

50 km/h Speed Limit - Finch Avenue East, between Yonge Street and Bayview Avenue

Date: June 23, 2017

To: North York Community Council

From: Acting Director, Transportation Services, North York District

Wards: Ward 23 - Willowdale, Ward 24 - Willowdale

SUMMARY

As TTC operates a transit service on Finch Avenue East, City Council approval of this report is required.

Transportation Services is requesting approval to reduce the speed limit from 60 km/h to 50 km/h on Finch Avenue East, between Yonge Street and Bayview Avenue.

The roadway characteristics and pedestrian activity on this section of Finch Avenue East justify a 50 km/h speed limit. This will promote slower operating speeds and enhance safety for pedestrians, including students of Cummer Valley Middle School and Finch Public School. The proposed speed limit will be consistent with the section of Finch Avenue West, west of Yonge Street.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Acting Director, Transportation Services, North York District recommends that:

1. City Council reduce the speed limit from 60 km/h to 50 km/h on Finch Avenue East, between Yonge Street and Bayview Avenue.
2. City Council amend the officially designated location of the existing traffic control signals at Finch Avenue East and Kenneth Avenue to Finch Avenue East and Kenneth Avenue/Doris Avenue, for house-keeping purposes.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

All costs associated with lowering the speed limit to 50 km/h are included within the Transportation Services 2017 Operating Budget.

DECISION HISTORY

This report addresses a new initiative.

COMMENTS

Transportation Services reviewed the warrants to reduce the speed limit from 60 km/h to 50 km/h on Finch Avenue East, between Yonge Street and Bayview Avenue. The speed limit reduction was requested by a resident concerned for the safety of students attending Cummer Valley Middle School and Finch Public School.

The subject section of Finch Avenue East is about 1.95 km in length and is classified as a major arterial roadway. It has a posted 60 km/h speed limit and an average daily traffic volume of approximately 30,000 vehicles. It generally consists of two lanes in each direction, with an exclusive westbound lane reserved for TTC buses between Kenneth Avenue/Doris Avenue and the entrance to the TTC's Finch Station. There are sidewalks provided on both sides of Finch Street East and they are separated from the travelled lanes by a boulevard.

The TTC operates the 39 Finch East regular bus route and the 199 Finch Rocket express bus route on this section of Finch Avenue East. Additionally, bus access to the TTC's Finch Station is located on the north side of the road, approximately 80 metres east of Yonge Street.

Traffic control signals are located at the following intersections on this section of Finch Avenue East (west to east):

- Yonge Street;
- 80 metres east of Yonge Street (TTC exit);
- Kenneth Avenue/Doris Avenue;
- Willowdale Avenue;
- Maxome Avenue/private access;
- 35 metres east of Winlock Park (pedestrian signals); and
- Bayview Avenue.

Stopping is prohibited at all times on both sides of Finch Avenue East, between Yonge Street and Kenneth Avenue/Doris Avenue. Between Kenneth Avenue/Doris Avenue and Bayview Avenue, parking is generally allowed for up to three hours on both sides of the road, except between the hours of 7:00 a.m. to 9:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m., Monday to Friday, when parking is prohibited.

The land use along this section of Finch Avenue East generally consists of one or two storey residential buildings, except the block east of Yonge Street. In the latter section, there are high-rise residential buildings. There are also several daycares and churches located in this section of Finch Avenue East. Other pedestrian generators of note include:

- Cummer Valley Middle School, located on the east side of Maxome Avenue, north of Finch Avenue East;
- Finch Public School, located on the south side of Finch Avenue East, approximately 200 metres west of Bayview Avenue;
- Carefree Lodge, a long-term care facility, located on the north side of Finch Avenue East, approximately 130 metres west of Bayview Avenue; and
- Finch Avenue Medical Centre, located on the northwest corner of Finch Avenue East and Dudley Avenue.

There is a school crossing guard posted at the intersection of Finch Avenue East and Maxome Avenue. A weekday traffic count undertaken at this intersection on September 9, 2016 revealed 125 children crossed Finch Avenue East between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 9:00 a.m. and 33 crossed between the hours of 3:00 p.m. and 4:00 p.m.

A speed study was undertaken on Finch Avenue East, east of Maxome Avenue, on November 23, 2016. The study revealed the 85th percentile speeds to be 65 km/h and 64 km/h for eastbound and westbound traffic, respectively. The 85th percentile speed is the speed that 85 percent of traffic travels at, or below.

A review of the Toronto Police Service collision records for the three year period ending December 31, 2016 revealed that there were 253 reported midblock and intersection collisions on Finch Avenue East, between (but not including) Yonge Street and Bayview Avenue. Further review disclosed that in 29 of these 253 collisions, the motorist lost control. There was one midblock pedestrian collision and four intersection pedestrian collisions reported.

On February 29, March 1 and 2, 2000, Toronto City Council adopted a Road Classification System. The City of Toronto's Road Classification criteria identifies legal speed limits ranging from 50 to 60 km/h for major arterial roads (with some 70 km/h and 80 km/h speed limits) and 40 to 60 km/h for minor arterial roads.

The warrant criteria for a 50 km/h speed limit consists of vehicle speeds, pedestrian activity and generators, collision history, roadway characteristics, property access and parking activity. These warrants were applied against Finch Avenue East, between Yonge Street and Bayview Avenue, and it was determined that a 50 km/h speed limit is justified based on the following criteria:

- High pedestrian traffic generators in the area (schools, high-rise residential buildings);
- Significant number of pedestrians under 12 years of age crossing and walking along the road;
- More than 30 non-commercial driveways per kilometre;
- More than 5 low-density residential driveways per kilometre; and
- No centre left-turn lane along most of the road.

In view of the forgoing, a 50 km/h speed limit is recommended on Finch Avenue East, between Yonge Street and Bayview Avenue, to promote slower operating speeds and

enhance safety for all pedestrians, including students travelling to/from the two schools in this section of road.

The proposed speed limit will be consistent with the regulatory speed limit of 50 km/h that is in effect on Finch Avenue West, west of Yonge Street. The section of Finch Avenue East, east of Bayview Avenue, can remain at 60 km/h, as it has different characteristics. Specifically, the residences adjacent to Finch Avenue East do not front on the road and all driveways are located on the side-streets. There are no schools within the section of Finch Avenue East, between Bayview Avenue and Leslie Street.

Housekeeping

The staff review also detected an inconsistency in the traffic by-law related to the location of the traffic control signals at Finch Avenue East and Kenneth Avenue/Doris Avenue. This inconsistency will be resolved with the approval of Recommendation 2.

The Ward Councillors have been advised of the recommendation of this report

CONTACT

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SIGNATURE

Peter K. Hillier
Acting Director

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1: 50 km/h Speed Limit Finch Avenue East Map