



**STAFF REPORT
ACTION REQUIRED**

Request to Remove/Amend Signs within the Corso Italia BIA – St. Clair Avenue West (Just west of Lansdowne Avenue to Westmount Avenue)

Date:	December 2, 2011
To:	Etobicoke York Community Council
From:	Acting Director, Transportation Services - Etobicoke York District
Wards:	Ward 17 – Davenport
Reference Number:	p:\2012\Cluster B\TRA\EtobicokeYork\eycc120005-to

SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to respond to the request of Etobicoke York Community Council that following completion of the St Clair Avenue West Transit Improvement Project, to address concerns regarding excessive traffic signage along St Clair Avenue West.

As part of our initial review in 2010, staff did remove a number of signs that were considered redundant; however, we recommended retaining the regulatory turn and U-turn prohibitions. Although the report was adopted by Council, the direction was to report back on the issue of excessive signs. As part of this review, staff was able to review the area again and identify other signs considered redundant. While we have removed two additional signs in the area, we continue to not recommend the complete elimination of the regulatory turn prohibition and U-turn prohibitions signs at the mid-block and non-signalized intersections based on the advice from Legal Services and our observations.

Since the Toronto Transit Commission (TTC) operates a transit service on St Clair Avenue West, City Council approval of this report is required. TTC staff has been consulted and supports retaining the regulatory signs that prevent motorists crossing over the centre median.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Transportation Services recommends that City Council approve:

1. Maintaining the minimum regulatory signing requirements on St Clair Avenue West between Lansdowne Avenue and Westmount Avenue.

DECISION HISTORY

City Council, at its meeting of June 23 and 24, 2008, approved the Road Alterations and Traffic Regulations for the St Clair West Avenue West Transit Improvement Project for the section between the Caledonia Road/Caledonia Park Road intersection and Vaughan Road (between Caledonia Road/Caledonia Park Road and Winona Drive, in the Etobicoke York District). This includes the area between Lansdowne Avenue and Westmount Avenue (Corso Italia BIA).

ISSUE BACKGROUND

Transportation Services staff met with Councillor Palacio and representatives from the Corso Italia Business Improvement Area (BIA) in January 2010 to discuss their concerns with the number of existing traffic control signs installed within the BIA, including turn prohibitions, loading zones, “Do Not Enter” and oversized street name signs.

As a result of this meeting, staff did amend and remove a number of redundant signs. However, following our initial review, Councillor Palacio asked that this issue be addressed in a report to Etobicoke York Community Council. The approved recommendation (April 2010) was to report back to Etobicoke York Community Council following completion of the St Clair Avenue West Transit Improvement Project on the concerns regarding excessive traffic signage along St Clair Avenue West. A map of the area is Attachment 1.

COMMENTS

The Preferred Design Concept approved by City Council for the St Clair Avenue West light rail transit (LRT) project includes two centre lanes reserved for exclusive use by streetcars and emergency vehicles protected by a raised, mountable (by emergency service vehicles) track bed. Since turning or through movements across the streetcar tracks is only possible at signalized intersections (where the track bed is flush with the road) it was necessary to prohibit left turn and through movements from all side streets, that intersect St. Clair Avenue West but are not controlled by traffic control signals. Due to the continuous centre median of the LRT, U-turns are prohibited in both directions on St. Clair Avenue West between all signalized intersections.

The concern expressed to Transportation Services staff by the BIA is that these signs, especially the “No U-Turns”, may be confusing to motorists. Although the signs are posted mid-block, between signalised intersections, and are intended to deter motorists from crossing over the LRT track bed, they feel some motorists may believe that the U-turns also apply at the next signalized intersection. This concern is despite that “U-turn Permitted” signs are posted at the signalized intersections where U-turns are allowed.

Staff was also questioned on the need for these mid-block “No U-turn” signs as the road is divided by a continuous raised concrete curb that separates the LRT right of way from the road. The Councillor and the BIA also had concern with the apparent proliferation of signage that they perceive as unnecessary.

Our review of the collision history on the section of St Clair Avenue West between Caledonia Avenue and Westmount Road for 2010 reveals two incidents with a motorist/cyclist mounting the curb to cross over the TTC tracks and being struck by a streetcar. The one incident involved a motorist turning left from St Clair Avenue to McRoberts Avenue (just west of the Corso Italia BIA) the other being a cyclist crossing the tracks at St Clarens Avenue.

Transportation Services staff reviewed both the number and location of existing “No U-Turn and No Left Turn” signs. As both are regulatory signs described in the Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) in the Highway Traffic Act and the Ontario Traffic Manual (OTM), signing standards must be maintained to achieve driver compliance and to limit the City’s liability.

City Legal confirms that without the “No U-Turns” and “No Left turn” signs, motorists could turn across the streetcar right-of-way; consequently, the signs and by-laws are required to allow for police enforcement. It should be noted that while the majority of the streetcar right-of-way contains continuous poured raised concrete curb, there are sections where the curb is depressed to allow for limited movements across the right-of-way (e.g. Prospect Cemetery). In addition, as the curb may not always be visible, especially during inclement weather, these signs are necessary to deter motorists from mounting the curb.

Based on our review, and the comments from Legal, we are not recommending the removal of all of the “No U-Turns” and “No Left turn” signs, however, as part of our review, we were able to remove two signs considered redundant. Specifically, a "Do Not Block Driveway" sign on St Clair Avenue West, immediately east of Lansdowne Avenue was removed as a similar sign was already posted at the TTC driveway. Also, an eastbound "No Left turn" sign was removed at Harvie Avenue as the appropriate "Do Not Enter" and One-Way arrows already exist at this intersection.

Although not in the Corso Italia area, as part of a separate review of signs on St Clair Avenue West, two Signal Ahead signs were removed in advance of Alberta Avenue. From the start of our review in 2010 until now, staff have removed eight signs in the Corso Italia BIA that were considered redundant.

CONTACT

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SIGNATURE

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ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1: Map