



**STAFF REPORT  
ACTION REQUIRED**

**Traffic Operational Review – Woodmount Avenue,  
between O’Connor Drive and Cosburn Avenue**

<b>Date:</b>	December 15, 2009
<b>To:</b>	Toronto and East York Community Council
<b>From:</b>	Director, Transportation Services Toronto and East York District
<b>Wards:</b>	Beaches-East York, Ward 31
<b>Reference Number:</b>	Ts09213te.top.doc

**SUMMARY**

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

As a result of area resident concerns of the amount and speed of traffic on Woodmount Avenue, Transportation Services reviewed the installation of speed humps, turn prohibitions, change in direction, signal timing extensions and corner parking restrictions.

The speed of motorists on Woodmount Avenue is insufficient to meet the criteria for the installation of speed humps; however, the posted speed limit should be reduced to 40 km/h. Implementation of turn prohibitions or a one-way operation on Woodmount Avenue would impact local and area residents and should only be initiated as part of a neighbourhood traffic management plan. Transportation Services will monitor the left-turn movement at Woodbine Avenue and O’Connor Drive and make improvements where possible. Corner parking prohibition signs will be installed to improve visibility at the Woodmount Avenue/O’Connor Drive intersection.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

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**Transportation Services recommends that Toronto and East York Community Council:**

1. Not authorize installation of speed humps on Woodmount Avenue, between O’Connor Drive and Cosburn Avenue.

2. Reduce the existing speed limit on Woodmount Avenue, between O'Connor Drive and Cosburn Avenue from 50 km/h to 40 km/h.

### Financial Impact

Type of funding	Source of funds	Amount
Available within current budget	Transportation Services Division 2010 Interim Operating Budget	\$1,200.00

The adoption of Recommendation No. 1 will not result in any financial impact. If, however, Toronto and East York Community Council decides speed humps on Woodmount Avenue, between O'Connor Drive and Cosburn Avenue, would be beneficial, the following financial impact will result:

1. the estimated cost for installing 4 speed humps would be \$12,000.00. Funds in the amount of \$500,000.00 have been allocated in the Transportation Services 2010 Capital Budget for traffic calming initiatives. Installing speed humps on Woodmount Avenue is subject to competing priorities and funding availability.

### ISSUE BACKGROUND

At the request of Councillor Janet Davis, on behalf of area residents, Transportation Services studied Woodmount Avenue, between O'Connor Drive and Cosburn Avenue. Residents are concerned with the volume of traffic using Woodmount Avenue and with the speed of motorists. Transportation Services considered the following suggestions:

- (1) installation of speed humps on Woodmount Avenue, between O'Connor Drive and Cosburn Avenue;
- (2) prohibiting westbound left turns from O'Connor Drive onto Woodmount Avenue and northbound right turns from Woodmount Avenue onto O'Connor Drive during peak periods;
- (3) a one-way southbound operation between O'Connor Drive and Plains Road and a one-way northbound operation between Plains Road and Cosburn Avenue;
- (4) extending the westbound left turn signal timing at O'Connor Drive and Woodbine Avenue; and
- (5) review parking at the corners on both sides of Woodmount Avenue at O'Connor Drive that block visibility.

### COMMENTS

Woodmount Avenue, between O'Connor Drive and Cosburn Avenue is a local roadway operating two-way on a pavement width of 8.6 metres, with a speed limit of 50 km/h. There are sidewalks on both sides of the road and the road grade is less than 8 percent.

Parking is allowed for a maximum of 3 hours (unsigned) on both sides of Woodmount Avenue. There is no TTC service on this street.

### Study Results

Transportation staff conducted speed and volume studies in June of 2009, on Woodmount Avenue between O'Connor Drive and Cosburn Avenue. The results were as follows:

Location	85 <sup>th</sup> percentile speed	Average Speed	Total Volume
Woodmount Avenue, northbound between O'Connor Drive and Plains Road	47 km/h	38 km/h	460
Woodmount Avenue, southbound between O'Connor Drive and Plains Road	47 km/h	38 km/h	788
Woodmount Avenue, northbound between Plains Road and Cosburn Avenue	46 km/h	37 km/h	358
Woodmount Avenue, southbound between Plains Road and Cosburn Avenue	47 km/h	39 km/h	699

As indicated above, the recorded speeds are well within the existing speed limit of 50 km/h on Woodmount Avenue. The average two-way traffic volume is approximately 1150 vehicles over a 24-hour period.

A recent 8-hour traffic count conducted at Woodmount Avenue and O'Connor Drive on a typical weekday recorded the following turning traffic volumes:

Location	Two hour morning peak period	Two hour afternoon peak period	Off-peak period	8-hour Total
Westbound left turns O'Connor to Woodmount	107	94	128	329
Northbound right turns Woodmount to O'Connor	49	56	74	179

## Analysis

### (1) Speed Humps

Vehicle speeds and traffic volumes are the prime criteria for installing traffic calming devices. Other factors, including road width, pedestrian facilities and gradient are also considered in the assessment.

Woodmount Avenue, between O'Connor Drive and Cosburn Avenue, does not meet all the criteria for installing traffic-calming devices. Specifically, the operating speed of 47 km/h is below the minimum of 10 km/h over the speed limit that the traffic-calming policy requires. Therefore, installing speed humps on Woodmount Avenue, between O'Connor Drive and Cosburn Avenue, is not warranted.

A review of the Toronto Police Service collision records for a three year period ending December 31, 2008 disclosed that one collision has been reported on Woodmount Avenue, between O'Connor Drive and Plains Road, and no collisions were reported between Plains Road and Cosburn Avenue. This collision did not involve a pedestrian or cyclist and speed was not a factor. The attached, Appendix A, outlines the assessment of the technical criteria in more detail.

### (2) Turn Prohibitions

Woodmount Avenue is one block west of Woodbine Avenue and forms a north-south T-type intersection at O'Connor Drive. In addition to Woodmount Avenue, there are four other local streets extending from O'Connor Drive to Cosburn Avenue, between Coxwell Avenue and Woodbine Avenue, all with similar operating characteristics. There are no turning movement restrictions at any of the local streets intersecting with O'Connor Drive, between Coxwell Avenue and Woodbine Avenue at the present time.

Motorists making westbound left turns from O'Connor Drive onto Woodmount Avenue could use this street to access Cosburn Avenue and circumvent queuing on O'Connor Drive. However, a certain amount of traffic using Woodmount Avenue could also be generated by the school located on the north side of Plains Road between Woodmount Avenue and Woodbine Avenue. Regardless of motorists' reasons for using Woodmount Avenue, the overall traffic volume on this street is low. Prohibiting westbound left turns and northbound right turns during the peak periods, as suggested, would not eliminate motorists' preference or requirement to use the local street system south of O'Connor Drive. Most likely, this would only serve to relocate southbound vehicles and northbound vehicles to neighbouring streets such as Norlong Avenue or Glebement Avenue. Further, based on past experience with similar situations in other areas, implementing a turn prohibition, as suggested, would generate similar complaints and requests from residents of those streets where displaced traffic has chosen to relocate.

Based on the findings of our investigation, implementing a westbound left-turn and northbound right-turn prohibition is not recommended without further consultation from

area residents of Woodmount Avenue and adjacent streets to develop a neighbourhood traffic management plan.

(3) Change in Direction on Woodmount Avenue

One of the preferred options by residents was to change the existing two-way direction of travel, on Woodmount Avenue, to one-way southbound between O'Connor Drive and Plains Road and one-way northbound between Plains Road and Cosburn Avenue. This proposal would have the most direct impact of reducing traffic volumes on Woodmount Avenue. However it will also displace both local residents and through traffic to adjacent streets west of Woodmount Avenue with similar characteristics. North of Plains Road, approximately 460 motorists will be displaced and south of Plains Road approximately 700 motorists will seek other routes.

As with the proposal for turn prohibitions, a change to one-way operation is not recommended without consultation from area residents of Woodmount Avenue and adjacent streets to develop a neighbourhood traffic management plan.

(4) Extending the westbound left turn signal timing at O'Connor Drive and Woodbine Avenue

Woodbine Avenue is classified as a major arterial roadway, operating two-way in a north/south direction. O'Connor Drive is classified as a local roadway, operating two-way in an east/west direction. The traffic control signal located at Woodbine Avenue and O'Connor Drive operates as semi-actuated which means it will continually cycle between the westbound left turn signal and the east/west green signal until either a pedestrian, by means of a push button, or a vehicle, by means of a detector loop embedded in the pavement, actuates the signal for northbound traffic to enter O'Connor Drive. Pedestrians can only cross at the south and west legs of the intersection.

Transportation Services has reviewed the signal timing at this intersection. During the morning peak period, an extensive left turn signal is provided for the westbound left turn movement. No changes are feasible without affecting the service for the other directions of travel and pedestrians. However, there may be some opportunity to increase the time provided for the westbound left turn movement during other times of the day. Staff will be making changes to the timings, and monitoring the intersection operation, to ensure that an optimum level of service is provided to all users.

(5) Review parking at the corners on both sides of Woodmount Avenue at O'Connor Drive that block visibility

Currently, parking is allowed on both sides of Woodmount Avenue between O'Connor Drive and Cosburn Avenue for a maximum period of three hours. There are no signed corner prohibitions (default by-law prohibits parking within 9 metres of a corner and does not require signs). Observations indicated that during the off-peak daytime periods the street is basically vacant of vehicles. However during the weekday periods between 5:00

p.m. and 7:00 a.m., motorists park right up to the corners on Woodmount Avenue. This can create visibility problems for turning motorists and conflicts with through vehicles. Transportation Services will install 9 metre corner parking prohibition signs. This will provide better sightlines for all motorists.

### Speed Limit

We reviewed Woodmount Avenue, between O'Connor Drive and Cosburn Avenue, against the warrants (adopted by City Council in April, 2001) for a 40 km/h maximum speed limit. The subject section of Woodmount Avenue satisfies the warrants for the implementation of a 40 km/h maximum speed limit. Therefore, to enhance operating safety and promote lower operating speeds, the existing 50 km/h maximum speed limit on Woodmount Avenue, between O'Connor Drive and Cosburn Avenue, should be reduced to 40 km/h.

### Alternate recommendations

If, despite the findings in Section (1), the Toronto and East York Community Council determines that installing speed humps on Woodmount Avenue, between O'Connor Drive and Cosburn Avenue, would be beneficial, it should adopt the following:

1. Transportation Services staff consult with Councillor Davis to develop a speed hump plan.
2. Polling Registry Services poll eligible householders on Woodmount Avenue, between O'Connor Drive and Cosburn Avenue, to determine whether residents support the installation of speed humps, in accordance with the City of Toronto Traffic Calming Policy.
3. Subject to favourable results of the poll:
  - (a) the City Solicitor prepare a by-law to alter sections of the roadway on Woodmount Avenue, between O'Connor Drive and Cosburn Avenue, for traffic calming purposes, generally as the speed hump plan that Polling Registry Services circulated to residents during the polling process shows; and
  - (b) Transportation Services take the necessary actions to reduce the speed limit from 40 km/h to 30 km/h on Woodmount Avenue, between O'Connor Drive and Cosburn Avenue, when the speed humps are installed.

### Conduct poll

The City of Toronto Traffic Calming Policy stipulates residents who would be directly affected by installing speed humps on Woodmount Avenue must be formally polled. A minimum response of 50 percent plus one ballot is required, of which at least 60 percent of the respondents must support installing speed humps in order to proceed with the

installation. Subject to approval by Toronto and East York Community Council of the alternate recommendations outlined above, Polling Registry Services would poll eligible residents on Woodmount Avenue, between O'Connor Drive and Cosburn Avenue. If the poll supports speed humps, Transportation Services would schedule installation based on relative need and competing priorities.

### **Relative Priority and Other Impacts**

Relative need and priority of speed hump installation is based on a technical assessment of traffic volume, vehicle speed percentages, speed-related collisions, and the presence of schools, parks, seniors' residences or bicycle routes. Woodmount Avenue, between O'Connor Drive and Cosburn Avenue, scored 12 ranking points out of a possible 100.

No alterations to parking regulations are required, nor would the number of parking spaces be affected, by the installation of speed humps. Installation of speed humps will have minimal effect on winter services, street cleaning and garbage collection.

Speed humps will result in slower operating speeds for all vehicles, including emergency service vehicles, and could result in increased response times in the event of an emergency.

### **Emergency Services Comments**

Consultation with emergency services (Police, Fire and Emergency Medical Services) is required in order to ensure that the design and layout of a traffic calming proposal does not unduly affect their operations. Transportation Services will consult with emergency services if Toronto and East York Community Council determines that installing speed humps on the subject section of Woodmount Avenue would be beneficial.

### **CONTACT**

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### **SIGNATURE**

Peter Noehammer, P.Eng.  
Director, Transportation Services

### **LIST OF ATTACHMENTS**

- (1) Drawing No. 421F-9876, dated December 2009
- (2) Appendix A - Table 1: Traffic Calming Warrant Criteria

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