



POLICY 15: Community Safety Zones

Environmental and Infrastructure Services

Approval Date: September 13, 2022
Approval Authority: Council
Effective Date: September 20, 2022
Revision Date/s: June 11, 2024

Purpose:

Scope: This policy is intended to be applicable to all County roads.

Authority: The *Highway Traffic Act* authorizes Municipalities to pass by-laws to create community safety zones.

Objectives: Community Safety Zone designations are intended for parts of the roadway where public safety is of a special concern. Examples of these areas are school zones, playgrounds, community centers, recreation areas and hospitals.

Policy Statement:

Community Safety Zones (CSZ) have been identified as a potential traffic-calming and safety measure on County roads.

CSZ designations are intended for parts of the roadway where public safety is of a special concern and allow for increased monetary penalties for speeding infractions within these zones.

CSZ evaluations and potential implementation will be undertaken in consultation with the Norfolk County Roads Safety Committee and Ontario Provincial Police. Staff will work with the Communications team to develop a public education campaign and appropriate communications for each CSZ implemented.

Implementation Procedure:

The County-wide CSZ criteria and warrant process will be utilized to further evaluate designated areas for potential implementation of CSZ as part of future budgets and operational work plans.

The findings and recommendations from the CSZ evaluations will be presented to County Council for further consideration and enactment of applicable by-law amendments.

Background

The Ontario Highway Traffic Act (HTA) permits the use of CSZ and gives authority to municipal Councils to designate a part of a highway as a CSZ where public safety is of a special concern. The HTA also allows for increased monetary penalties for speeding infractions within CSZ in order to promote deterrence of speeding behaviour.

CSZ must be designated by a municipal by-law in order to be enforceable and must identify the specific zone limits and time periods (times/days/months) when increased penalties are in effect. The designation of the entire length of a particular roadway (versus shorter defined road segments) is generally not an intended application of the CSZ concept. Furthermore, public safety risks must be evident for the part of the roadway segment selected as a CSZ.

Comments

To support the designation of CSZ, staff has prepared CSZ guideline criteria and a warrant process for Council's authorization. The intent of adopting County-wide CSZ implementation criteria is to identify areas, supported by documented evidence, where public safety is of a special concern.

Community Safety Zone (CSZ) Criteria and Warrant Process

The following proposed CSZ criteria and warrant process is based on two major components and was developed from similar CSZ municipal policies.

The first component identifies areas for special consideration (Warrant 1) and the second component considers road safety (Warrant 2). Only areas within the County Road network that meet **both** warrants will be considered for CSZ designation.

Warrant 1: Designated Areas of Special Consideration

CSZ must only be implemented at locations of special concern and that are obvious to the road user. CSZ shall only be considered at the following locations where posted speeds are 70km/hr. or less and be a minimum length of 500 m:

- Elementary or Secondary Schools (including those with identified official school zones),
- Community centers, recreation areas, playgrounds, hospitals,
- High pedestrian traffic locations (100 pedestrians/hr. in any 8-hour period), and/or
- Senior centers/residences.

Designated areas for special consideration (Warrant 1) must be satisfied before continuing onto the second component (Warrant 2).

Warrant 2: Road Safety

The road safety warrant is comprised of a collision component and a risk component,

either of which must be satisfied to meet Warrant 2.

- Collision Component:
 - Collision ratio < 1:900 (collisions/year: Average Annual Daily Traffic) averaged over 3 recent years

OR

- Road Safety Component:
 - Road safety risk factor will be determined based on the following scoring matrix shown in Table 1.
 - Designated areas of special concern identified in Warrant 1 with a safety risk scoring of **14 or greater** will meet the road safety component of Warrant 2.

Table 1: Road Safety Scoring Matrix

| Risk Factor | High (Score 3) | Moderate (Score 2) | Low (Score 1) | Score |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|--------------------|---------------|-------|
| 85 th percentile speeds (km/hr.) above the posted Speed Limit | >15 | 5 to 15 | Less than 5 | |
| Average Annual Daily Traffic (AADT) | Over 7,000 | 3,000 to 7,000 | Under 3,000 | |
| Number of travel lanes | 4 or > | 3 | 2 | |
| Length of sidewalks | <25% | 25% to 75% | >75% | |
| Truck volume | >5 % | 3-5 % | <3 % | |
| Pedestrians crossing in any 8 hours | >100 | 50 to 100 | < 50 | |
| Intersection and entrances per kilometer | > 10 | 4 to 10 | < 4 | |
| TOTAL SCORE | | | | |

CSZ Implementation Guidelines

In addition to identifying parts of roadways where public safety is of special concern, other guidelines for CSZ implementation are provided in the Ontario Traffic Manual (OTM) to ensure regulatory compliance and effective enforcement.

The limits (length) of a CSZ are not a legislative requirement; however, a zone that is too long can result in enforcement not being appropriately targeted. Additionally, if the zone is too short, it may not be clear whether a driver has committed an offence within the zone. The zone length will also determine the location and quantity of regulatory signage required to delineate CSZ limits.

A minimum zone length of 500 m has been specified in the above-proposed CSZ criteria and warrant process. It is anticipated that in most cases, maximum CSZ limits will range from 1.5 to 2.0 km based on typical lengths of reduced speed zone limits in many of the rural communities.

The number and locations of CSZ will be critical to successful enforcement. Policing resources and verification that enforcement can be undertaken safely without undue risk to either motorists or Officers must be considered and can be validated through ongoing collaboration with Police Services.

REQUESTS BY MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC OR COUNCIL

A request by the public to create a CSZ should be reviewed to the Norfolk Road Safety Committee for initial review and screening.

When there are grounds for action or when Council direction is received staff will undertake data collection and review and prepare a report for Council consideration.