Traffic Control Signals – Burnhamthorpe Road and Meadowbank Road

Date: June 6, 2013
To: Etobicoke York Community Council
From: Director, Transportation Services - Etobicoke York District
Wards: Ward 3 – Etobicoke Centre and Ward 5 – Etobicoke-Lakeshore
Reference Number: p:\2013\Cluster B\TRA\EtobicokeYork\eycc130094-to

SUMMARY
The purpose of this report is to respond to a request from Council to re-examine the feasibility of moving the proposed traffic control signals originally recommended at the intersection of Burnhamthorpe Road and Meadowbank Road (Etobicoke York Community Council report EY17.26) to a mid-block location in front of 400 Burnhamthorpe Road (St. James Church).

As previously stated on our original report to Etobicoke York Community Council (EY17.26), although the warrants for the installation of traffic control signals are not met, a safety audit of the existing pedestrian crossover on Burnhamthorpe Road at Meadowbank Road showed that this location is no longer environmentally suitable for a pedestrian crossover, given the existing operating speed of vehicle traffic on Burnhamthorpe Road. Based on the results of the pedestrian crossover audit, staff recommended that the pedestrian crossover be replaced with traffic control signals at this intersection and this recommendation was approved by Council in July 2012.

Studies were conducted following the original approval of Council of the traffic control signals at the intersection of Burnhamthorpe Road and Meadowbank Road to try to determine which location would be better utilized by pedestrians, at the intersection or at a mid-block location further to the east. These studies revealed that the majority of pedestrians crossing at the existing pedestrian crossover were destined to locations to the west of Meadowbank Road. As such, on a typical day, if the signals were installed at a mid-block location further west of Meadowbank Road, this location would likely be less convenient for pedestrians currently crossing in this area of Burnhamthorpe Road.
RECOMMENDATIONS
Transportation Services continues to reaffirm the original recommendation that City Council approve:

1. Installing traffic control signals at the intersection of Burnhamthorpe Road and Meadowbank Road.

2. Removing the pedestrian crossover on Burnhamthorpe Road at Meadowbank Road, in conjunction with installing traffic control signals.

Financial Impact

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Funding</th>
<th>Source of Funds</th>
<th>Amount</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Available within capital works budget</td>
<td>Signal Installation</td>
<td>$100,000.00</td>
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ISSUE BACKGROUND
Transportation Services staff originally investigated the feasibility of replacing the existing pedestrian crossover on Burnhamthorpe Road at Meadowbank Road with traffic control signals in 2012. Our safety protocol requires that staff conduct an audit of existing pedestrian crossovers. One of the primary criteria of this audit is the road’s vehicular operating, or 85th percentile speed. Pedestrian crossovers are not appropriate if vehicle operating speeds exceed 60 km/h. Our speed studies on Burnhamthorpe Road, in the area of Meadowbank Road, did reveal an 85th percentile speed of 61 km/h.

Given the operating speeds on Burnhamthorpe Road, the existing pedestrian crossover at Meadowbank Road was no longer considered environmentally suitable for pedestrian crossings. In addition, our review of the collision history prior to recommending the signals at this location revealed two collisions involving pedestrians crossing at this pedestrian crossover over a five year period.

As such, it was recommended to Etobicoke York Community Council in report EY17.26 that the existing pedestrian crossover be removed and be replaced by traffic control signals at the intersection of Burnhamthorpe Road and Meadowbank Road. A map of the area is shown on Attachment 1.

Following approval of the signals by Council, area residents were advised of the installation and the installation of the underground signal work began while Burnhamthorpe Road was under construction. However, residents in the immediate area of the intersection expressed their concerns with the signals at the intersection and as a result, a meeting involving both area Councillors, City staff and area residents took place. Since that time and the installation of the signals has been on hold and staff has conducted further investigations.
The issue was subsequently reopened at Council and referred back to the April 9, 2013 Etobicoke York Community Council and then ultimately to Council where the following was directed "City Council request the Director, Transportation Services, Etobicoke York District, in consultation with the affected property owners and the Toronto Transit Commission, to report to the June 18, 2013 Etobicoke York Community Council meeting on the feasibility of moving the proposed pedestrian signal to a mid-block location in the proximity of 400 Burnhamthorpe Road."

**COMMENTS**

According to the City of Toronto’s road classification system, Burnhamthorpe Road is classified as a "major arterial" roadway. Meadowbank Road is classified as a "local" roadway. The statutory speed limit on Burnhamthorpe Road and Meadowbank Road is 50 km/h. This intersection is controlled by a Stop sign on Meadowbank Road facing southbound traffic. A pedestrian crossover (PXO) is located at the east approach of the intersection of Burnhamthorpe Road and Meadowbank Road. The adjacent land use in this area is residential. St. James Church is located on the south side of Burnhamthorpe Road to the east of Meadowbank Road.

A Toronto Transit Commission (TTC) bus stop is located on the northeast corner of the intersection of Burnhamthorpe Road and Meadowbank Road for westbound traffic and is within a bus bay. For eastbound traffic, the bus stop is on the southwest corner of Burnhamthorpe Road and Blaketon Road, however, not within a bus bay.

During our original 8 hour study, 81 pedestrians were recorded using the PXO with 6 other pedestrians crossing at the intersection but not utilizing the PXO. A study was also conducted at the next intersection to the east (Warwood Road). Over 8 hours, 15 pedestrians crossed at this uncontrolled intersection.

A sample study was also conducted subsequent to the original approval of the signals and the meeting with area residents to determine the origin and the destination of the pedestrian who were using the existing crossing protection. This study revealed that the majority of the pedestrians using the crossing were destined to locations to the west of Meadowbank Road (21 of the 25 pedestrians recorded over 5 hours). For these pedestrians, walking 90 metres to the east to use the mid-block signal would be less convenient. The other option for these pedestrians would be to walk to the signals at The East Mall or cross at the intersection without crossing protection.

Transportation Service staff have met with TTC staff and asked if the signals were placed at a mid-block location, what would they propose with the existing bus stops. The TTC has indicated that their preference would be to combine the stops at the mid-block signal. This would involve removing the bus stops at both Meadowbank Road/Blaketon Road as well as Warwood Road/Laurel Avenue and creating two new stops on either side of the mid-block signals. The signals and bus stops would be installed in front of residential homes on the north side of Burnhamthorpe Road and in front of the church on the south side. Bus landing pads would be installed on the boulevard as part of the bus stop installation and a small tree on the north side may have to be removed.
Based on the findings of the pedestrian crossover audit, it is recommended that the existing pedestrian crossover be removed and be replaced by traffic control signals at the intersection of Burnhamthorpe Road and Meadowbank Road. The installation of traffic control signals will provide a more appropriate and convenient form of crossing protection at this location. While signals can be physically installed at both the intersection of Burnhamthorpe Road and Meadowbank Road as well as at a mid-block location, we would anticipate better pedestrian usage of the signal at the intersection.

CONTACT

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SIGNATURE

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ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1: Map