

**Southbound Prohibited Left Turn:
Bathurst Street at Old Orchard Grove
(North York Centre South)**

(City Council on November 23, 24 and 25, 1999, adopted this Clause, without amendment.)

The Works Committee recommends the adoption of the following report (October 14, 1999) from the Commissioner of Works and Emergency Services for a six-month trial period, and that the Commissioner of Works and Emergency Services be requested to submit a report back to the Committee at the end of the trial period:

Purpose:

To amend the existing southbound left turn prohibition at Bathurst Steet and Old Orchard Grove.

Financial Implications and Impact Statement:

All costs associated with the amendment to the southbound left turn prohibition are included within the 1999 operating budget.

Recommendations:

It is recommended that:

- (1) the southbound left turns from Bathurst Street to Old Orchard Grove be prohibited from 4:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m., Monday to Friday; and
- (2) the appropriate by-laws be amended accordingly.

Background:

Following an incident which occurred on April 16, 1993, in which a pedestrian was struck by a southbound left turning vehicle, the former Metropolitan Toronto completed an investigation. During the investigation, a total of 193 motorists completed southbound left turns from Bathurst Street to Old Orchard Grove. During the same period, 530 pedestrians crossed Old Orchard Grove, within the east side crosswalk.

Observations by staff confirmed that northbound vehicles on Bathurst Street queued south through the intersection with Baycrest Avenue. The signalized intersection with Baycrest Avenue is located 43 metres north of Old Orchard Grove. These vehicles created difficulties for southbound left turning traffic, as motorists were required to weave through northbound queued vehicles and the many pedestrians crossing Old Orchard Grove. This manoeuvre was of concern as queued vehicles obstructed the visibility of pedestrians within the crosswalk.

As a result of the traffic investigation, Council for the former Metropolitan Toronto adopted a recommendation to prohibit southbound left turns, at any time, from Bathurst Street to Old Orchard Grove.

Since the implementation of the southbound turn restrictions, the former and current Councillors have received complaints from the local business owners on Bathurst Street. As access to their parking facilities are from both Bathurst Street and Old Orchard Grove, they believe that their businesses have been unduly impacted. As a result, they have, by means of a petition, requested that the City of Toronto rescind the turn restriction.

As a result of this request, staff of the Transportation Services Division of the Works and Emergency Services Department conducted a review of existing conditions in order to determine whether the southbound left turn prohibition could be rescinded or amended.

During the study, which was completed between the hours of 7:00 a.m. and 9:00 a.m., 12:00 p.m. and 1:00 p.m. and 4:00 p.m. and 6:00 p.m., on September 14 and 16, 1999, northbound vehicle queues were recorded. The results of the study are as follows:

- (i) during the a.m. peak period, northbound vehicles did not queue southerly through the Bathurst Street/Old Orchard Grove intersection;
- (ii) although slightly longer than those observed during the a.m. peak period, during the mid-day period, northbound vehicles did not queue southerly through the Bathurst Street/Old Orchard Grove intersection;
- (iii) during the p.m. peak period, northbound vehicles were continually queued through the Bathurst Street/Old Orchard Grove intersection when there was a red signal display for Bathurst Street traffic at Baycrest Avenue; and
- (iv) due to the limited pavement width available and spacing between Old Orchard Grove and Baycrest Avenue, it would not be possible to provide a southbound left turn lane at the Bathurst Street/Old Orchard Grove intersection.

There were a total of 163 pedestrians observed crossing Old Orchard Grove at Bathurst Street. Of those, 60 crossed during the p.m. period, 50 during the a.m. period and 53 during the mid-day period. It was also observed that the majority of pedestrians were senior citizens, many of which utilized walkers. A review of our collision records indicates that 27 incidents have occurred at the intersection, during the preceding five years. Of those, three involved pedestrians and westbound left turning vehicles.

Comments:

During the original study, which supported the implementation of the turn restrictions, it was observed that continual northbound vehicles queuing through the Bathurst Street/Old Orchard Grove intersection created a hazard for pedestrians, who were not visible to southbound left turning motorists.

The subsequent investigation has confirmed that these conditions exist principally during the p.m. peak period.

Conclusions:

With the change in traffic patterns on Bathurst Street at Old Orchard Grove, amendments to the southbound turn restrictions would appear to be suitable. By maintaining the southbound left turn restriction between the hours of 4:00 p.m. and 6:00 p.m., Monday to Friday, appropriate safety for pedestrians is maintained, while providing access for both the commercial properties on the east side of Bathurst Street and the residential community. Because of the number of senior citizens, we will monitor this location to ensure that the proposed modifications to the regulations does not result in pedestrian conflicts.

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Councillor Milton Berger, North York Centre South, appeared before the Works Committee in connection with the foregoing matter.

Insert Map
Bathurst Street at Old Orchard Grove