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Export date: Fri Oct 30 1:03:10 2026 / +0000 GMT

Dufferin County Warden pushes for safety features at Hwy. 10 intersection

Written By **Paula Brown**

Dufferin County Council is bringing road safety concerns for the intersection of Highway 10 and County Road 17 to the attention of the Ministry of Transportation (MTO) in the hopes of implementing road features to help prevent future collisions.

Darren White, mayor of Melancthon and warden of Dufferin County, brought the motion to County Council after raising concerns at the Infrastructure and Environmental Services Committee meeting on June 27.

White expressed his concerns after almost being involved in an accident himself at the intersection of Highway 10 and County Road 17, which he described as ?one of the most dangerous intersections in the north part of Dufferin County?.

?This intersection is a prime candidate and in my opinion it's not even up for discussion on whether there needs to be additional measures done at this intersection, it just does,? said White. ?It needs either signalization or roundabout or something ? anything other than what is there.?

White added that the intersection is a ?hot spot for bad driving? with drivers speeding and running through the stop sign. He noted that several accidents have occurred there, including fatal ones.

Earlier this year, emergency services responded to a call where a 32-year-old woman was killed and a 61-year-old man sustained non-life-threatening injuries following an accident at the intersection.

During the committee meeting, White suggested adding lane rumble strips and a flashing light to the stop sign on County Road 17 leading up to the intersection.

According to Scott Burns, director of public works and county engineer, the county is not able to make any changes to the road as it is under the control of the Ministry of Transportation.

?This is MTO's intersection and we simply cannot modify their infrastructure,? said Burns. ?What we can do is try to pursue our colleagues at the MTO to put some pressure, but that's the extent of it.?

White shared his frustrations

?This is turning into a blood bath at this intersection, it just gets worse every week,? said White. ?I wasn't aware that we weren't allowed to do anything on our part of the roads, which is just ridiculous.?

He added that county staff need to make multiple phone calls daily to the MTO and to Dufferin-Caledon MPP Sylvia Jones' office to voice their road safety concerns and pressure them on the needed changes.

?I'm happy to go over to Sylvia's [Jones] office and start yelling and showing her pictures of crumples cars and crosses on the side of the road,? said White.

Amaranth Mayor Chris Gerrits expressed his support for the motion and reflected on a similar experience the Township of Amaranth had regarding the MTO and road safety changes.

?What the Warden is feeling is the same emotions that Amaranth was feeling when we were unable to make improvements to the 20 Side Road and County Road 12 intersections,? said Gerrits. ?I completely understand the frustrations with what he's feeling and I support whatever he wants to do to get the MTO to look at it.?

Amaranth Deputy Mayor Gail Little inquired about the possibility of having a ?flashing warning sign? ahead of the intersection to warn drivers about the upcoming stop sign.

?Even though that is one of our roads, apparently we are limited on what we could do because the intersection itself is under control of the ministry,? explained White.

?Everything associated with what's referred to as the ?functional footprint' of an intersection, so any signage or markings that communicates anything about the intersection belongs to whoever has jurisdiction,? said Burns. ?We cannot make any changes within that footprint.?

Grand Valley Deputy Mayor Philip Rentsch recommended reaching out to local emergency services to help back the motion.

?I'm assuming they get called there a lot and that's pulling resources away from other areas,? said Rentsch. ?It could also provide a whole lot of data.?

White noted that he's asked for a delegation at the Association of Municipalities of Ontario's (AMO) annual conference next month in Ottawa, has messaged the Premier, and has addressed MPP Jones and the Minister of Red Tape Reduction as part of the motion.

Concluding the meeting, White encouraged councillors to support the motion to have MTO address the road safety concerns at Highway 10 and County Road 17.