

**Access Issues: 1280/1290 Finch Avenue West**

<b>Date:</b>	September 15, 2011
<b>To:</b>	North York Community Council
<b>From:</b>	Director, Transportation Services, North York District
<b>Wards:</b>	<b>Ward 8 – York West</b>
<b>Reference Number:</b>	<i>ny11115</i>

**SUMMARY**

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As the Toronto Transit Commission operates a transit service on Keele Street and Finch Avenue West, City Council approval of this report is required.

To obtain approval for recommendations associated with the accesses and on-street parking which serve 1280/1290 Finch Avenue West, including:

- Retention of the existing right-in/right-out driveway and associated southbound and eastbound left turn prohibitions located on the north side of Finch Avenue West west of Tangiers Road;
- Consideration of the feasibility of an access to Keele Street as part of the planning review of the property owned by Imperial Oil at the northeast quadrant of Keele Street/Finch Avenue;
- Retention of the existing parking regulations on Tangiers Road between Finch Avenue West and the driveways to 1280/1290 Finch Avenue West.

Recent studies conducted by Transportation Services indicate that the property at 1280/1290 Finch Avenue West is well-served by current access arrangements and on-street parking regulations. Transportation staff will continue to monitor these issues throughout the duration of the Toronto York Spadina Subway Extension (TYSSE) construction.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

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Transportation Services recommends that City Council:

1. Retain the existing right-in/right-out driveway and associated southbound and eastbound left turn prohibitions at 1280/1290 Finch Avenue West located on the north side of Finch Avenue West west of Tangiers Road; and
2. Direct the Director, Community Planning, to investigate with the property owner of the Imperial Oil site at the northeast corner of Keele Street and Finch Avenue West the possibility of including a mutual access driveway through the site when a planning application for redevelopment of the site is submitted.
3. Retain the existing parking regulations on Tangiers Road between Finch Avenue West and the driveways to 1280/1290 Finch Avenue West.

### **Financial Impact**

There are no financial impacts associated with this report.

### **ISSUE BACKGROUND**

At its meeting of January 12, 2010, North York Community Council adopted Item NY30.17 which recommended the implementation of southbound and eastbound left turn prohibitions at all times at the driveway serving 1280/1290 Finch Avenue West, located on the north side of Finch Avenue West, west of Tangiers Road. These recommendations were subsequently approved by City Council at its meeting of January 26, 2010. The signs which gave effect to these prohibitions were installed on March 8, 2010.

At its meeting of June 22, 2011, North York Community Council adopted Item NY8.22, which recommended a number of traffic regulations associated with the construction of the Toronto York Spadina Subway Extension. In addition, North York Community Council recommended that:

Transportation Services Division staff report to North York Community Council on September 12, 2011 on the following:

- a. The existing right-in-right-out (RIRO) driveway on Finch Avenue West be instated as a full moves driveway;
- b. A combined right-in-right-out (RIRO) access between the bus terminal and the Esso property be developed; and,
- c. On-street parking on Tangiers Road be protected during the interim and post construction period.

This report was delayed to the October meeting of North York Community Council to allow for updated traffic counts to be undertaken under typical conditions, following Labour Day.

## **COMMENTS**

### **Access to 1280/1290 Finch Avenue West**

Finch Avenue West is a five-lane arterial road with a daily two-way traffic volume of approximately 43,000 vehicles and a regulatory speed limit of 60 km/h. Currently, access to 1280/1290 Finch Avenue West is obtained from two full-moves driveways on Tangiers Road and one right-in/right-out driveway on Finch Avenue West. Prior to commencement of the Toronto York Spadina Subway Extension ( TYSSE ) construction, there were also two restricted access driveways on Keele Street. Since the commencement of TYSSE construction in 2010, these two driveways have been closed and the extension of Murray Ross Parkway and Tangiers Road has been opened.

### **Finch Avenue West Access to 1280/1290 Finch Avenue West**

The commercial property at 1280/1290 Finch Avenue West is located between Keele Street and Tangiers Road and was developed in the early 1990's. The site plan agreement for this site states that the Finch Avenue West access was to be restricted to right-in/right-out movements. The access was constructed to discourage southbound and eastbound left turns in order to support the site plan conditions, by means of a concrete island. However, left turn prohibition signage was not originally installed and as a result, many motorists made southbound and eastbound left turns at the driveway.

In late 2009, Transportation Services conducted a study and recommended that left turn prohibitions be implemented at the driveway by by-law and associated signage. North York Community Council and City Council approved these recommendations and the signs were installed on March 8, 2010.

A review of the Toronto Police Service collision records revealed that prior to the installation of the left turn prohibition signs, in the period from January 1, 2008 to March 7, 2010, two southbound left-turn collisions and no eastbound left-turn collisions occurred at the subject driveway.

From the date that the signs were installed, until July 31, 2011, there have been no collisions involving either southbound or eastbound left turns at the subject driveway.

Traffic counts and observations were undertaken after Labour Day following the opening of the extensions of Murray Ross Parkway and Tangiers Road to public traffic on August 15, 2011. The counts indicated that traffic volumes are relatively light on Tangiers Road with a 24-hour two-way traffic volume of approximately 2,200 vehicles. Approximately 29% of this volume is comprised of heavy vehicles, mainly tanker trucks generated by the tank farms which have access to the Murray Ross Parkway/Tangiers Road Extension.

Observations also indicated no significant delays at the Tangiers Road or Finch Avenue driveways to 1280/1290 Finch Avenue West. Observations at the Finch Avenue driveway did indicate that illegal turns, particularly eastbound left turns, are being made. Conflicts were observed as eastbound left turns and westbound right turns arrive simultaneously at the driveway designed for inbound right turns only. Motorists that are making the illegal turns could make use of the Tangiers Road access to the property.

Based on our review of traffic data and our observations, it is recommended that the existing left turn prohibitions at the Finch Avenue West access to the subject property be retained. Transportation Services staff will continue to monitor area traffic operations throughout the duration of TYSSE construction and will recommend modifications as required.

### **Keele Street Access to 1280/1290 Finch Avenue West**

The commercial property at 1280/1290 Finch Avenue West occupies the northwest quadrant of Finch Avenue West and Tangiers Road. Prior to TYSSE construction, this property had access to Keele Street via two driveways with restricted movements. Also prior to TYSSE construction, a gas station ( Esso ) occupied the northeast quadrant of Keele Street and Finch Avenue West and bordered on the property at 1280/1290 Finch Avenue. The southerly access from 1280/1290 Finch Avenue to Keele Street was located just north of the "Esso" site.

In order to facilitate construction of TYSSE, Imperial Oil agreed to a long-term lease of the "Esso" site with the Toronto Transit Commission - TYSSE Department. This agreement was based on the understanding that once the site was no longer needed for TYSSE construction purposes, it would revert back to Imperial Oil ownership. In addition, the two driveways from Keele Street which served 1280/1290 Finch Avenue West were closed in order to facilitate TYSSE construction, including the bus terminal which will be located at this location and which will serve Finch West Station.

On August 15, 2011 the extension of Murray Ross Parkway and Tangiers Road was opened to public traffic. The extension of these two roads serves as an alternate route for motorists using Keele Street during TYSSE construction. On a permanent basis, the extension of these roads will serve as an alternate route for accessing 1280/1290 Finch Avenue West via the two existing driveways from Tangiers Road.

The Environmental Assessment conducted for the TYSSE did not contemplate replacement of the two closed accesses to Keele Street. This was supported by a traffic study conducted by Cole Engineering on behalf of the TTC which concluded that no road or access improvements were necessary to accommodate traffic that would be redistributed as result of the closure of these accesses. The recent field studies conducted by Transportation Services have further supported this conclusion.

It is anticipated that ownership of the "Esso" site will revert back to Imperial Oil in 2014, once the TYSSE construction is complete. It is unclear at this point, what Imperial Oil's plans are for the site. At an appropriate point in time, City staff will work with Imperial Oil through the standard planning processes to resolve land use and access issues for the site. It is therefore premature to consider a Keele Street connection to the 1280/1290 Finch Avenue West site.

In the interim, as noted above, Transportation Services staff will continue to monitor traffic operations in the Keele Street/Finch Avenue vicinity during TYSSE construction.

## **Parking on Tangiers Road**

Prior to the extension of Tangiers Road, one-hour parking was permitted on the west side of Tangiers Road while three-hour parking was permitted on the east side, with the exception of the standard parking prohibition for 30.5 meters north of the traffic control signals at Finch Avenue West. Parking was also prohibited on both sides of Tangiers north of the north driveway to 1280/1290 Finch Avenue West. With the extension of Murray Ross Parkway and Tangiers Road, stopping was prohibited on both sides of Murray Ross Parkway from Keele Street to Tangiers Road and on both sides of Tangiers Road from Murray Ross Parkway to the south driveway to 1280/1290 Finch Avenue West. The stopping prohibition was necessary to prevent pick-up and drop-off activity in the curb lanes of Murray Ross Parkway and Tangiers Road, particularly once the Finch West Subway Station is open, and also to allow for the introduction of left turn lanes on Tangiers Road to serve the driveways to 1280/1290 Finch Avenue West. The parking regulations between the south driveway and Finch Avenue West have been retained, which provides on-street parking opportunity for patrons of 1280/1290 Finch Avenue West. Transportation Services staff will continue to monitor traffic operations in the area, including parking, during and upon completion of TYSSE construction.

## **CONTACT**

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## **SIGNATURE**

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Myles Currie, B.A.  
Director

## **ATTACHMENTS**

Attachment 1: 1280, 1290 Finch Av W – Access Issues