

---

**Subject:** Community Safety Zone Policy and Warrant

**Report to:** Public Works Committee

**Report date:** Tuesday, August 8, 2023

---

## Recommendations

1. That Regional Council **APPROVE** the adoption of Community Safety Zone Policy attached as Appendix 1 to report PW 34-2023;
2. That the designation of Community Safety Zones **BE APPROVED** for the list of zones in Appendix 3 to report PW 34-2023; and
3. That the necessary By-law **BE PREPARED** and **PRESENTED** to Regional Council for consideration.

## Key Facts

- The purpose of this report is to seek Council approval for the implementation of a dedicated Community Safety Zone (CSZs) policy and associated warrant process.
- This report further recommends that 12 new community safety zones as outlined in Appendix 2 be implemented ahead of the start of the 2023 school year, consistent with the warrant process.
- A CSZ is a section of roadway where public safety is of a special concern, particularly for vulnerable road users like children and older adults, and where traffic offences are subject to double the fines.
- As CSZs are intended to address specific and localized community safety concerns, it is important to establish a clear policy and warrant criteria to guide staff in the development of recommendations for expansion.
- The 12 new CSZs recommended in this report will not be included in the rotation of the Region's 4 Automated Speed Enforcement (ASE) cameras, which will remain focused in the 13 existing CSZs. Any expansion of the ASE program will be subject to future reporting to Council (anticipated for late Q1/early Q2 2024) and to be based on the early results of the program within the initial 13 locations.

## **Financial Considerations**

The cost to establish a Community Safety Zone (CSZ) is minimal in terms of signage installation within the limits of each zone. The costs will be covered under the approved 2023 Transportation Services Operating Budget.

## **Analysis**

Niagara Region adopted Vision Zero in 2019 with the aim of reducing and ultimately eliminating traffic fatalities and injuries on the Regional road network.

The implementation of Community Safety Zones (CSZ) serves as an important component of the Region's Vision Zero initiative by highlighting to drivers sections of the road network where safety is a particular concern due to the increased presence of vulnerable road users such as children or older adults. The doubling of traffic offence fines within CSZs assists in reinforcing the importance of safety and is intended to modify driver behaviour. CSZs are further an important component of the Region's Automated Speed Enforcement program, which operates within designated CSZs.

Niagara currently has 13 CSZs, the majority of which were implemented based on screening criteria (PW4-2020) and which are primarily located in areas where schools have direct frontage on a Regional road.

## **Community Safety Zone Policy**

As CSZs are intended to address specific and localized community safety concerns, it is important to establish a clear policy and warrant criteria to guide staff in the development of recommendations for expansion of CSZs in the future.

The policy (Appendix 1) and warrant process outlined in this report seeks to expand on the previous screening criteria in order to:

- Provide a warrant process based on the road environment, risk, and collision history;
- Expand the current practice of placement of CSZs exclusively in school areas to other areas of concern such as senior centres, playgrounds, and community centres;
- Reflect the placement of CSZs both with and without the implementation of Automated Speed Enforcement cameras; and
- Establish an annual review process for the implementation of additional CSZs.

The policy establishes that CSZ must be between 500 metres and 2.5 kilometres in length, and that they will not be implemented on roads with speeds posted 70 km/h or higher.

Subject to Council approval of the policy, the Director Transportation Services will be delegated authority to develop any required procedures necessary to implement the policy.

### **Community Safety Zone Warrant**

Transportation Services retained a consultant (CIMA+) to review the draft CSZ Policy, assist in the development of a warrant for the implementation of new CSZ, and evaluate 25 candidate CSZ locations against the warrant for potential implementation. The full CIMA+ report is provided in Appendix 2.

CSZs are most effective when implemented at locations of special concern that are obvious to the road user. Human factors research has concluded that posted signs, such as "Community Safety Zone" signs, are most effective when the road itself and its adjacent land communicate to the driver that this section of road is different and that higher numbers of pedestrians, cyclists or other vulnerable road users may be present. Therefore, one of the most important considerations in implementing CSZs is that the need and use should be obvious to the road user.

To achieve this goal and ensure CSZs are recommended only in areas where they are most appropriate, the proposed warrant incorporates criteria such as the number of sensitive land uses (i.e. schools, community centres, and seniors homes) environmental risk factors such as average vehicle operating speeds, percentage of trucks and past collision history.

The establishment of a warrant and the recommended criteria follows the approach taken in peer Regions such as Halton, York, and Durham, all of which have established dedicated warrants for CSZs utilizing similar criteria.

The warrant process recommended for Niagara considers the following criteria:

- Number of fatal and injury collisions involving pedestrians and cyclists per year;
- Operating Speed vs. Posted Speed Limit;
- Average Daily Traffic Volume (AADT);
- Number of Lanes;

- Percent Coverage of Sidewalks;
- Truck Volumes;
- Pedestrian Volumes;
- Number of Intersections and Driveways (per kilometre); and
- Number and type of locations where there is anticipated to be a high amount of pedestrian or cyclist traffic such as schools, seniors centres, community centres, playgrounds, food banks or homeless shelters, or places of worship.

The full list of categories and associated scoring criteria is outlined in the consultant report in Appendix 2.

In order to satisfy this warrant, a minimum score of 25 points is required. This threshold has been recommended to reflect the policy objective of ensuring that CSZs are implemented in locations where the need and use is obvious to the road user, and to balance the number of new CSZs being immediately implemented. As outlined in the proposed policy, this threshold will be evaluated on an annual basis.

### **Recommended Community Safety Zone Locations**

An initial 25 sections of the regional road network have been evaluated against the proposed CSZ warrant. Candidate locations were selected by staff based on anticipated ability to successfully satisfy the warrant given known land uses and past collision history.

However, the CSZ warrant is potentially applicable to any section of the regional road network with a posted speed limit of 60 km/hr or below, and staff will on an annual basis assess both additional candidate locations as well as previously evaluated locations based on factors such as updated traffic counts and speed studies in accordance with the policy.

Having passed the warrant, a total of 12 locations have been recommended for implementation. These locations are summarized below as well as in Appendix 3:

- Fort Erie - Garrison Road - RR3 - Rose Hill Road to Spears Road
- Grimsby – Main Street East – RR 81 – Lawrence Avenue to Durham Road
- Lincoln - Mountain Street - RR18 - Edelheim Road to Beam Street
- Niagara Falls - Lundy's Lane - RR20 - Brookfield Avenue to Main Street
- Niagara Falls - McLeod Road - RR49 - Oakwood Drive to Drummond Road
- Pelham - Highway 20 East - RR20 - Rice Road to Pinecrest Court

- Port Colborne - Killaly Street West - RR5 - West Side Road to King Street
- St. Catharines - Glendale Avenue - RR89 - Pelham Road to Caroline Street
- St. Catharines - Lakeshore Road - RR87 - Bradmon Drive to Read Road
- St. Catharines - Niagara Street - RR48 - Carlton Street to Scott Street
- Thorold - Collier Road South - RR56 - Highway 58 Ramp to St. David's Road
- Welland - Prince Charles Drive North - RR54 - Lacy Avenue to First Avenue

The list of recommended new CSZs has been shared with the Niagara Region Police Service (NRPS) for their awareness, subject to Council approval, with respect to enforcement.

### **Community Safety Zones and Automated Speed Enforcement**

The ASE program is anticipated to launch in September 2023, with 4 ASE units rotating through the Region's 13 existing Community Safety Zones. The 12 new CSZs recommended in this report will not be included in the rotation of the Region's 4 ASE cameras.

The first implementation of ASE units in some existing CSZs will not occur until Summer 2024, based on the September 2023 launch and approximately 90-day period in which ASE units will remain in place for during each deployment. Adding the 12 new CSZs to the existing rotation schedule would push this timeline well into the 2024-2025 school year and limit the ability to undertake a second round of rotations within the existing CSZs.

Potential expansion of the ASE program to include the new 12 CSZs will be considered as part of future reporting to Council (anticipated for late Q1/early Q2 2024), at which time recommendations will be made based on the early results of the ASE program, including demonstration of realized safety benefits and an assessment of required resources for program expansion.

### **Other Vision Zero Program Updates**

The implementation of additional CSZs forms a component of the overall Vision Zero initiative. The following is a brief update on other parallel Vision Zero programs underway:

- *5-Year Road Safety Strategic Plan* – staff have initiated a consulting assignment for development of a comprehensive strategic roadmap and plan for the Region's

implementation of Vision Zero. The plan will set out the targets, policies and actions to improve the level of roadway safety and reduce the number of fatal and injury collisions. Plan development will continue through 2023 in partnership with local area municipalities and other key advocacy groups with a report back to Council anticipated for late Q1 /early Q2 2024.

- *Red Light Cameras* – all operational agreements authorized in April 2023 by PW 11-2023 have been successfully executed, and staff are in the process of verifying with the vendor timelines for site works and camera installation. It is currently anticipated that program will launch in early Q4 2023.

### **Alternatives Reviewed**

The alternative to approval of the recommendations in this report is to not adopt a policy and warrant process for the implementation of CSZs.

This would result in the inconsistent implementation of CSZs without clear and measurable criteria. Implementing CSZs in areas where they are not warranted will harm the overall effectiveness of the program if drivers are not able to clearly understand the rationale for why an area has been designated as a CSZ.

### **Relationship to Council Strategic Priorities**

The proposed implementation of additional Community Safety Zones under the Vision Zero initiative directly aligns with the Council Strategic Priority: Facilitating the Movement of People and Goods (Objective 3.4) through supporting and advancing safe and healthy streets for the Region.

### **Other Pertinent Reports**

PW 34-2022	Implementation of ASE Across Niagara Region
PW 49-2021	Designation of a Community Safety Zone on Regional Road 20 Lundy's Lane in the City of Niagara Falls
PW 4-2020	Vision Zero Road Safety Program Designation of Community Safety Zones around Schools
PW 38-2019	Community Safety Zones

---

**Prepared by:**

Scott Fraser, P. Eng  
Associate Director, Transportation  
Planning  
Transportation Services

---

**Recommended by:**

Dan Carnegie  
Commissioner of Public Works (Acting)  
Public Works Department

---

**Submitted by:**

Ron Tripp, P.Eng.  
Chief Administrative Officer

This report was prepared in consultation with Petar Vujic, Road Safety & Permit Program Manager; Manny Rataul Road Safety Technician; and reviewed by Janice Wiggins, Corporate Policy Program Advisor; Miranda Vink, Manager Court Services; Brian McMahon, Program Financial Specialist; Renee Muzzell, Manager Program Financial Support; Frank Tassone, Director Transportation Services; and Donna Gibbs, Director Legal and Court Services.

**Appendices**

- |            |                                      |
|------------|--------------------------------------|
| Appendix 1 | Draft Community Safety Zone Policy   |
| Appendix 2 | CIMA Report – CSZ Policy and Warrant |
| Appendix 3 | Proposed Community Safety Zones      |