

# A year in community safety initiatives

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Road in many parts of Caledon was top of mind for residents, with numerous initiatives, including demonstrations, designed to underscore the issue.

## Road safety emergency

In January, Caledon joined neighbour municipality Mono in declaring a Road Safety Emergency.

It also joined Mono in calling on the Province to launch an Ontario-wide road safety education campaign; review and increase Highway Traffic Act (HTA) fines; and permit municipalities to deploy Automated Speed Enforcement (ASE) cameras without having to declare community safety zones or meet ?onerous conditions?.

Multiple Caledon Councillors shared that road safety is the number one concern they hear about from residents. Mayor Annette Groves said municipalities need to come together to advocate to the Province, and get the Ministry of Transportation at the table to help.

## Caledon votes to continue ban on retail cannabis stores

At Caledon Council's April 9 General Committee meeting, Councillors nearly unanimously voted to continue to opt out of having legal cannabis retail stores in Town.

Ward 3 Councillor Doug Maskell was the lone voice of support for allowing the stores.

When cannabis was made legal by the Federal Government in 2018, it gave municipalities the option to opt in or out of allowing stores within their boundaries. In January of 2019, Caledon Councillors chose to opt out.

Since then, a new term of Council has begun. In October 2023, a motion from Maskell asking Town staff to review the feasibility of permitting cannabis retail stores in Caledon was passed by Council. The motion directed Town of Caledon staff to report back to Council in the first quarter of 2024, which they did at the April 9 meeting.

The report from staff included data from a recent survey conducted by the Town on the topic.

In 2024, 56 per cent of survey respondents were against allowing cannabis stores, while 41 per cent were in support and two per cent were undecided. 323 people participated in the survey.

A similar survey conducted by the Town in 2019 found that 52 per cent of residents supported allowing cannabis stores, while 43 per cent were against them and three per cent were undecided. 602 people participated in that survey.

## Caledon residents protest to advocate for safer roads

Just before 6 p.m. on October 3, residents gathered in Downtown Bolton for a peaceful protest demanding safer roads in Caledon.

The protest, titled ?March to Save the Next Life?, was organized by the newly-formed Caledon Community Road Safety Advocacy Group (CCRSA).

The group was created after a September 10 collision at the intersection of Coleraine Drive and King Street West took the life of 23-year-old Bolton woman Adrianna Milena McCauley.

Joanna Valeriani, who helped organize the March to Save the Next Life, said McCauley's death was the last straw for people concerned about road safety in Caledon. She said she's heard that "enough is enough" from so many people.

The CCSRA has gotten tons of support in a very short time.

"I have never seen a movement take off so quickly and grow like this has," said Valeriani. "We're all here for the same reason, we want to save the next life? we're in it for the long haul because this isn't going to happen overnight."

### **Caledon declares road safety emergency? again**

On October 8, Mayor Annette Groves brought forward a motion to declare a road safety emergency at a General Committee meeting.

"Safety is a priority for us? yesterday I believe there were four accidents across the Town, it really amplifies the need to declare a road safety emergency," said Groves. "Our roads are getting overwhelmed with the volume and type of traffic? the community has been asking us to do this for quite some time."

Groves said at Caledon's October 3 traffic safety meeting in Bolton, residents made it clear Caledon needed to declare a road safety emergency.

"They need us to create our own road safety emergency program? there's no dollar value we can place on a life," said Groves. "We don't want to continue to react, we want to be proactive? we need to show solidarity from our residents so they feel they are being heard? we can't have any more fatalities on our roads."

Prior to the October 3 meeting, the Caledon Community Road Safety Advocacy Group (CCRSA) held the "March to Save the Next Life" in honour of 23-year-old Bolton woman Adrianna Milena McCauley, who was killed in a September 10 collision at King and Coleraine.

Groves' October 8 motion to declare a road safety emergency program was approved by Council.

Also approved was a motion from Groves to form a safe driving and truck operating advisory committee.