

Motion Memorandum

SUBJECT: Safer Drivers, Safer Roads – A Call for the Provincial Government to Act

TO: Committee of the Whole

From: Councillor Rory Nisan

Seconded by: Councillor Kelvin Galbraith

Date to Committee: N/A

Date to Council: May 20, 2025

CIP Date: N/A

Motion for Council to Consider:

WHEREAS In addition to tragic loss of life and injury, vehicle collisions cause higher auto-insurance rates, unwanted congestion, lost productivity, and significant costs associated with emergency response (police, fire, paramedics, hospital emergency rooms and healthcare);

WHEREAS Ontario Provincial Police say 411 people were killed as a result of collisions on the province's highways in 2023, making it the deadliest year in more than 15 years (1);

WHEREAS That same year 26,425 were injured in vehicle collisions according to the MTO Preliminary 2023 Ontario Road Safety Annual Report (2);

WHEREAS As of Thanksgiving 2024, the OPP notes that 296 drivers, passengers, pedestrians and cyclists died in car collisions, and the vast majority of those road incidents were preventable and attributed to poor and careless actions and behaviours (3);

WHEREAS 2024 was the most dangerous year for pedestrians and cyclists who have been particularly at risk last year, with fatalities in these two road user classes up 100 per cent and 82 per cent respectively over the same time for 2023 (4);

WHEREAS By far, the most common type of conviction of the Highway Traffic Act (HTA) and cause for fatalities was speeding, representing 60.4% of all HTA convictions (5);

WHEREAS Halton Regional Police report that motor vehicle collision totals were 3.6% higher during 2024 (up from 4,799 to 4,974), Property Damage collisions were up from 4,345 to 4,519 (+4.0%), and Injury collision totals were up from 445 to 453 (+1.8%). Fatal collisions decreased from 9 to 2 (6);

WHEREAS Warning Notices (Warns) provide officers with an opportunity to document an offence and educate the public, but proceed by way of a warning option instead of a charge. Total enforcement (Provincial Offence Notices issued, plus Warns) was up by 2,568, or 13.4%, to 21,764 (from 19,196 in 2023) (7);

WHEREAS To mitigate speeding drivers, the City of Burlington has made investments in Automated Speed Enforcement (ASE) cameras, speed bumps, lower speed limits, police enforcement and other traffic calming measures, however like all municipalities, lacks jurisdiction over driver training and examinations;

WHEREAS Under the HTA, the Ministry of Transportation (Ministry) is responsible for protecting the public by restricting the privilege of driving to those who demonstrate that they have the necessary knowledge, skills and experience to drive safely;

WHEREAS Ensuring that drivers receive appropriate and effective training and testing before they get a driver's licence is a crucial step in keeping Ontario's roads safe;

WHEREAS The Auditor General (AG) conducted a value for money audit (AG Report) which includes 18 recommendations for the Provincial Government Ministry, published in December 2023 and concludes by highlighting: "Our audit concluded that the Ministry of Transportation did not have effective evidence-based driver examination programs to evaluate and test novice drivers thoroughly and consistently. The Ministry did not provide effective oversight of novice driver training and driver examination service providers to ensure desired service outcomes with due regard to economy. Ministry oversight of driving schools and instructors was limited. It does not regulate driver training services outside of the optional Beginner Driver Education program, curbing its ability to identify and/or deter substandard training practices within the industry. In addition, the Ministry's monitoring programs were not designed to proactively identify drivers with repeat suspensions or high-risk medical conditions, impeding the effectiveness of these programs to maximize road safety in Ontario," (8);

WHEREAS In March 2024, CBC Marketplace broke an investigative story "Driving schools selling shortcuts to insurance discounts and faster road tests" where schools

submit false information to government saying drivers completed 40 hours of training, consistent with concerning findings in the AG Report (9); and,

WHEREAS The provincial government has not provided a substantial update on any action taken regarding the recommendations in the AG Report to improve driver training and examination for safer drivers and improve safety on our roads.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

1. The City of Burlington endorse the Auditor General Value-for-Money Audit Driver Training and Examination Report (AG Report) - its findings and 18 recommendations to ensure that we have safe and qualified drivers on our roads;
2. The City of Burlington request a formal update from the provincial government and meeting with the Minister of Transportation regarding any action taken to date based on the recommendations described in the AG Report, particularly those that prioritize improved driver training and examination for safer drivers on our roads;
3. The City of Burlington share this motion and endorsement with the Premier, Minister of Transportation, all local MPPs, and the leaders of the official opposition and third party;
4. The City of Burlington forward this motion and attachment to any cities or towns listed in the AG Report and the top dangerous cities in Ontario, encouraging them to pass a similar motion, and CC them in the follow-up correspondence to the province;
5. The City of Burlington forward this motion, attachment, and follow-up correspondence to the Region of Halton, Halton Regional Police, the Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO), Driving Instructors Association, and Young Drivers of Canada.

Reason:

Following the detailed recommendations contained within the AG Report to ensure Ontario is ensuring safe and qualified drivers on our roads, this resolution is intended to prompt an update from the Ministry of Transportation on actions taken to implement the recommendations contained within the AG Report.

While municipalities lack jurisdictional oversight over the enforcement of driver training and examinations in the province of Ontario, municipal resident safety is of critical importance and where the municipality designs safe roadways and traffic management

strategies, these implementations are only as effective as the persons in charge of driving a given motor vehicle.

For the safety and confidence of all Ontario road users, the Ministry of Transportation ought to implement the recommendations contained within the AG Report and to communicate its implementations publicly

Outcome Sought:

Seeking endorsement from City Council to action the components of the resolution, including, requesting a formal update from the Ministry of Transportation regarding any action taken based on the recommendations described in the AG report, and to share the resolution with relevant stakeholders to gain further support in requesting policy intervention updates from the provincial government.

Implications:

Minimal staff impacts anticipated beyond preparing correspondence requesting a formal update from the Minister of Transportation and distributing the resolution to other stakeholders as detailed.

References:

1. CBC News – Ontario highway deaths topped 400 last year, OPP says, May 14, 2024: <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/toronto/opp-number-fatalities-last-year-deadly-year-1.7204528>
2. Ontario Ministry of Transportation – Preliminary 2023 Ontario Road Safety Annual Report Selected Statistics, July 2024: <https://www.ontario.ca/files/2024-07/mto-orsar-preliminary2023-en.pdf>
3. CTV News – Nearly 300 people missing from Thanksgiving tables: OPP, October 11, 2024: <https://www.ctvnews.ca/barrie/article/nearly-300-people-missing-from-thanksgiving-tables-opp/>
4. BayToday.ca – Cyclists and pedestrian fatalities double over last year: OPP, October 10, 2024: <https://www.baytoday.ca/local-news/cyclists-and-pedestrian-fatalities-double-over-last-year-opp-9641490>
5. G1.ca – Ontario driving statistics for 2024: the Ultimate List: <https://www.g1.ca/driving-statistics/>

6. Halton Regional Police Service – Mid-Year Performance Report, September 26, 2024: https://www.haltonpolice.ca/en/about-us/resources/Documents/2024_Mid-Year_Performance_Report.pdf
 7. Ibid.
 8. Office of the Auditor General of Ontario – Value-for-Money Audit: Driver Training and Examination, December 2023: https://www.auditor.on.ca/en/content/annualreports/arreports/en23/AR_drivertraining_en23.pdf
 9. CBC News – Driving schools selling shortcuts to insurance discounts and faster road tests, investigation reveals, March 8, 2024: <https://www.cbc.ca/news/business/marketplace-driving-schools-education-fee-1.7134557>
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Strategic Alignment

- ☐ Designing and delivering complete communities
 - ☒ Providing the best services and experiences
 - ☐ Protecting and improving the natural environment and taking action on climate change
 - ☐ Driving organizational performance
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Approved as per form by the City Clerk