

Council approves step forward to establish framework for stand-alone red light camera program

By Riley Murphy

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

Council has approved the Town of Caledon's staff recommendation to establish the framework for a stand-alone Red Light Camera (RLC) program for the municipality.

In May, Staff were directed to prepare a report on red light cameras within the Town of Caledon's jurisdiction, and this Tuesday it was presented to Council.

The report states that there are 71 signalized intersections within the Town of Caledon that are operated and maintained by the Region of Peel.

Of these, 13 fall under the jurisdiction of the Town of Caledon. Staff were asked to investigate whether RLCs are needed at the 13 intersections the Town itself controls.

At this time, Staff reported that RLCs shall not be installed at any of the 13 intersections.

The objective of the RLC program in Ontario is to reduce red light running and severe right-angle collisions, also known as T-bone collisions, at high-risk intersections across the province.

The report shared that there were 27 right-angle collisions out of 81 motor vehicle collisions during a 5-year period spanning 2020 to 2025 at these 13 intersections.

Staff stated that the collisions were "widely distributed" across the 13 intersections, with the highest recorded count at one intersection: seven collisions.

Five intersections reported no right-angle collisions during this time period.

"The findings indicate that the incidence right-angle collision frequencies across these intersections is comparatively low, with no significant collision patterns in any specific direction that would warrant the immediate need for the installation of a red-light camera. Therefore, no RLCs are recommended at this time," stated the report.

Staff prepared the report based on information currently available in the Town's database. They had requested additional collision data from the OPP, which could include incidents not yet recorded in the Town's database, but it was not available in time for the report.

Staff recommended that at this time, RLCs not be installed, and instead, recommended that staff continue to analyze and monitor collision data and trends at the 13 locations and "begin to establish a mechanism under which the Town of Caledon can install red light cameras in the future should they become warranted."

In order to establish a standalone RLC program for the Town of Caledon, several steps will need to be taken to authorize the Town to install cameras and ensure compliance.

In terms of financial implications, Staff report the initial capital cost is estimated to range between \$100,000 \$130,000 per camera, and covers all one-time expenses required to install

and activate the system, which can vary depending on the complexity.

The annual operating cost per camera is estimated to range between \$50,000 and \$90,000.

Currently in Ontario, the penalty for running a red light detected by an automated camera is \$325; of this, \$260 is directed back to the municipality, while \$65 is collected by the Province as a victim surcharge and administration fees.

“The municipal share of these fines should be applied toward offsetting RLC and AMPS program expenses, helping to reduce the financial burden on taxpayers,” reported Staff.

Amanda Corbett from the Caledon Community Road Safety Advocacy (CCRSA) Group, speaking on the Staff report, said, “We’re a little disappointed to see that the recommendation is to not proceed with them [RLCs], but fully understanding that there is a list of criteria to meet.”

Corbett said in light of the recent removal of Automated Speed Cameras, and Caledon OPPs recent report regarding a decrease in patrol hours, as well as a decrease in policing of highway traffic act offenses than previous years, “putting that all together, this is making the situation we’re in worse, not better.”

“I think we need to really figure out what we’re going to do as a Town. Given all of those factors, to try and make something better as opposed to things getting worse,” says Corbett.

Members of the Council also expressed their concerns.

Councillor Dave Sheen noted that many of the intersections fall within his Ward, some of which did not exist for very long during the study period, and some of which are in areas that were ASEs zones, which may have played a part in these areas being “safer” over the years.

“I always find this confusing that the number of incidents is not high enough, so more people have to get hurt to make it reasonable to get in red light cameras,” said Councillor Lynn Kiernan.

During the meeting, Dan Terziewski, Director, Transportation, said there are several reasons to consider bringing an RLC program in-house.

He shares that with development, Caledon is likely to receive more intersections that will fall under their jurisdiction, as well that “with transition, the other 71 intersections that are currently under the jurisdiction of Region of Peel would then potentially transfer to us, and then we would be then responsible for about 90 intersections, and I think some of the intersections that currently may not prioritize or rank as high on a region-wide basis may rank differently from a town of Caledon perspective,” says Terziewski.

“The intent of this is to get that framework in place, get all the agreements in place, so that when all that happens, we can basically bring it in-house and make our own decisions.”

Councillor Christina Early noted that regarding aggregate hauling, she shares they have seen accidents resulting in death when it comes to red light runners, “I think we’ve got to push pretty hard to get those red light cameras in place. It is a clear safety issue.”

Councillor Doug Maskell raised the question of whether the seven reported right-angle collisions that occurred at a single intersection were close to the threshold to require an RLC, to which Terziewski answered that he suspects it’s not.

In regard to the Miovision cameras that the Town of Caledon and the Region of Peel are implementing at various intersections for traffic data collection and management, Councillor Mario Russo asked whether these cameras will be able to be used to continue to

analyze and surveillance the intersections.

Terziewski responded they can be, as the Region is currently looking at whether they can establish a feature that can also evaluate near misses as well, which can be used in future as a tool to monitor these intersections.

In the end, the motion was moved that Staff be directed to continue reviewing collision and traffic data on an annual basis at intersections under the Town's jurisdiction to monitor and identify any future need for red light cameras at these locations, as well as establish the framework for a stand-alone Red Light Camera (RLC) program for the Town of Caledon.