



Region of Waterloo

October 23, 2024

Making Decisions That Matter for October 23, 2024

With input from the community, Regional Council sets the direction for the Region as an organization and makes decisions that help improve the lives of Waterloo Region residents every day. Please refer to the minutes for an official record of the meeting.

Hybrid shelter on Erb's Road renewed as we advance Plan to End Chronic Homelessness

The Region of Waterloo will continue to operate the Erb's Road Hybrid Emergency Shelter until at least 2030. This site has 50 individual cabins and a main cabin complex to support those experiencing unsheltered homelessness in Waterloo Region. In its first year, the shelter supported 103 people. Nineteen of these have moved from the shelter into housing. In a survey, a majority of Erb's Road Hybrid Shelter residents said the site was a positive option for stability and recovery.

Regional Council has also approved a funding and engagement strategy to move forward with the wider Plan to End Chronic Homelessness. A projected \$345M is needed over the next six years to end chronic homelessness in Waterloo Region by 2030, plus \$110 million in capital investments. Funding for 2025 will be decided during the upcoming Plan and Budget process and will require investments from other levels of government.

[Read the full report](#) on Erb's Road

[Read the full report](#) on the PECH

Improving road safety with new pedestrian pathway

Regional Council has approved a design that will improve safety and traffic flow on busy Franklin Boulevard between Bishop Street and Avenue Road. The plan includes two lanes of traffic in each direction plus a third lane between Can-Amera Parkway and Elgin Street, center medians, multi-use trails on both sides of the road and roundabouts where Franklin meets Can-Amera Parkway and Elgin Street/Saginaw Parkway. A new pedestrian pathway underneath Franklin at Saginaw will improve safety for the high volume of pedestrians – most of them St. Benedict High School students. The project will also include important watermain upgrades. The estimated cost is \$22 million.

[Read the full report](#)

Expanding Municipal Speed Camera program for safer streets

Regional Council has voted to move forward with its Municipal Speed Camera program to help enforce speed limits and keep roads safer for everyone. With the program expanding to all eligible school across Waterloo Region, Council has approved bylaws to hire officers and other implementation. To keep streets safer, drivers who speed will face penalties ranging from \$5 to \$19.50 per kilometre over the speed limit.

Region of Waterloo is also adopting a new method for creating Community Safety Zones on Regional roads. The Region will add new zones using data like traffic levels, pedestrian levels, collision history, and more. Community Safety Zones will also be created where a new Municipal Speed Camera is installed. Designating areas this way identifies roadways with higher risk. Speeding fines are increased in these zones to encourage slower, safer vehicle speeds and help reduce serious collisions.

[Read the full report](#) on Municipal Speed Cameras

[Read the full report](#) on Community Safety Zones

GRT to consider all buses to grow public transit

Grand River Transit will consider clean-diesel, clean-diesel hybrid, and battery-electric buses for fleet updates in 2026. The fleet needs to replace 82 buses from 2026-2030 to maintain current service. The fleet will also need to grow by 10 buses per year to meet increased demand for car-free options to get around Waterloo Region.

GRT had planned to buy only hybrid and electric buses. Due to the state of the bus manufacturing industry and current electric buses capabilities, it is not feasible to buy only electric buses at this time.

[Read the full report](#)

Support for local workers and businesses

The Region of Waterloo is investing \$379,000 in three new programs, in partnership with local Chambers of Commerce and other community partners. These programs are designed to help attract and support the talented workforce that local businesses need. The investments are:

- \$80,000 to attract doctors to this community through the Healthcare & Physician Recruitment Program
- \$249,000 to implement a Food Bank Volunteer Pilot Program that will create temporary jobs and provide newcomers with critical skill assessments and work experience
- \$50,000 to create a Waterloo Region Newcomer Ecosystem Mapping Project to help clarify the settlement process and available services for newcomers

[Read the full report](#)