

Region of Waterloo
Transportation Services
Transportation

To: Planning and Works Committee
Meeting Date: April 4, 2023
Report Title: Region of Waterloo Road User Safety Program – 2023 Update

1. Recommendation

For Information.

2. Purpose / Issue:

To present to Regional Council the 2023 update of the Region’s Road User Safety Program. The full Program report is attached as Appendix A to this report. This report is supplemented by the Annual Collision Report (TES-TRP-22-08, September 6, 2022). This cover report serves to provide key highlights of the 2023 Road User Safety Program Report and inform Regional Council of current activities and upcoming new initiatives.

3. Strategic Plan:

The Region’s Road User Safety Program supports the following Region Strategic Focus Areas:

Sustainable Transportation: Strategic Objective 2.4: Improve road safety for all users. In addition, by enhancing the real and perceived safety of vulnerable road users, the Road User Safety Program also serves Strategic Objective 2.3: Increase participation in active forms of transportation (walking and cycling). And in turn, increases in active transportation will help to serve Focus Area: Environment and Climate Action, Strategic Objective 3.1: Reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

4. Report Highlights:

- The Region of Waterloo Road User Safety Program is a comprehensive evidence-based and data-driven program that involves the collaboration of a variety of proponents and stakeholders in the community. The main goal of the Program is to significantly reduce all collisions involving serious injuries and fatalities, with particular emphasis on reducing serious collisions involving vulnerable road users, including pedestrians and cyclists. The key elements of the Program are the five E’s of road safety: Evaluation, Engagement,

Engineering, Education and Enforcement.

- Collection and analysis of collision data over many years indicates that the Program is contributing positively to the downward trend of collisions involving vulnerable road users within the Region’s road network. While significant achievements have been made, there is much more work yet to be done in order to “move the needle” closer to the ultimate goal of zero serious collisions.
- Innovation lies at the heart of every aspect of the Program as staff continually explore new traffic safety initiatives through research on safety projects performed around the country and around the globe. Staff also explore new safety initiatives for which limited performance data is available through the implementation of Pilot Projects. Some of the key Pilot Projects currently underway include the Time/Day/Month Speed Restrictions in School Zones, Flex Signs for speed control in rural hamlets and the Rural All-way Stop Pilot.
- In addition to proven and emerging safety enhancing initiatives already underway, the Transportation team is also developing new initiatives for potential implementation in the coming years. Some examples of these new initiatives are: Raised Crosswalk and Rapid Flashing Beacons at Roundabout Pilot, Illumination Review at Existing Roundabouts, Review of Warrants for Pedestrian-Oriented Traffic Controls, Global implementation of No Right-Turn on Red and Rural Hamlet Speed Compliance.
- Regional Transportation staff actively participate in the ION Safety and Operations Committee which, among other initiatives, facilitates a collaborative review and assessment of any safety concerns observed in and around the Region’s LRT. Members of the Committee identify and review the factors that may have contributed to collisions involving the light rail vehicles with pedestrians, cyclists, or vehicles. From these ongoing reviews, Region staff identify and implement both location-specific and systemic measures aimed at eliminating collisions involving ION trains.
- Some key action items for 2023 include:
 - Implement safety countermeasures at the top 20 pedestrian, cyclist and driver collision locations as identified through the annual Collision Report;
 - Provide recommendations to Design and Construction regarding safety countermeasures to be incorporated into all capital projects under design;
 - Continue to implement systemic safety countermeasures, such as Pedestrian Countdown Signals, Leading Pedestrian Intervals, Ladder Crosswalks, Pedestrian Refuge Islands and Offset Crosswalks as part of routine upgrades to intersections;
 - Report back to Council in Q2 regarding the feasibility of expanding the

- existing ASE Program in 2023 to include 32 sites;
- Present to Council by Q2 a “road map”, including work plan and resource requirements, to rapidly expand the ASE Program to cover all 175 schools in the Region;
- Develop and present to Council a work plan and resource requirements to implement a Rural Hamlet Speed Compliance Program;
- Report back to Council on the results of two key Pilot Projects: the Time/Day/Month Speed Restrictions in School Zones and the Flex Signs for speed control in rural hamlets;
- Produce the 2023 Collision Report; and
- Develop and initiate a new Road Safety Education campaign, including a focus on ION Safety.

5. Background:

Nil.

6. Area Municipality Communication and Public/Stakeholder Engagement:

Engagement involves ongoing collaboration with various internal partners and stakeholders to obtain and analyze data, develop and share material on safety programs and ongoing implementation. Some of the key partner agencies include Waterloo Regional Police Services, Student Transportation Services Waterloo Region and local area municipalities. In addition to the collaboration with partners noted above, the Region’s Transportation team frequently engages with the community through concerns raised through Regional and Area Municipality Councillors and via concerns and requests raised by residents through the Region’s Service First Contact Centre (SFCC) or other modes such as through social media platforms. These concerns can range from requests for a new traffic control device (stop sign or traffic signals, etc.) to questions about traffic signal timing or posted speed limits. In 2022, Transportation staff responded to over 800 such queries, most of which were safety related.

7. Financial Implications:

The approved 2023 Operating and Capital Budgets include sufficient funds for existing programs and initiatives. Delivery of the current Road User Safety Program, including the recently expanded ASE Program, in addition to the ongoing day-to-day activities of the Traffic Engineering group, is putting considerable strain on current staff resources. The Road User Safety Program in its entirety is being delivered by a total of two FTE’s. Expansions of existing programs or the implementation of new initiatives will require additional staff resources and capital funding in order to maintain adequate service levels for day-to-day activities. As the plans for these expansions and new initiatives are formulated, staff will identify and present these additional budget requirements for Council’s approval as part of future update reports or as part of future budget processes.

8. Conclusion / Next Steps:

Some key actions for 2024 and beyond are:

- Develop progress targets and resource requirements for the implementation of all systemic engineering countermeasures;
- Develop work plans and resource requirements for expanded data collection, analysis and reporting on key performance metrics;
- Develop work plans and resource requirements for the expansion of existing programs and the development of new safety programs as detailed in the 2023 Road User Safety Program Report; and
- Investigate the potential to leverage ongoing camera-based monitoring /enforcement technology to provide more proactive collision analytics.

9. Attachments:

Appendix A: Road User Safety Program – 2023 Update

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