



December 3, 2024

Peter Dutchak,
Director of Engineering Services
County of Elgin
450 Sunset Drive
St. Thomas, ON N5R 5V1

Dear Mr. Dutchak and Members of Elgin County Council

RE: Improved signage for agricultural equipment on County Roads.

The Elgin Federation of Agriculture (EFA) and the Middlesex Federation of Agriculture (MFA) represent over 3,050 members with economic contributions of \$2.332 billion. As affiliates of the Ontario Federation of Agriculture (OFA), we focus on advancing agriculture and the rural community through partnerships, education, and advocacy.

With increased traffic to our rural areas for tourism, recreation, and commuting, collisions involving farm equipment are becoming more frequent. Federal government data indicates that slow-moving vehicles face a 3.8 to 4.8 times higher likelihood of being involved in fatal collisions per kilometre than other vehicles.

We recognize the fast-paced nature of today's world—planting and harvesting seasons are particularly busy for farmers, who must travel extensive distances on our roads. Unfortunately, drivers often overlook that slow-moving vehicles cannot exceed 40 km/h. As municipalities promote commercial truck routes that share the road with agricultural equipment, unsafe conditions are becoming increasingly prevalent. We must address these challenges to ensure safety for all road users.

Together, the EFA and MFA request that all bridges, hazardous hills and curves be marked with "No Passing" signs and the existing solid line markers within the county's highway networks. Such signage would inform motorists that conditions are unsafe for overtaking. The county's road systems often include narrow bridges and shoulders, further increasing the hazards for today's modern farm equipment using the roadway.

If you ate today, thank a farmer!
info@middlesexfederation.ca | elginfarmers@gmail.com



Each year, we observe a rise in near-miss incidents reported by our members, with drivers frequently taking unnecessary risks when overtaking farm vehicles. Ontario's Highway Traffic Act outlines regulations governing vehicle operation on provincial roads.

While the province provides recommendations and guidelines for best practices, municipalities are best positioned to manage their local road networks.

The Ministry of Transportation's traffic laws are designed to ensure the safety of all road users. The MFA and EFA appreciate the opportunity to discuss the enhanced use of signage and markings to improve roadway safety and enforcement from an agricultural perspective. We look forward to continuing to work with the County of Middlesex and the County of Elgin to promote safer driving behaviours on our roadways.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Patrick Verkely".

Patrick Verkely

President

Middlesex Federation of Agriculture (MFA)
633-4 Lions Park Drive
Mt. Brydges, ON N0L 1W0

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Greg Fentie".

Greg Fentie

President

Elgin Federation of Agriculture (EFA)
450-228 Sunset Drive
St. Thomas, ON N5R 5V1

CC: Hon. Rob Flack, Minister, Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Agribusiness
Chris Traini, P. Eng., Deputy CAO/County Engineer, County of Middlesex
Members of Middlesex County Council