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**Subject:** Vision Zero Road Safety Program: Designation of Community Safety Zones around Schools

**Report to:** Public Works Committee

**Report date:** Tuesday, March 10, 2020

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## Recommendations

1. That the designation of Community Safety Zones (CSZs) **BE APPROVED** for schools described in Appendix 1, effective date March 30, 2020;
2. That the necessary By-law **BE PREPARED** and **PRESENTED** to Regional Council for consideration; and,
3. That Regional Staff **REPORT BACK** to Council by the end of 2020, providing an update on the Community Safety Zones; including the new proposed ten (10) locations with the two (2) already in operation since 2019.

## Key Facts

- Aggressive driving contributed to 24% of fatal and injury collisions in Niagara region during the last five years (2014-2018).
- Societal cost of collisions represents costs incurred by individuals directly involved in a collision. The calculated societal cost of collisions in Niagara region in 2018 was more than \$400 million.
- In Niagara Region, there is a strong correlation between the peak period of traffic and the number of collisions. Most collisions occur in PM, mid-day and AM peak of traffic (3:00- 6:00 p.m.) PM, around afternoon and (8:00- 9:00 a.m.) AM.
- The adoption of CSZs, in Niagara region, was approved by Regional Council on July 2019.
- Since September 2019, the Niagara Regional Police continue to issue Provincial offences tickets at the two CSZs, in support of the Vision Zero Road Safety Program in partnership with the Niagara Region Transportation Services Division.
- Consistent with other Municipal experience, traditional enforcement has its challenges with enforcing road safety. Consequently, Automated Speed

Enforcement (ASE) Technology was regulated the end of 2019 to supplement, not replace, traditional enforcement operations.

- A plan is in progress, subject to Council approval, to deploy in the future a combination of ASE systems with traditional police enforcement within CSZs. Locations will be assessed related to speeding-related crashes, concentration of vulnerable road users, and in proximity to sensitive community areas (schools).

## **Financial Considerations**

The cost to establish a Community Safety Zone is minimal in terms of signage installation within the limits of each zone. The costs are covered under the approved 2020 Transportation Services Operating Budget.

The community education programs and police enforcement resources have already been discussed with the Niagara Regional Police, Strategic Communications and Public Affairs, Niagara Student Transportation Services and Public Health Staff.

## **Analysis**

### **Background**

As Part of the Vision Zero Road Safety Plan, Regional Council recently approved the creation of Community Safety Zones (CSZs). This is a critical step forward in the Vision Zero Road Safety Program, to help reduce aggressive driving and speeding in areas within the Region that have higher concentrations of vulnerable road users.

Accordingly, this report seeks the approval from Regional Council to amend the necessary by-laws to expand the CSZs program to ten (10) additional elementary and / or secondary schools within the Niagara District School Board (Catholic and Public School Boards). Doing so will make the Zones eligible for automated speed enforcement under the Province's Bill 65, Safer School Zones Act, 2017. The Act was updated and proclaimed to include for the implementation of ASE within CSZs and School Zones on December 1, 2019.

The combination of an automated speed enforcement system, subject to Council approval, and the CSZs will, in future, serve as a two-key tool to help address

aggressive driving behaviours to enable road safety solutions for vulnerable road users in Niagara. This represents the youngest and most vulnerable road user groups.

Moreover, this is the first step in the overall review process being conducted by Transportation Services Staff that will subsequently include a detailed site-by-site review to the five (5) E's of road safety (Engineering, Evaluation, Enforcement, Education and Engagement) with identification of safety measures to be implemented. Further strategies will be brought forward for Council approval during the second quarter of 2020.

### **Implementation Strategy**

Transportation Services Staff have completed a review of 30 additional elementary and / or secondary schools and are recommending initial CSZs; limits from intersection to intersection along the frontage of the schools (Attachments 1-10). The screening methodology consists of the following criteria:

1. Exposure:
  - a. Traffic Volume (Average Annual Daily Traffic)
  - b. Speed Differential (85<sup>th</sup> percentile – Posted Speed Limit)
  - c. Length of Zone
  - d. Students Walking Along and Crossing Regional Road
  - e. Speed Transition
2. Collisions statistics from 2014 to 2018
3. Zone Environment:
  - a. Sidewalk
  - b. On-street Parking
  - c. Roadway curvature
  - d. Land use
  - e. Illumination

The image below provide details of ranking to each of the addition ten (10) schools:

School Name	Full Address	RR	School Type	Municipality	Weighted Ranking	Direction	Posted Speed
Blessed Trinity Catholic Secondary School	145 Livingston Avenue	512	Secondary	Grimsby	77	WB	50
Smithville District Christian High School	6488 Townline Road	14	Secondary	West Lincoln	66	WB	50
Greendale Elementary School	5504 Montrose Road	98	Elementary	Niagara Falls	63	SB	50
Our Lady Of Victory Catholic Elementary School	300 Central Avenue	124	Elementary	Fort Erie	63	SB	40
Park Elementary School	217 Main Street East	81	Elementary	Grimsby	60	WB	50
Crossroads Public Elementary School	1350 Niagara Stone Rd	55	Elementary	NOTL	58	EB	50
Alexander Kuska KSG Catholic Elementary School	333 Rice Road	54	Elementary	Welland	56	NB	40
DSBN Academy	130 Louth Street	71	Secondary	St. Catharines	45	NB	50
John Calvin School	320 Station Street	14	Elementary	West Lincoln	37	NB	50
St Ann Catholic Elementary School (SC)	218 MAIN ST	81	Elementary	St. Catharines	33	TBD	50

**Signage**

Each Community Safety Zone will require signage at the beginning and end of each zone as per the Highway Traffic Act. Given the requirements, each school would require a minimum of four (4) signs (i.e. wo (2) per direction) and possibly additional signs mid-block depending on the length of the defined section as seen in the images below.

The signs will be placed at the respective CSZs and be in effect as of March 30, 2020.



**Figure 1 - Example of Community Safety Zone signage to be installed**

**Vision Zero TASK FORCE (VZTF)**

The Vision Zero Road Safety Program is a toolkit of traffic safety tools for implementation for a safe systems approach within Niagara region. The successful implementation of a safe systems approach requires collaboration between

Transportation Services, Niagara Regional Police Services, Niagara Public Health, Niagara Student Transportation Services and School Boards; in addition to local Area Municipalities, other community partners and other levels of government.

To help create an understanding and develop a common language and possible framework across the region and among all stakeholders, a Task Force will be established with partners. Invitations will be extended to partners to participate and provide input into coordination, education, evaluation, monitoring, and advise on progress and next steps.

### **Alternatives Reviewed**

Do nothing is not an option as excessive speed is one of the leading factors that contribute to traffic crashes in Niagara region where speeding-related crashes are responsible for an average of \$350 million in economic losses each year in Niagara region.

Other reports will be coming forward to PWC and Council outlining other traffic safety tools for implementation as part of the Vision Zero Road Safety Program.

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

#### **Implementing Community Safety Zones (CSZs) supports the 2019 to 2022 Strategic Plan and aligns with the Transportation Master Plan (TMP) Vision 2041**

Regional Council adopted Niagara Region's Strategic Plan 2019-2022 with the vision statement of striving to achieve a prosperous, safe and inclusive community that embraces our natural spaces and promotes holistic wellbeing and quality of life. Community Safety Zones will serve to address Niagara Region's commitment to the safe system approach; by recommending extensive, proactive and targeted initiatives, informed by data and aimed at eliminating serious injury and fatalities on Niagara Regional roads.

### **Alignment to Niagara Region Transportation Master Plan (TMP)**

Niagara Region is undergoing significant change and by 2041 will have grown and evolved on economic, demographic, social and technological fronts. This

recommendation will support growth and enhance Niagara globally by promoting an integrated network of roads and highways for the safe movement of people and goods.

This recommendation is part of Transportation's Vision Zero Road Safety Program that is critical to building a safe and inclusive community. It is a philosophy of significant departure from the traditional approach of road safety by providing a transportation network with safer walking, cycling, and motor vehicle routes.

### **Other Pertinent Reports**

PW 64-2019 Vision Zero Road Safety Program, November 5, 2019

PW 38-2019 Community Safety Zones, July 9, 2019

PW 35-2019 Automated Speed Enforcement – Safer School Zones, July 9, 2019

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*This report was prepared in consultation with Carolyn Ryall, Director Transportation Services, and was reviewed by Donna Gibbs, Director Legal and Court Services and Brian McMahon, Program Financial Specialist.*

### **Appendices**

Appendix 1            List of Designated Community Safety Zones (CSZs)

Appendix 2            Maps of CSZ Locations from 1 – 10