver Data on fatalities and injuries on the road.](#)

- According to ICBC, approximately 60% of crashes occur at intersections - banning right turns on red is one more way alongside a host of other measures that can reduce injuries and fatalities and work towards Vision Zero. - [ICBC](#)

Region		2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	5-year average
Lower Mainland	Incidents	81,154	55,438	67,239	75,569	77,961	71,472
	Injured Victims	55,915	36,091	42,332	40,814	39,807	42,992
Vancouver Island	Incidents	11,299	8,589	10,038	10,736	10,985	10,329
	Injured Victims	7,253	5,248	5,521	5,371	5,180	5,715
Southern Interior	Incidents	9,527	8,100	9,125	10,068	9,330	9,230
	Injured Victims	6,007	4,658	5,093	4,921	4,495	5,035
North Central	Incidents	3,091	2,773	2,826	3,204	3,191	3,017
	Injured Victims	1,666	1,392	1,304	1,289	1,276	1,385
British Columbia (total)	Incidents	105,071	74,900	89,228	99,577	101,467	94,049
	Injured Victims	70,841	47,389	54,250	52,395	50,758	55,127

- A study by the District Department of Transportation in Washington, D.C., found that when the city banned right on red at 100 intersections in 2018, most drivers complied and there were fewer conflicts between pedestrians and vehicles. - [stateline.org](#)
- The permitted phase is a treatment of signal timing to provide the traffic movements permission to proceed without priority, and the subjective users are supposed to complete the movements after yielding to conflicting movements. - [researchgate.net](#)
- The Washington State Department of Transportation found 20% of collisions involving a driver hitting a pedestrian or cyclist occurred on a right turn. In a weeklong study of 40 intersections, the city of Bellevue found right turns made up two-thirds of conflicts between cars and pedestrians at intersections. [SeattleTimes.com](#)
- Right turn on red appears clearly as the most dangerous motorist maneuver for pedestrians at intersections with a crash rate about three times higher than the level of exposure (see chart below with comparisons of relative risk)

Table 3
RELATIVE RISK OF MOTORIST MANOEUVRES
FOR PEDESTRIANS AT INTERSECTIONS (Knaublauch & al., 1984)

Vehicle action	Accidents (%)	Manoeuvres (%)	Relative Risk
Straight forward	90.0%	84.6%	1.06
Right turn	3.8%	7.7%	0.49
Left turn	4.6%	7.2%	0.64
RTOR	1.6%	0.5%	3.20
All	100.0%	100.0%	1.00

To support this advocacy work, or learn more, contact us at mva@bikehub.ca.