



**STAFF REPORT
ACTION REQUIRED**

Traffic Management – Northdale Boulevard

Date:	June 4, 2010
To:	Toronto and East York Community Council
From:	Director, Transportation Services Toronto and East York District
Wards:	Beaches-East York, Ward 31
Reference Number:	Ts10100te.top.doc

SUMMARY

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

After extensive community consultation, Transportation Services has been requested by Councillor Janet Davis to implement various traffic improvements in the vicinity of Northdale Boulevard.

The proposed traffic modifications will promote slower vehicle operating speeds, discourage heavy truck traffic in the residential area, and provide for a safer pedestrian environment in this vicinity. There are no impacts to TTC service routes.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Transportation Services recommends that Toronto and East York Community Council:

1. Authorize the City Clerk to conduct a poll of eligible householders in English, on Northdale Boulevard and on Northline Road, between Northdale Boulevard and Curity Avenue, to determine resident support for the proposed speed hump plans, in accordance with the City of Toronto Traffic Calming Policy;
2. Subject to favourable results of the poll;
 - a. The City Solicitor prepare a by-law to alter sections of the roadway on Northdale Boulevard and on Northline Road, between Northdale Boulevard and Curity Avenue, for traffic calming purposes, generally as shown on the attached print Drawing No. 421G-0013 and No. 421G-0033,

respectively, dated May, 2010 and circulated to residents through the polling process;

- b. Transportation Services take the necessary actions to reduce the speed limit to 30 km/h on Northdale Boulevard and on Northline Road, between Northdale Boulevard and Curity Avenue, when the speed humps are installed.
3. Rescind the existing Yield sign control on Curity Avenue at Northline Road.
4. Approve the installation of an All-way Stop control at Northline Road and Curity Avenue as the warrant criteria has been met.
5. Reduce the existing speed limits from 50 km/h to 40 km/h on the following streets:

Northdale Boulevard
Northline Road, between Northdale Boulevard and Hollinger Road;
Hollinger Road, between Northdale Boulevard and Curity Avenue;
Cranfield Road, between Northdale Boulevard and Bermondsey Road;
Curity Avenue, between Northline Road and Hollinger Road;
Waterman Avenue, between Northline Road and Cranfield Road; and
Dohme Avenue, between Northline Road and O'Connor Drive
6. Approve the alteration of Northdale Boulevard at Northline Road in the form of a modular traffic island, generally as described in Drawing No. 421F-9529, dated January, 2009
7. Direct Transportation Services to install Heavy Truck Route signs on Northline Road directing heavy trucks to use Curity Avenue, Dohme Avenue or Bermondsey Road to access O'Connor Drive and at St. Clair Avenue West and O'Connor Drive directing them away from the Parkview Hills area.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

The estimated cost for installing 5 speed humps would be \$15,000. Funds in the amount of \$418,000 have been allocated in the Transportation Services 2010 Capital Budget for traffic calming initiatives. Installing speed humps on Northdale Boulevard and Northline Road is subject to competing priorities and funding availability.

The estimated cost for installing a modular traffic island and the various required signs is \$5,000, funds for which are available in the Transportation Services 2010 Operating Budget.

ISSUE BACKGROUND

For almost two years, representatives of the residents on Northdale Boulevard, representatives of the Parkview Hills Community Association, a local business

representative, Councillor Janet Davis, and staff of Transportation Services have been working on potential solutions to safety and operational concerns in their community. Agreement has been reached on a number of proposals for improving safety, reducing vehicular speeds and re-directing heavy truck traffic in the vicinity of Northdale Boulevard. Councillor Davis has requested Transportation Services to report on the results of this work and seek the necessary approvals.

COMMENTS

Issues of Concern

The primary issues of concern identified by area residents are outlined below:

- a) Volume and speed of traffic cutting through the community via Northdale Boulevard to Denvale Road.
- b) Trucks from Northline Road using Northdale Boulevard to cut through the neighbourhood and causing damage at both ends of the street when attempting to go around the centre median.
- c) Vehicle speeds on Northline Road approaching Northdale Boulevard and non-compliance of the stop sign.
- d) Safety of the children on the cul-de-sac section of Northdale Boulevard.

Proposals for Change

The following section describes the proposals that met the objectives of the community working group. Namely, they address the issues identified, do not transfer traffic problems to other residents or restrict emergency response, and are supported by the community as a whole.

- 1) Traffic Calming

Northdale Boulevard is a local roadway that is divided by a treed centre median. The west side of the roadway is residential and the east side of the roadway is industrial. The north section of Northdale Boulevard is a cul-de-sac. Northdale Boulevard provides access to the Parkview Hills community via Glenshaw Crescent and Denvale Road.

It is proposed that, subject to a positive poll of residents, speed humps be installed on the southbound half of Northdale Boulevard. These speed humps would slow motorists down when travelling on the residential side of the street and entering the Parkview Hills community. Speed humps may also discourage heavy truck traffic from using the street when travelling to or from the industrial area to the east.

We conducted a traffic calming study for the installation of speed humps on Northdale Boulevard. We measured an operating speed of 46 km/h and a daily traffic volume of approximately 1,000 vehicles travelling southbound on Northdale Boulevard. These values do not satisfy the warrant criteria for the installation of speed humps on Northdale

Boulevard. However, given the unusual nature of this street and the additional concern with industrial traffic, we are recommending that a poll be conducted of residents for the installation of four speed humps on the residential side of Northdale Boulevard, generally as shown on attached Drawing No. 421G-0013 dated May 2010.

An additional speed hump is proposed on the single block of Northline Road between Northdale Boulevard and Curity Avenue. The purpose of this speed hump is to slow traffic down before approaching the stop sign at Northdale Boulevard, and also to discourage heavy truck traffic from proceeding east on Northline Road past Curity Avenue and thus ending up in the residential community.

On this section of Northline Road, we measured a daily traffic volume of approximately 1150 vehicles with an operating speed of 40 km/h. Although these speeds do not satisfy the traffic calming warrant criteria, we are recommending that this single speed hump be installed, subject to a poll of the tenants/property owners, as part of the overall traffic calming plan on Northdale Boulevard, generally as shown on Drawing No. 421G-0033, dated May 2010.

2) Replace Yield with All-Way Stop Signs at Northline Road and Curity Avenue

The north end of Curity Avenue intersects with Northline Road to form a “T” type intersection. Currently, Curity Avenue is controlled by a Yield sign. This intersection is one block east of Northdale Boulevard within the industrial area. We conducted an All-way Stop Sign Warrant Study at this location and determined that this intersection satisfies the necessary criteria for installation. Introducing All-Way Stop signs at this intersection will resolve any right-of-way conflicts at this intersection. Also, requiring westbound motorists (particularly heavy trucks) on Northline Road to stop at Curity Avenue, will give them more chance to realize that they are at the final opportunity to turn south to O’Connor Drive to exit the industrial area.

3) 40 km/h speed limits

The operating speeds on Northdale Boulevard and Northline Road are within the existing speed limit of 50 km/h. However, given that some area residents have expressed concerns that speeding does occur, and given that residents must walk on the roadway since there are sidewalks on only the west side of Northdale Boulevard, and none at all on Northline Road, the speed limits can be reduced to improve pedestrian safety. In fact, within the industrial area to the east of Northdale Boulevard, there are no continuous sidewalks provided for pedestrians. To improve the safety of pedestrians, and also to encourage lower traffic speeds in the area, it is proposed that the speed limits be reduced to 40 km/h on Northdale Boulevard, Northline Road, Hollinger Road, Cranfield Road, Curity Avenue, Waterman Avenue and Dohme Avenue.

4) Modular traffic island on Northdale Boulevard at Northline Road

Currently, there is a stop sign for westbound traffic on Northline Road where it intersects with Northdale Boulevard to form a skewed “T” type intersection. There is an existing “No Exit” sign on the southwest corner of Northline Road and Northdale Boulevard to indicate that this section of Northdale Boulevard is not a through street. Residents are concerned that motorists ignore the stop sign and proceed through the intersection into the cul-de-sac. They must then turn around to proceed south on Northdale Boulevard. To emphasize that motorists should not proceed straight through the intersection, we will install a modular traffic island, generally as shown on attached Drawing No.421F-9529, dated January, 2009. Also, an additional “No Exit” sign will be placed on the northwest corner to further emphasize that this section of Northdale Boulevard is not a through street.

5) Heavy Truck Route Signs

The community is concerned that heavy vehicles continue to use Northdale Boulevard to access O’Connor Drive despite the installation of numerous “No Heavy Truck” and “No Exit” signage within the immediate area. While this is disturbing to the residents due to the noise and disruption of heavy vehicles, it is also a problem at either end of Northdale Boulevard where vehicles must negotiate around the ends of the centre median. There is insufficient road space, particularly at the south end, for very large vehicles to make it around the turn. This has resulted in damage to curbs, trees, and public and private property.

It is proposed that Transportation Services will install “Heavy Truck Route” signs on Northline Road directing heavy trucks to use Curity Avenue, Dohme Avenue or Bermondsey Road to access O’Connor Drive. We will also install a “Heavy Truck Route” sign at St. Clair Avenue West and O’Connor Drive directing them away from the Parkview Hills area. Signs will be installed as soon as scheduling allows.

In addition, we will be forwarding letters to businesses whose properties have access to Northdale Boulevard from the commercial community to the east of Northdale Boulevard. The businesses will be requested to advise truck drivers who ship and receive goods to their respective businesses to obey the Heavy Truck Route signs once installed. If trucks continue to contravene the existing “No Heavy Truck” restrictions, we will request enforcement by Toronto Police Services.

Other Suggestions Considered

The following section describes the suggestions that the working group considered that were not carried forward as they would not be effective, they would impact other streets in the community, or they were not supported by the community as a whole.

1) One Way Operation

The Parkview Hills area has two access points from Northdale Boulevard serving approximately 750 homes. Glenshaw Crescent and Denvale Road are the primary access points into and out of Parkview Hills via Northdale Boulevard. Presteign Heights Public School is also a focal point in the Parkview Hills area. Approximately 1000 motorists access Parkview Hills via Glenshaw Crescent and Denvale Road from Northdale Boulevard.

The working group considered the option of making Denvale Road one-way northbound to Northdale Boulevard. They also considered the option of making Northline Road one-way eastbound between Curity Avenue and Northdale Boulevard.

While implementing one-way traffic regulations decreases cut-through traffic it also establishes circulatory patterns of locally generated traffic such as residents and visitors to the street. If Denvale Road operated one-way motorists would use other streets such as Glenshaw Crescent. If Northline Road was one-way between Northdale Boulevard and Curity Avenue motorists would still be able to use Hollinger Road to access Northdale Boulevard to Glenshaw Crescent as an alternate route to get to the Parkview Hills area.

With both of these options, traffic would be diverted to other streets, emergency response would be affected to a certain degree, and the options were not supported by the residents of Denvale Road or the Parkview Hills community.

2) Closure of Northline Road at Northdale Boulevard

There were numerous options considered by the working group to close off Northdale Boulevard at Northline Road. While these options would have reduced the traffic volumes entering the community via Northdale Road, they would only be effective for inbound traffic. As well, these options still allowed access to the community from Hollinger Road. There were concerns with the feasibility of constructing a turnaround at the closure within the existing public right of way and also with the impact on emergency services. These options were not supported by the community.

3) Restricting heavy truck traffic

Some other suggestions considered by the work group to restrict traffic and heavy truck volumes were truck height restrictions on Northline Road at Northdale Boulevard; re-opening Northdale Boulevard to Cranfield Road; enhancing the centre median on Northdale Boulevard with planters or shortening the median; or a traffic circle at Northdale Boulevard and Northline Road; requesting City Yard trucks to use alternate routes. None of these options were considered feasible except for the last. Staff were advised and notices were posted at the nearby City works yard advising drivers not to use Northdale Boulevard unless required.

4) Parking regulations

There was initially a concern with the availability of on-street parking, particularly in view of proposed developments within the industrial area to the east. A review of the parking regulations indicate that it is feasible to make amendments to provide more on-street parking in the industrial area to the east of Northdale Boulevard. The community work group determined not to carry this forward at this time.

SUMMARY

In summary, the following proposals are being recommended:

- installing traffic calming in the form of speed humps
- the installation of an all-way stop control at Northline Road and Curity Avenue
- reducing the existing 50 km/h speed limit in this area to 40 km/h
- installing a modular traffic island on Northdale Boulevard at Northline Road
- installing “Heavy Truck Route” signs

The implementation of the above noted proposals, collectively, will significantly improve and enhance pedestrian, cyclist and vehicular safety in this vicinity.

CONTACT

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SIGNATURE

Peter Noehammer, P.Eng.
Director, Transportation Services

LIST OF ATTACHMENTS

- (1) Drawing No. 421G-0013, dated May, 2010 – Northdale Boulevard
- (2) Drawing No. 421G-0033, dated May, 2010 – Northline Road
- (3) Drawing No. 421F-9529, dated January, 2009 – modular traffic island
- (4) Drawing No. 421G-0059, dated June, 2010 – speed limits

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