

Future Impact on Arterial Roads: Ward 24 Willowdale

Date:	June 3, 2010
To:	North York Community Council
From:	Director, Transportation Services Division, North York District
Wards:	Ward 24 Willowdale
Reference Number:	<i>ny10084</i>

SUMMARY

To report on a request to study the changes in traffic volumes on Steeles Avenue East, Finch Avenue East, Don Mills Road, Leslie Street and Yonge Street and the impacts on these roads as a result of the increased congestion on southbound Highway 404 between 16th Avenue and Highway 401 according to the findings of the Ontario Ministry of Transportation 2008 Travel Time Study.

Financial Impact

There are no financial implications associated with this report.

ISSUE BACKGROUND

North York Community Council, at its meeting on January 12, 2010, adopted Councillor Shiner's Notice of Motion contained within Item NY30.52 requesting that City Transportation Staff study and report to North York Community Council:

- a. the changes in traffic volume to Steeles Avenue East, Finch Avenue East, Don Mills Road, Leslie Street and Yonge Street over the last 5 years; and
- b. the impacts on the above mentioned roads resulting from increased congestion for southbound Highway 404 between 16th Avenue and Highway 401, according to the findings of the Ministry of Transportation Ontario 2008 Travel Time Study.

COMMENTS

The Toronto Star published an article on January 7, 2010, entitled “GTA commuter crawl gets slower” based on findings of the Ontario Ministry of Transportation 2008 Travel Time Study. The Ontario Ministry of Transportation has undertaken a biennial travel time survey of major provincial roadways in the Greater Toronto Area since 1996. The results of the studies provide measures for assessing facility performance and identifying critical road sections to be considered for future improvement projects and traffic management strategies. The results of the study measured travel time delay and not the changes in the volume of traffic on principle 400-series highways.

Transportation Services does not collect traffic volume data on a yearly basis, however volume data is collected once every four to five years for arterial roads. Attachment 2 identifies the traffic volume data for arterial roads that are bordered by Steeles Avenue East, Sheppard Avenue East, Yonge Street and Don Mills Road. The 24-hour volume data tabled in Attachment 2 is an average taken from several volume count locations along each section of road.

The changes in the average 24-hour traffic volume on the specified sections of arterial roads, between the most recent volume counts are as follows:

Arterial Roadways	24 Hour Volume Change (Percent)			
	Eastbound	Westbound	Northbound	Southbound
Steeles Avenue E	- 7	-12		
Finch Avenue E	- 5	- 8		
Sheppard Avenue E	+ 10	+ 10		
Bayview Avenue			-12	- 10
Leslie Street			- 1	- 6
Don Mills Road			+ 1	- 7

In view of the above, Sheppard Avenue East, between Highway 404 and Yonge Street, was the only segment of arterial road to indicate an increase in both directions.

The Ontario Ministry of Transportation 2008 Travel Time Study covered approximately 280 km of MTO highways within the City of Toronto including the Don Valley Parkway and 24 arterial corridors. As part of the study, a Travel Time Index was generated which compared the peak period and free-flow travel conditions to provide an indication of the additional time required in peak periods. The section of southbound Highway 404 between 16th Avenue and Highway 401 is the subject of this Community Council report.

The Travel Time Study is intended to measure travel time, and more specifically changes in the travel time as compared to the previous Travel Time Studies conducted. The 2008 Travel Time Study does not collect traffic volume data, nor does it measure the changes in traffic volume from interchange to interchange. Since there is no traffic volume information available within the study, Transportation Services Division is not able to determine the impact that congestion on southbound Highway 404 has on City of Toronto roads.

In summary, Sheppard Avenue East is the only arterial road reviewed that has shown an increase in traffic volume in both directions over the last 5 to 8 years and Transportation Services staff cannot identify what the impacts are to City roads as a result of congestion on southbound Highway 404, from 16th Avenue to Highway 401 based on the Ontario Ministry of Transportation 2008 Travel Time Study results.

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SIGNATURE

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ATTACHMENTS

- Attachment 1: Location Map (*ny10084_map*)
- Attachment 2: North York Arterial Volumes 2001 – 2008 (*ny10084_volumes*)