



City of
Woodstock

Community Safety Zone Policy

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Notice Regarding Referenced Materials

This policy references guidance from the Ontario Ministry of Transportation through the *Ontario Traffic Manual (OTM)*, including Book 5 – Regulatory Signs. The OTM provides standards and guidelines for the selection, application, and placement of regulatory traffic control devices in Ontario. Where applicable, general principles from national and provincial best practices have informed the development of this policy. All referenced materials remain the property of the respective owners.

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1.0 Introduction

Community Safety Zones (CSZs) are bylaw-designated sections of roadway where public safety is of special concern. These zones are commonly located near schools, parks, community facilities, and other pedestrian-oriented land uses; they are normally areas with high pedestrian activity or increased safety and collision risks between road users. Within a CSZ, the rules of the road remain unchanged; however, monetary penalties for certain traffic-related offences, including speeding, are increased under the Highway Traffic Act (HTA). Other traffic violations remain enforceable under applicable traffic laws. The purpose of this designation is to increase driver awareness and to deter unsafe driving behaviour in sensitive areas.

2.0 Purpose

CSZs are intended to inform drivers that they are entering an area where public safety is of particular importance and where fines for certain traffic-related offences are increased. While the rules of the road do not change, the penalties for traffic law violations are substantially increased. The CSZ designation is intended to enhance driver awareness and encourage safer driving behaviour.

The purpose of this policy is to establish a consistent and evidence-based framework for identifying, evaluating, and designating CSZs within the City of Woodstock. This policy aims to:

- Improve road safety in areas of special concern;
- Enhance safety for vulnerable road users;
- Support traffic calming and encourage speed compliance with posted speed limits; and
- Support the implementation of enforcement strategies.

3.0 Legislative Authority

CSZs are designated under the authority of the HTA, which permits municipalities to designate portions of roadways as CSZs (where public safety is of special concern). The CSZ must be established through a municipal bylaw; the bylaw must define:

- The limits of the zone; and
- The time periods (days and hours) during which increased penalties are in effect.

All signage and implementation shall be in accordance with OTM Book 5 – Regulatory Signs.

4.0 Definitions

4.1 Community Safety Zone (CSZ)

A section of roadway designated by bylaw where public safety is of special concern and where increased penalties apply to traffic violations, in accordance with the HTA.

4.2 85th Percentile Speed

The observed speed where 85% of vehicles travel under free-flowing conditions.

4.3 Average Annual Daily Traffic (AADT)

The average number of vehicles passing a point on a roadway in a typical day (normalized over the course one full year); if less than one year of data is collected, the alternative term is “average daily traffic” (ADT).

4.4 Collision Rate

A measure of the frequency of accidents relative to traffic volume, typically expressed as the number of collisions per unit of traffic.

4.5 Vulnerable Road Users

Pedestrians, cyclists, children, older adults, and persons using mobility devices.

5.0 Policy Statement

CSZs must be implemented selectively and with documented evidence of elevated safety concerns in the proposed zone. The designation of a CSZ must:

- Be based on measurable traffic operations and safety data;
- Reflect identifiable safety concerns and site-specific conditions;
- Be clearly recognizable and understandable to road users; and
- Be applied effectively; overuse of CSZs reduce their effectiveness.

6.0 Community Safety Zone Warrant Process

The designation of a CSZ is based on a two-step warrant process. A location must satisfy both **Warrant 1: Areas for Special Consideration** and **Warrant 2: Road Safety** to be eligible for designation. Only roadway segments within the City's jurisdiction that meet both warrants will be considered for CSZ designation. Traffic data and documented evidence must be used to support the evaluation, prioritization, and implementation of CSZs.

6.1 Warrant 1: Areas of Special Consideration

A roadway segment may be considered for a CSZ when it is adjacent to pedestrian-oriented land uses, including:

- Elementary or secondary schools (including School Zones);
- Parks, playgrounds, and recreation areas;
- Hospitals;
- Community centres;
- Daycare centres; and
- Senior centres or residences.

Furthermore, locations with high pedestrian activity (generally exceeding 100 pedestrians within an 8-hour period) may be considered. The following conditions should also apply:

- The posted speed limit is 70 km/h or less, and there is evidence of poor speed compliance;
- There are no existing or planned traffic calming measures; and
- The limits of the proposed zone (minimum length of 500m) correspond to the extent of pedestrian activity.

CSZs should only be considered at locations where the safety concern is clearly identifiable to road users. Locations must satisfy Warrant 1 before proceeding to Warrant 2 for further evaluation.

6.2 Warrant 2: Road Safety Assessment

A location that satisfies Warrant 1 will be evaluated using one of the following methods under Warrant 2: Option A - Collision-Based or Option B - Risk-Based Scoring System. A candidate location must satisfy either option to meet Warrant 2.

Option A: Collision-Based Assessment

A candidate location may satisfy the warrant where collision data indicates an elevated safety risk relative to traffic volume; this can be demonstrated through a review of recent collision history, whereby the collision rate must exceed a threshold of at least three collisions per year for a subsequent three-year period. Locations with a higher collision frequency are considered to pose a greater safety risk and warrant CSZ designation.

Option B: Risk-Based Scoring Assessment

Road safety risk is evaluated using a point-based scoring matrix (**Table 1**) that assesses roadway and traffic characteristics to quantify overall safety risk; a total score of 15 or greater meets the warrant for CSZ designation.

Table 1: Road Safety Scoring Matrix

Risk Factor	Risk Factor Scoring			Score
	High (Score = 3)	Moderate (Score = 2)	Low (Score = 1)	
Operating Speed (85 th percentile)	≥ 70 km/h	60 km/h	≤ 50 km/h	
Average Annual Daily Traffic (AADT)	> 6000	3,000 to 6,000	< 3000	
Number of Travel Lanes	≥ 4	3	2	
Length of Sidewalks	None	One side	Both Sides	
Presence of Cycling Facilities (Bike Lanes, Cycle Tracks)	None	One side	Both Sides	
Truck Volume	> 5%	3% to 5%	< 3%	
Pedestrians Crossing in Any 8 Hours	> 100	50 to 100	< 50	
Number of Bus Stops per km	≥ 3	2	≤ 1	
Intersection and Major Entrances per km	> 10	4 to 10	< 4	
TOTAL SCORE				

7.0 Design and Implementation Guidelines

7.1 Zone Length and Limits

CSZs should:

- Have a minimum length of 500m;
- Range between 500m and 2.0km; and
- Be defined to reflect the limits of pedestrian activity and safety concerns.

Excessively long or short zones should be avoided, as they limit the effectiveness for enforcement and may confuse drivers.

7.2 Signage

All CSZ signage must comply with the OTM Book 5; this includes:

- Installation of the Community Safety Zone (**Rc-9**) sign;



Rc-9 (Community Safety Zone)

- Placement of the “Begins” tab sign (**Rb-84t**) and the “Ends” tab sign (**Rb-85t**) below the **Rc-9** sign at the start and end points of the zone;



Rb-84t (Begins Tab)



Rb-85t (Ends Tab)

- Installation of additional Rc-9 signage within the zone, where appropriate, to reinforce driver awareness.

If the zone is 1 km or less, additional CSZ signs may be installed within the zone to remind drivers of the increased fines. If the zone is greater than 1 km, the spacing should be no more than 300m apart (for a speed limit ≤ 60 km/h). Time periods of CSZ operation should be defined in the bylaw but not displayed on the signs.

7.3 Time of Operation

In the City of Woodstock, CSZs will operate on a full-time (24-hour) basis.

7.4 Visibility and Driver Expectation

CSZs must be clearly visible and recognizable to drivers. CSZs should not be hidden or installed in a confusing zone.

8.0 Enforcement

Enforcement can assist in approved compliance to CSZs. The number and location of CSZs should be considered in coordination with the police to ensure that enforcement can be carried out safely and effectively. Coordination with enforcement agencies should be undertaken to ensure:

- Safe and practical enforcement locations; and
- Alignment with broader road safety initiatives.

9.0 Evaluation and Implementation Process

The following process should be used to identify and implement CSZs:

- 1) Identify candidate locations based on special safety concerns, surrounding land use, and pedestrian activity (Warrant 1);
- 2) Collect and review relevant traffic and safety data, including design speed, traffic and pedestrian volumes, roadway characteristics, and collision history;
- 3) Apply Warrant 2 to evaluate the risk factor to road safety;
- 4) Rank and prioritize locations based on level of risk;
- 5) Conduct an engineering review and consult with police services;
- 6) Present recommendations to Council for approval and enactment of the required bylaw;
- 7) Install signage; and
- 8) Communicate the implementation of CSZs to the public.

10.0 Monitoring and Review

CSZs should be reviewed periodically (e.g., every 3 to 5 years) to observe their effectiveness.

Reviews can include:

- Speed studies to verify compliance with posted speed limits;
- Collision history;
- Observations of driver behaviour and pedestrian activity; and
- Review and, where appropriate, adjustment of zone limits.

Where feasible, before-and-after studies should be conducted to evaluate the CSZ's effectiveness.

11.0 Communications and Public Education

Public education and awareness are important components of CSZ implementation. To help residents stay informed, the City of Woodstock can:

- Explain what CSZs are, why they are being implemented, and their locations to the public;
- Work with schools, hospitals, and community groups to spread the information and encourage community-wide participation; and
- Incorporate CSZ into driver education programs.

Communication strategies should accompany the implementation of CSZs to promote public awareness and understanding.

12.0 Additional Considerations

12.1 Integration with School and Playground Policy

School Zones and Playground Zones address location-specific conditions, and CSZs provide broader area-based protection where warranted. Accordingly, CSZs may be considered at school and playground locations, particularly at school and playground zones. Best practices suggest that a CSZ designation layered onto a school or playground zone extend the boundary to 250m on either side of the school or playground property line; however, the CSZ designation can also be applied to roads that do not qualify as school or playground zones under the HTA, such as the back entrance to a school that has pedestrian access but no vehicle access.

12.2 Appropriate Application

Overuse of CSZs may reduce their effectiveness and should be avoided. CSZs should be implemented in locations where the safety of children and pedestrians is paramount and where fine activity has increased. CSZs may be implemented along defined corridors where safety concerns exist.

12.3 Enforcement and Penalties

Police services are responsible for enforcing traffic violations within CSZs under the HTA. In these zones, speeding results in increased penalties, and other traffic violations remain enforceable under applicable legislation. The province sets the exact fines, and CSZs do not change the law; they only set the penalty amount.

13.0 Conclusion

This policy establishes a consistent framework for the designation and implementation of CSZs within the City of Woodstock. CSZs are an important tool for improving road safety and increasing driver awareness in areas where public safety is of greater concern. By identifying, evaluating, and implementing CSZs in these locations and applying increased penalties for certain traffic-related offences, CSZs should encourage safer driving behaviour and enhance awareness among road users.