



STAFF REPORT INFORMATION ONLY

Effectiveness and Impact of Turn Prohibitions - Avenue Road, between Hillholm Road and Kilbarry Road

Date:	August 25, 2009
To:	Toronto and East York Community Council
From:	Director, Transportation Services Toronto and East York District
Wards:	St. Paul's, Ward 22
Reference Number:	Ts09152te.top.doc

SUMMARY

This staff report is about a matter which Community Council has been delegated authority from City Council to make a final decision.

Transportation Services has reviewed the effectiveness and impact on traffic following installation of “No Right-Turn, from 7:00 a.m. to 9:00 a.m., Monday to Friday” regulations for southbound traffic on Avenue Road at Hillholm Road, Killarney Road and Kilbarry Road.

The intent of these regulations was to reduce cut-through traffic during the morning rush hour period in the residential community south of Chaplin Crescent and west of Avenue Road. The turn prohibitions have generally accomplished this. However, non-compliance with the turn prohibitions is occurring, concerns about local access to the neighbourhood have been raised by representatives of schools in the area and some local residents, U-turns along the subject section of Avenue Road are a potential safety concern and an annoyance to residents, and increased traffic volume has increased delays and traffic congestion on Oxtown Avenue and Oriole Parkway.

Financial Impact

This report has no financial impact.

ISSUE BACKGROUND

Toronto and East York Community Council at its meeting of April 8, 2008 gave consideration to a staff report dated March 18, 2008 entitled, “Turn Prohibitions – Avenue Road, between Hillholm Road and Kilbarry Avenue” (Item TE14.45) The Community Council directed that right-turns be prohibited from 7:00 a.m. to 9:00 a.m.,

Monday to Friday by southbound traffic on Avenue Road at Hillholm Road, Killarney Road, and Kilbarry Road and requested the Director, Transportation Services, Toronto and East York District to review and report back on the effectiveness of the turn prohibitions in September 2009.

COMMENTS

Neighbourhood traffic controls

Avenue Road, between Oxtan Avenue and Kilbarry Road is classified as a minor arterial road. The daily two-way traffic volume ranges from about 8,000 to 12,500 vehicles. The speed limit is 40 kilometres per hour. Hillholm Road and Killarney Road intersect the west side of Avenue Road forming T-type intersections. “Stop” signs regulate eastbound traffic on Hillholm Road and on Killarney Road at Avenue Road. This branch of Avenue Road ends in a T-type intersection at Kilbarry Road. A private driveway leading to a parking lot/receiving area at Upper Canada College is located at the south side of this intersection. This parking lot has a capacity of about 50 vehicles. The intersection of Avenue Road and Kilbarry Road has all-way “Stop” sign control. Signs indicating the “No Right-Turn, from 7:00 a.m. to 9:00 a.m., Monday to Friday” regulations for southbound traffic on Avenue Road at Hillholm Road, Killarney Road and Kilbarry Road were installed in April, 2008.

Traffic Volumes

The location of Upper Canada College creates the discontinuity of Avenue Road, requiring traffic to use the Oxtan Avenue-Oriole Parkway-Lonsdale Road link to reconnect with Avenue Road at the south side of the college. Prior to the installation of the turn prohibitions, motorists could enter the local street system west of Avenue Road and filter through the residential neighbourhood to the west of the college. Although a moderate amount of traffic was locally generated by Upper Canada College (200 Lonsdale Road) and The Bishop Strachan School (298 Lonsdale Road), Hillholm Road, Killarney Road and Kilbarry Road experienced combined westbound traffic volumes in excess of 1500 vehicles in the morning rush hour period.

Follow-up traffic counts were undertaken in May and June 2009 at locations in the neighbourhood to determine the impact of the turn regulations on traffic volume and traffic patterns in the area. The before and after data is depicted on the copy of Drawing No. 421F-9753, dated August 2009, attached to this report. The specific before and after southbound right-turn volumes recorded during the 7:00 a.m. to 9:00 a.m. period at Hillholm Road, Killarney Road and Kilbarry Road are shown in the following chart.

Avenue Road at:	Before (2007-2008)	After (2009)	% Change
Hillholm Road	924	45	- 95%
Killarney Road	167	25	- 85%
Kilbarry Road	465	130	- 72%
Total all locations	1556	200	- 87%

Analysis

Traffic infiltration of the local street system west of Avenue Road has been reduced significantly since the installation of the “No Right-Turn, 7:00 a.m. to 9:00 a.m., Monday to Friday” regulations for southbound traffic on Avenue Road at Hillholm Road, Killarney Road, and Kilbarry Road. However, at the time of our traffic survey a total of 200 vehicles turned illegally at the three streets. What is not clear by only reviewing this data is how many motorists circumvented the turn prohibitions by making U-turns on Avenue Road to enter Killarney Road and Hillholm Road by way of a northbound left-turn, use the Upper Canada College parking lot to circumvent the turn prohibition at Kilbarry Road, or re-route to other streets in the area.

U-turns:

Traffic surveys revealed that 43 vehicles at Hillholm Road and 26 vehicles at Killarney Road made U-turns south of these streets to enter them by way of a northbound left-turn. Most of these vehicles turned into private driveways along Avenue Road, between Hillholm Road and Kilbarry Road to turn around. This occurs to the annoyance of residents and creates a potential hazard to pedestrians and cyclists as motorists back out of driveways across a sidewalk and into northbound traffic.

Upper Canada College parking lot:

Staff was unable to determine exactly how many motorists enter the UCC parking lot to turn around then make a northbound left-turn to travel westbound on Kilbarry Road. However, 145 vehicles were recorded traveling straight south from Avenue Road into the parking lot. As mentioned above, the capacity of the parking lot is about 50 vehicles. Although some of these motorists could be parents bringing children to the school, school staff has instructed parents to use the Forest Hill Road entrance to the school for this purpose. During a meeting with school staff, Transportation Services staff observed about one car a minute on average enter the parking lot to turn around. This has prompted UCC to place traffic cones at the entrance to the parking lot and assign a staff person to control access to the lot between 7:00 a.m. and 9:00 a.m.

Use of other streets in the area:

It appears from the traffic data that about 700 vehicles have diverted onto Oxtan Avenue and travel eastbound towards Oriole Parkway. This is the preferred routing but might misrepresent the actual diverted demand since traffic on Oxtan Avenue is heavily congested, with vehicles often taking about 10 minutes to travel the distance from Avenue Road to Oriole Parkway. Queuing of southbound traffic on Avenue Road waiting to turn left onto Oxtan Avenue was also observed. Queues often extend north from Oxtan Avenue to nearly Chaplin Crescent and at times block northbound traffic flow through the Avenue Road/Oxtan Avenue intersection.

Staff suspect that some motorists turning south onto Oriole Parkway from Oxton Avenue turn right from southbound Oriole Parkway onto westbound Kilbarry Road. The southbound right-turn volume between 7:00 a.m. and 9:00 a.m. at Oriole Parkway/Kilbarry Road has increased from about 225 vehicles to over 450 vehicles since the right-turn prohibitions were implemented along Avenue Road. This turn volume includes motorists that have diverted to Oriole Parkway at points south of Eglinton Avenue West.

There also has been a significant increase in westbound left-turns from Oxton Avenue onto southbound Highbourne Road. In 2007 about 20 vehicles made this turn during the 2-hour morning rush hour period. This has increased to about 100 vehicles since the turn prohibitions were implemented. A similar increase in southbound right-turns is noted at the intersection of Highbourne Road and Kilbarry Road. This suggests that some motorists now approach the area by way of Oriole Parkway, travel west to Highbourne Road, south to Kilbarry Road, then turn right onto Kilbarry Road to enter the local neighbourhood west of Avenue Road. It is also possible that some of these motorists could be the result of U-turns being made on Oxton Avenue, east of Highbourne Road. Traffic surveys did not record this maneuver.

Collision data

In the year preceding the installation of the right-turn prohibitions at total of 5 collisions were reported along Avenue Road, between Oxton Avenue and Kilbarry Road. A total of 4 collisions have been reported along this section of roadway in the year following installation of the turn prohibitions. There is no evidence to suggest that the installation of the turn prohibitions was a contributing factor in any of the collisions reported within the past year.

Enforcement

Police have been enforcing the turn prohibitions on a regular basis. Transportation Services has requested Toronto Police Service staff at 53 Division, if they could advise us how many motorists they have charged with making a prohibited turn at the intersections of Avenue Road/Hillholm Road, Avenue Road/Killarney Road, and Avenue Road/Kilbarry Road. To date staff have not received this information.

Other communications

Several letters have been received from a resident of Avenue Road, representing several residents along Avenue Road, between Oxton Avenue and Kilbarry Road, expressing concerns about the turn prohibitions in general and the use of their driveways by motorists to turn around. It is also suggested that the concerns of these residents were not considered prior to Toronto and East York Community Council approving installation of the turn prohibitions.

Staff have also received communications from staff at Upper Canada College and The Bishop Strachan School concerning the use of the UCC parking lot and the general inconvenience experienced by parents bringing children to these schools. The primary drop-off area for both schools is on Forest Hill Road (one block west of Avenue Road). Parents can only get to Forest Hill Road either by traveling around Upper Canada College by way of Oriole Parkway and Lonsdale Road and access Forest Hill Road from the south or by turning right from Oriole Parkway onto Kilbarry Road and traveling west to Forest Hill Road.

Staff have not received any communication from the Toronto Transit Commission expressing concern about increased delay to their “Avenue Road – 5” bus or “Downtown/Avenue Road -142” express bus service since the installation of the right-turn prohibitions along Avenue Road.

Summary

As indicated in the 2008 staff report that lead to implementation of the turn prohibitions during the morning rush hour period, it is desirable to protect local neighbourhood streets from high levels of transient traffic wherever feasible. Despite the significant number of illegal southbound right-turns that continue to occur along Avenue Road at Hillholm Road, Killarney Road, and Kilbarry Road in the morning rush hour period, the turn prohibitions have been successful as evidenced by the reduction of about 1300 vehicles in total entering these streets in the 7:00 a.m. to 9:00 a.m. period.

The main benefactors of the reduction are Hillholm Road, with a reduction of over 800 vehicles and Killarney Road, with a reduction of over 100 vehicles in the 7:00 a.m. to 9:00 a.m. period. Forest Hill Road, north of Kilbarry Road also has benefited directly from the loss of traffic on Hillholm Road and Killarney Road.

It is difficult to quantify the benefit to Kilbarry Road, west of Avenue Road. Although southbound right turns have been reduced by over 300 vehicles in the morning rush hour period, the westbound traffic volume on Kilbarry Road, east of Avenue Road has increased by about 300 vehicles through traffic diverting to other approach routes.

As expected, the magnitude of traffic diversion, in the range of 1300 vehicles over the two hour morning rush period has had an impact on delay and congestion on nearby arterial routes, mainly Oxtown Avenue and Oriole Parkway, and has resulted in some increase in traffic volume on other local streets such as Highbourne Road.

Although the turn prohibitions have created an inconvenience and added additional travel time for parents bringing children to Upper Canada College and The Bishop Strachan School, parents have adjusted their route to the schools, and perhaps reluctantly, are coping with the issue. Of greater concern to Transportation Services is the use of the UCC parking lot and private residential driveways by motorists intent on circumventing the turn prohibitions. Transportation Services will consult further with Councillor Michael Walker in regard to resolving these issues.

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SIGNATURE

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LIST OF ATTACHMENTS

(1) Drawing No. 421F-9753, dated August 2009

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