



The Corporation of the Town of Tecumseh

Public Works & Engineering Services

To: Policies and Priorities Committee

From: Phil Bartnik, Director Public Works & Engineering Services

Date to Council: March 26, 2024

Report Number: PWES-2024-20

Subject: School Safety Zones Policy 125

Recommendations

It is recommended:

That Report PWES-2024-20 School Safety Zones Policy 125 **be received**;

And that Policy 125 in Attachment 1 to Report PWES-2024-20 School Safety Zones Policy 125 **be recommended for approval and adoption by Council** at the April 9, 2024 Regular Meeting of Council;

And further that a By-law for the designation of School Safety Zones **be prepared and considered by Council** at the April 9, 2024 Regular Council Meeting;

And furthermore that the recommended update to Schedule P (Rates of Speed) of the Traffic and Parking By-law 2001-36 as amended, **be prepared and considered by Council** for adoption by way of an Amending By-law at the April 9, 2024 Regular Council Meeting;

And furthermore that, subject to the approval and adoption of the foregoing Policy 125 and By-laws described above, the review and analysis of the twelve (12) School Safety Zones in 2024 **be authorized by Council and funded** in the amount of \$180,000 from the Road Lifecycle Reserve, at the April 9, 2024 Regular Council Meeting;

And furthermore that Administrative Report PWES-2024-20, Policy 125 and the Motion of Council **be sent** to the Clerk for the County of Essex requesting they be

placed on the next regular meeting of County Council's Agenda, for consideration to implement a School Safety Zone on County Roads adjacent to Tecumseh Schools.

Background

At the December 11, 2018 Regular Council Meeting, Council approved the recommendations within report [PWES-2018-08](#), titled "2019-2023 Public Works & Environmental Services Five Year Capital Works Plan" that authorized Administration to complete a traffic calming study (Motion: RCM-361/18). The study intended to review the general policies on traffic calming, outline the process for determining if a problem exists and the process for addressing inquiries from the public in an efficient and consistent manner.

As the study progressed, and as public inquiries were received on a variety of traffic-related issues, Administration identified several traffic-related policies and programs required to assist in handling those inquiries, which include the following:

- Speed Management and Traffic Calming Policy
- School Safety Zone Policy
- Community Safety Zone Policy
- Controlled Pedestrian Crossing Policy
- School Crossing Guard Program

This Administrative report provides key technical information and regulations relating to implementing School Safety Zones (SSZ). The attached policy establishes the regulatory framework for School Safety Zones in the Town and provides PWES staff with a transparent and consistent process to follow for policy implementation.

Comments

The attached policy presents best practices for implementing school safety zones, with a focus on enhancing safety in the vicinity of all schools for all pedestrians at all times of the day and week.

The key principles and procedures within the policy shall be employed with engineering judgment when assessing existing and future school developments within the Town of Tecumseh.

Governing Regulations

The most relevant regulations that govern SSZ implementation include:

- The Ontario Traffic Manual (OTM);
- The *Highway Traffic Act* (HTA);

- Bill 90, *Highway Traffic Amendment Act* (School Safety Zones);
- Transportation Association of Canada – School and Playground Areas and Zones: Guidelines for Application and Implementation (TAC SPAZ); and
- Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA).

The OTM is the regulation that provides specific information and guidance for engineering transportation practitioners to promote uniformity of treatment in the design, application, and operation of traffic-related systems.

The OTM consists of a series of 22 separately bound books and provides policy and practical guidance on the full range of traffic control devices. The books within the OTM series specific to this topic include:

- Book 5: Regulatory Signs
- Book 6: Warning Signs
- Book 11: Pavement, Hazard and Delineation Markings
- Book 12: Traffic Signals
- Book 15: Pedestrian Crossing Treatments.

The TAC SPAZ provides engineers and practitioners across Canada with guidance to implement school zones effectively and uniformly.

Technical Information

Relevant to school zones, the HTA and Bill 90 provide information on setting the rate of speed in a school zone and establishing the length of school zones. It also states the following:

- A council of a municipality may pass a bylaw to designate a portion of a municipal roadway that is under its jurisdiction to be a school zone;
- That the designated school zone start/end within 150 meters along the municipal roadway in either direction beyond the school property limits; and
- A council of a municipality can propose a lower speed limit than the existing limit. That lower speed limit can be effective either at all times or only at certain times or days.

The OTM Books referenced above, provide technical guidance relevant to the design of school zones:

- Regulatory signs which must be present and their appropriate locations;
- Designating the overall length of the school zone, which matches the HTA;
- Supplemental pavement marking advice, and;

- Warning signs which must be present and their appropriate locations.

The TAC SPAZ provides a scoring matrix that would be used to determine if a given location meets the warrants for a school zone and generally provides consistent guidelines.

Key Principles & Practices of this Policy

While the above regulations provide some directional guidance, the specifics of what a school zone includes requires further defining, which is the main intent of the SSZ Policy.

To enhance safety within SSZs, the following principals and practices are included in the SSZ Policy beyond that which is regulated by the HTA and the OTM as explained above. These include:

- Designating all schools an SSZ regardless of the warrants presented in the TAC SPAZ;
- Mandating all crosswalks within an SSZ implement a special 'Ladder Crosswalk';
- The words 'School Zone' in retroreflective white marking on the pavement at the beginning of the SSZ in both directions, on arterial and collector roads;
- An analysis to take place at all currently uncontrolled (no signal or stop sign) crossing locations within SSZs following the Town's Controlled Pedestrian Crossing Policy 124 to review if further enhancements are warranted;
- A review of existing sidewalks and sidewalk ramps in all SSZs to determine if enhancements are required;
- A review of traffic speeds within the SSZs and recommended improvements in accordance with the Town's Speed Management and Traffic Calming Policy 126; and
- A review of existing street lighting in SSZs to ensure they meet current guidelines.

County of Essex Roads & School Safety Zones

Three of the twelve schools in Tecumseh are located on County Roads, these include:

- St. Mary French Immersion Catholic Elementary School on County Road 34 in Maidstone Hamlet;
- Tecumseh Vista Academy on County Road 43 and Shields Avenue; and

- Al-Hijra Academy on County Road 9 and Howard Avenue Connector

It is recommended that Administration work with County Administration to determine if School Safety Zones could be established on County Roads, and identify what enhancements, as contained within the Town’s School Safety Zone Policy 125, could be implemented on a County Road.

Consultations

Financial Services
SSL Project Services Inc.

Financial Implications

The estimated costs to conduct a review and analysis for each of the twelve (12) School Safety Zones is \$15,000, for a total of \$180,000. It is recommended that these costs be funded from the Road Lifecycle Reserve.

It is recommended that the review and analysis be completed in 2024 and that the costs of the recommended works will be included as part of the annual Public Works & Engineering Services Capital Works Plan, for the following calendar year(s).

Link to Strategic Priorities

Applicable	2023-2026 Strategic Priorities
<input type="checkbox"/>	Sustainable Growth: Achieve prosperity and a livable community through sustainable growth.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Community Health and Inclusion: Integrate community health and inclusion into our places and spaces and everything we do.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Service Experience: Enhance the experience of Team Tecumseh and our citizens through responsive and respectful service.

Communications

Not applicable

Website

Social Media

News Release

Local Newspaper

This report has been reviewed by Senior Administration as indicated below and recommended for submission by the Chief Administrative Officer.

Prepared by:

Phil Bartnik, P.Eng.
Director Public Works & Engineering Services

Reviewed by:

Tom Kitsos, CPA, CMA, BComm
Director Financial Services & Chief Financial Officer

Recommended by:

Margaret Misk-Evans, MCIP, RPP
Chief Administrative Officer

Attachment Number	Attachment Name
1	Policy 125 – School Safety Zones