

Month-long awareness efforts in King focus on pedestrians, cyclists, impaired driving, and speeding

King Township is revving up for its 'Safe Streets Start Here' traffic safety campaign, kicking off today with a four-week drive to make King's roads safer. Each week in September, a critical safety issue will be spotlighted, from pedestrian awareness and bike safety to tackling impaired and distracted driving and curbing speeding. The campaign was strategically launched to align with the return of children to school, emphasizing the increased need for safety on busier roads and sidewalks. This initiative will be an annual, month-long campaign in support of Complete Communities, a priority area of King Township's Corporate Strategic Plan, with the objective to enrich community well-being and make King the ideal place to live, work and play. A website featuring information, resources and traffic safety tips has been created at king.ca/SafeStreets. The community is encouraged to participate in the campaign to help spread key messages around road safety awareness. There are several ways to do this, including: Follow @kingtownship on the official corporate social media channels on X, Facebook and Instagram to like, comment and share photo and video content. Followers are invited to tag @kingtownship on their own road safety awareness posts using the hashtag #SafeStreets; and the Township will consider sharing content if deemed appropriate. Lawn signs: Pick up a free 'Safe Streets Start Here' lawn sign to install on your property throughout September, which will serve as a visual reminder to drive, walk and bike safely through local neighbourhoods. Signs are available at the King Township Municipal Centre, all three library branches in King City, Nobleton and Schomberg and the Trisan Centre in Schomberg, while quantities last. Art exhibit: Stop by the King Township Municipal Centre (Monday to Friday, from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.) to view a road safety art installation created by King's summer campers. Weekly themes of the Safe Streets Start Here campaign are as follows: Week 1: Pedestrian Safety. The key message is pedestrian safety and a two-way street for drivers and walkers. In 2023, York Region recorded 298 pedestrian collisions, with 94% resulting in injuries or fatalities. This week, we emphasize the importance of vigilance and visibility. Key tips include staying alert while crossing streets, avoiding distractions like phone use and being aware of crosswalks and train crossings. Week 2: Bike Safety. Pedal with purpose: our shared journey to safety. Cyclists are particularly vulnerable on our roads. Statistics show that over 80% of cyclist collisions result in injuries or fatalities, especially at intersections. Motorists are advised to give cyclists ample space, be patient, and watch for lateral movement. Cyclists should ride close to the right side, use lights, and be prepared to stop at intersections. Week 3: Impaired and Distracted Driving. Drive safe and don't risk it. Impaired driving continues to be a significant issue, with 1,885 traffic offences recorded in 2023. This week's focus will address the dangers of texting, driving under the influence, and driving while fatigued. We encourage all drivers to stay focused and avoid distractions to ensure safer roads. Week 4: Speeding. Life is not a race, it's worth more than time. Speeding remains a top traffic violation, with over 18,000 speeding charges issued in York Region last year. This final week will highlight the severe consequences of speeding, including its role in approximately 30% of fatal collisions over the past two years. Emphasis will be placed on the importance of adhering to speed limits, especially in construction zones. In collaboration with York Regional Police, King Township will host a radar speed enforcement event this week to further support the campaign's goals. For more information on the 'Safe Streets Start Here' campaign, visit king.ca/SafeStreets. 'The Safe Streets Starts Here campaign is more than just an initiative - it's a commitment to protecting our community. By focusing on key traffic safety issues each week, we aim to foster a culture of awareness and responsibility on our roads. Together with York Regional Police, we are working to make our streets safer for everyone,' said Mayor Steve Pellegrini.