

**To:** Warden and Members of County Council

**From:** Director of Public Works

## Community Safety Zone Criteria and Warrant Process – Revised

### RECOMMENDATION

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1. That Oxford County Council authorize the proposed Community Safety Zone criteria and warrant process, as revised, for application as part of future County-wide implementation.

### REPORT HIGHLIGHTS

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- The purpose of this report is to seek County Council authorization of the proposed Community Safety Zone (CSZ) criteria and warrant process that was deferred at the June 23, 2021 County Council meeting to allow Area Municipalities further opportunity to review and provide comments.
- Since this deferral, final comments on the proposed CSZ criteria and warrant process were received from the Town of Tillsonburg, the Township of South-West Oxford (SWOX) and the Township of Norwich.
- The CSZ criteria has been revised based on the comments received and further consideration has been given to existing traffic/road conditions in many of Oxford County's small urban and rural centric communities.

### Implementation Points

If approved by County Council, the proposed County-wide CSZ criteria and warrant process will be utilized to further evaluate designated areas for the potential implementation of CSZs as part of future budgets and operational work plans.

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

## Financial Impact

The recommendations contained in this report will not have an impact on the 2021 Budget.







Financial and staffing/third-party resources to undertake CSZ evaluation will be considered as part of the 2022 Operational Business Plan & Budget submission. Implementation plans that will result from the evaluation will be considered in future business plans and budgets.

## Communications

Report No. PW 2021-31 will be circulated to Area Municipalities, Ontario Provincial Police and Woodstock Police Services, local school boards and hospitals.

CSZ evaluation and potential implementation will be undertaken in consultation with Area Municipalities and Police. Public Works will work with the Communications team to develop a public education campaign and appropriate communications for each municipality as CSZs are implemented.

## Strategic Plan (2020-2022)

					
<b>WORKS WELL TOGETHER</b>	<b>WELL CONNECTED</b>	<b>SHAPES THE FUTURE</b>	<b>INFORMS &amp; ENGAGES</b>	<b>PERFORMS &amp; DELIVERS</b>	<b>POSITIVE IMPACT</b>
1.ii.		3.iii.		5.i. 5.ii.	

## DISCUSSION

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### Background

The proposed CSZ criteria and warrant process to assess a possible future County-wide implementation plan was presented to County Council on June 23, 2021 (Report No. PW 2021-25). However, the report recommendations were deferred to the August 11, 2021 County Council meeting to allow the Area Municipalities further opportunity to review and provide comments.

On June 29, 2021, a copy of Report No. PW 2021-25 was distributed to Area Municipality Chief Administrative Officers (CAOs) requesting feedback on the proposed CSZ criteria and warrant process by July 16, 2021. Further, staff then received notice from the Township of Norwich on July 13, 2021 indicating that their Council will be submitting formal correspondence at the August 11, 2021 County Council meeting requesting additional time for local municipalities to comment on the matter.

Ultimately, final comments on the proposed CSZ criteria and warrant process were received from the Town of Tillsonburg (July 27, 2021), the Township of SWOX (August 6, 2021) and the Township of Norwich (August 18, 2021) as per Attachments 1, 2 and 3, respectively.

## Comments

The CSZ criteria and warrant process has been revised based on comments received from Area Municipalities and with re-consideration given to existing traffic/road conditions in many of Oxford County's small urban and rural communities.

The CSZ criteria and warrant process, as revised, is shown in Attachment 4. Proposed revisions are further summarized below:

### Warrant 1: Designated Areas of Special Consideration

- Pedestrian volume warrant has been revised from 100 pedestrians/hr in any 8-hour period to 100 total pedestrians within any 8-hour period, and;
- Areas identified by Police have been added where Police may have first-hand knowledge of areas of special safety concern.

### Warrant 2: Road Safety Component

- Average Annual Daily Traffic (AADT) thresholds have been reduced to better align with typical traffic volumes seen on County roads;
- Number of travel lanes has been removed as a risk factor since the majority of County roads are two lanes, and;
- The total scoring threshold to meet Warrant 2 has been reduced from 15 to 13 to account for elimination of the number of travel lanes as a risk factor.

Staff acknowledge that road safety is a concern in all areas; however, CSZ implementation is intended for defined road segments where amenities identified in Warrant 1 are adjacent to the road segment and where a greater degree of risk is evident to vulnerable road users in these areas.

Designated areas of special consideration (Warrant 1) correspond to areas where vulnerable road users (seniors, children) are likely to be present. The road safety component (Warrant 2) provides a risk assessment based on traffic data (traffic/truck volume, operating speeds, pedestrian volumes) and existing conditions (sidewalks, entrances) that may negatively impact safety and increase the overall risk to these more vulnerable road users.

The objective of adopting a County-wide CSZ criteria and warrant process is to provide an evidence-based approach to assess the implementation of CSZs in designated areas with a higher road safety risk identified through analysis of existing road conditions and traffic/pedestrian data. Designation of CSZs on all County road segments that pass through communities and settlement areas would not meet this objective and would reduce the overall effectiveness of CSZs in areas of special consideration where the safety risk is greatest.

Utilizing an evidence-based approach that is further supported by traffic data will ensure CSZs are implemented consistently throughout the County.

## **Conclusions**

The proposed CSZ criteria and warrant process has been revised to address comments from Area Municipalities and the general concern that many small communities may not meet the scoring threshold originally identified in Warrant 2.

The revised warrant and road safety scoring matrix processes better align with typical conditions in many of Oxford's small urban and rural communities while keeping with the overall objective of assessing designated areas of special consideration.

Adoption of a County-wide evidence-based approach will provide a transparent process and ensure effectiveness of CSZ implementation.

## **SIGNATURES**

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### **Report Author:**

Original signed by

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Frank Gross, C. Tech.  
Manager of Transportation & Waste Management Services

### **Departmental Approval:**

Original signed by

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David Simpson, P.Eng., PMP  
Director of Public Works

### **Approved for submission:**

Original signed by

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Michael Duben, B.A., LL.B.  
Chief Administrative Officer

## **ATTACHMENTS**

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Attachment 1: Town of Tillsonburg CSZ Comments, July 27, 2021  
Attachment 2: Township of South-West Oxford CSZ Comments, August 6, 2021  
Attachment 3: Township of Norwich CSZ Comments, August 18, 2021  
Attachment 4: Revised CSZ warrant criteria, August 15, 2021