

## **Appendix B: Preliminary Information on Community Safety Zones**

### **What is a Community Safety Zone?**

Community Safety Zones were introduced in Ontario in 1998 (Bill 26). The provincial definition is relatively broad, stating that the “*council of a municipality may by by-law designate a part of a highway under its jurisdiction as a community safety zone if, in the council’s opinion, public safety is of special concern on that part of the highway.*” Beyond that, it is up to each municipality to identify a definition for Community Safety Zones.

While the Region and its area municipalities do not have an up-to-date set of criteria for Community Safety Zones at this time, plans are in place to develop such criteria. In broad terms, a Community Safety Zone might include key features such schools, parks, community centres, or other destinations that might attract vulnerable road users (such as pedestrians and cyclists). A full set of criteria will be developed to identify suitable locations in the Region of Waterloo.

Along with School Zones, Community Safety Zones are the other highway designation which qualifies for the implementation of Automated Speed Enforcement (ASE) per the provincial ASE regulations.

### **Does the Region already have Community Safety Zones?**

The Region currently has 8 designated Community Safety Zones, as outlined in By-Law 16-023, Schedule 21. Those Community Safety Zones were designated and implemented on-street in the early 2000’s. Following the implementation of the early Community Safety Zones, staff observed that, alone, the designation and the associated signage were ineffective in influencing the driving behaviour through those Community Safety Zones. In response, staff discontinued the use of Community Safety Zones along Regional roadways. Some of the area municipalities shared similar experiences and also discontinued the deployment of Community Safety Zones in recent years.

### **Can the whole Region be designated as a Community Safety Zone?**

The Region, or any municipality in Ontario, should not designate the entire Region as a Community Safety Zone. As stated in the provincial definition, and as understood by practitioners around the province, only “part of a highway” is suitable for Community Safety Zone designation and those designations must be where safety is a “special concern”. Designating the entire Region, or any broad area, as a Community Safety Zone would compromise the purpose of a Community Safety Zone designation which is to highlight areas where public safety is of special concern. Identifying the specific road

user safety outcomes that the Region is trying to achieve will also be critical to maintain public trust in the Automated Speed Enforcement program.

**What are the next steps for introducing Community Safety Zones to support expanded Automated Speed Enforcement?**

Regional staff plan to work with area municipal partners to develop an updated criteria for the designation of Community Safety Zones in the Region. In the spirit of provincial consistency in the application of ASE, staff will continue to engage other municipalities in Ontario who are also currently working to develop criteria for Community Safety Zones in their communities. Staff are aiming to bring recommendations for Community Safety Zones in the Region of Waterloo to Council in Q3 2023.