

Region of Waterloo
Transportation Services
Transportation

To: Sustainability, Infrastructure, and Development Committee
Meeting Date: December 3, 2024
Report Title: Traffic and Parking By-Law Changes in Support of Municipal Speed Cameras

1. Recommendation

That the Regional Municipality of Waterloo amend Traffic and Parking By-law 16-023, effective January 1, 2025, in support of the Region's Municipal Speed Camera Program as outlined in Appendix A in Report TSD-TRP-24-020 dated December 3, 2024.

2. Purpose / Issue:

This report sets out recommendations for amendments to the Region's Traffic and Parking By-Law (16-023) and the associated Schedules which are designed to enhance community safety by reducing traffic-related risks for vulnerable road users. The proposed changes, in support of the Region's Municipal Speed Camera program, include designating additional School Zones, designating new Community Safety Zones, and ensuring consistent speed limits near and within the Region's School Zones. These amendments will apply along a number of Regional Roads within the City of Cambridge, City of Kitchener, City of Waterloo, Township of Wellesley, Township of Wilmot, and Township of Woolwich.

3. Strategic Plan:

The recommendations in this report align with the Region's 2023-2027 Growing with Care Strategic Plan under the following key area:

- Equitable Services and Opportunities:
 - Ensures that regional services are designed to meet the diverse needs of all communities, promoting fairness and inclusivity.

4. Report Highlights:

- Proposed amendments seek to enhance community safety by expanding School

Zones, reducing speed limits, and designating new Community Safety Zones at select locations in Kitchener, Cambridge, Waterloo, Wellesley, Wilmot, and Woolwich.

- Benefits of the proposed amendments include improved safety for vulnerable road users (pedestrians, cyclists, horse & buggies), reduced traffic violations, and heightened community awareness around the importance of slower speeds near the Region's schools.
- The amendments include new School Zone designations on Regional Road 15 (Lobsinger Line) at King Alfred Academy and on Regional Road 22 (Northfield Drive E) at Balsam Grove Parochial School in the Township of Woolwich, setting the stage for increased driver caution near schools.
- The amendments also included proposed speed limits reductions from 80 km/h to 40 km/h in the newly proposed School Zones on Regional Roads 15 and 22, thereby enhancing pedestrian and student safety. Surrounding areas will have maximum speed limits adjusted to 60 km/h, ensuring a logical speed limit transition, per best practices.
- Staff have identified the first round of recommended sites for Community Safety Zone designations which are to be layered on to the School Zones along Regional Roads which have active Municipal Speed Camera enforcement (13 in total). The proposed amendments specify the limits of each of the 13 new Community Safety Zones, as developed through the Region's new Community Safety Zone warrant practice adopted by Regional Council in October 2024.
- Per the Highway Traffic Act, use of automated speed enforcement systems are authorized only in a community safe zone or school zone where the posted speed limit is less than 80 km/hr. Currently, the posted speed limit is 80 km/hr for the applicable roads where King Alfred Academy and Balsam Grove Parochial School are located. Therefore, without a change to the posted speed limit, those areas are not eligible for a Municipal Speed Camera.
- To provide the surrounding community a reasonable period of time to adjust to the new speed limit strategies recommended near the King Alfred Academy and Balsam Grove Parochial School, staff proposes delaying the start of the Municipal Speed Camera enforcement of these two sites for at least 90 days from the time when the speed limit changes are adopted on-street.
- To maximize the effectiveness of Community Safety Zones, staff recommends timing the recommended by-law updates with the installation of Municipal Speed Cameras starting in January 2025. Accordingly, staff recommends adopting all the recommended Traffic and Parking By-Law changes with an effective date of January 1, 2025, just before the new Municipal Speed Camera program

expansion is launched in Q1 of 2025.

- Funding for the implementation of these by-law changes will come from the approved Camera-Based Enforcement budget.

5. Background:

In October 2024 (Report TSD-TRP-24-010), the Regional Municipality of Waterloo adopted a plan to implement Community Safety Zones near schools on Regional Roads that are to be equipped with a Municipal Speed Camera. As a follow-up to this recommendation, 13 locations have been identified for Community Safety Zone designations across Kitchener, Waterloo, Cambridge, Wellesley, Wilmot, and Woolwich.

As part of the recommendations in Report TSD-TRP-23-14 (November 2023), staff committed to review the suitability of the current speed limits at School Zones along regional roads that have posted speed limits greater than 40 km/h. For the King Alfred Academy (Lobsinger Line) and Balsam Grove Parochial School (Northfield Drive), staff from the Region and Township of Woolwich have identified the need for a municipal speed camera to help regulate speeds at these critical school areas. Until now, these locations have not been granted a School Zone designation in the Region's Traffic and Parking By-Law. As part of the recommendations of this report, staff recommend designating a School Zone along Lobsinger Line and Northfield Drive for these two schools, applying the Highway Traffic Act definition of 150 meters from the edge of each school property. Additionally, staff recommend a speed limit reduction from 80 km/h to 40 km/h in these new school zones, along with 500-metre transition zones with posted speeds of 60 km/h on both approaches to each School Zone. Illustrations of the proposed speed limit plans near King Alfred Academy on Lobsinger Line and Balsam Grove Parochial School on Northfield Drive are provided in Appendix B.

These efforts align with broader regional goals to improve traffic safety by pairing Community Safety Zones with appropriate speed limit reductions and School Zone designations. The proposed changes aim to enhance safety and reduce traffic-related risks for vulnerable road users, particularly in School Zones, by encouraging slower travel speeds in these critical areas.

6. Communication and Engagement with Area Municipalities and the Public

Area Municipalities:

Regional staff have shared the recommendations of this report with staff from the area municipalities. Additionally, through the Transportation Coordinating Committee, there have been discussions around the Community Safety Zone and School Zone strategy that led to the recommendations contained in this report.

Public:

All of the recommended changes will be communicated with community members through the Region's broader Community Safety Zone and Municipal Speed Camera communication strategy, including updates to the Regional information website and GIS map, GRT bus shelter ads, social media and targeted mailings to nearby residents.

7. Financial Implications:

The implementation of Community Safety Zones will require a total of 66 signs across the 13 designated locations. The estimated cost for manufacturing each sign is \$30, resulting in a total manufacturing cost of \$1,980. Additionally, the installation cost per sign is estimated at \$110, leading to a total installation cost of \$7,260. Thus, the overall financial implication for this initiative amounts to \$9,240. (Estimate is based on previous MSC "coming soon" sign creation and installation).

The approved 2024 "Transportation Services Division, Camera Based Enforcement" operating budget includes a provision of \$9,240 for this work.

8. Conclusion / Next Steps:

Subject to Council approval, staff will proceed with the implementation of Community Safety Zones, School Zones, and speed reduction as outlined in this report. It is anticipated that the rollout will be completed in Q1 of 2025, in alignment with the launch of the Municipal Speed Camera program expansion.

9. Attachments:

Appendix A: Full Set of Proposed Amendments to Traffic & Parking By-Law 16-023

Appendix B: Proposed Speed Limit Strategies at King Alfred Academy and Balsam Grove Parochial School

Prepared By: Devin Le, Engineering Technologist, Camera-Based Enforcement, Transportation Services

Michelle McKnight, Supervisor, Camera-Based Enforcement, Transportation Services

Darryl Spencer, Manager Transportation Engineering, Transportation Services

Reviewed By: Mike Henderson, Director, Transportation Services

Approved By: Doug Spooner, Acting Commissioner, Transportation Services