

Traffic Control Signals - Don Mills Road and Freshmeadow Drive

Date: August 13, 2020

To: North York Community Council

From: Acting Director, Traffic Management, Transportation Services

Wards: Ward 17 - Don Valley North

SUMMARY

As the Toronto Transit Commission (TTC) operates a transit service on Don Mills Road and Freshmeadow Drive, City Council approval of this report is required.

Transportation Services is requesting approval from City Council to install traffic control signals at Don Mills Road and Freshmeadow Drive. Traffic control signals will provide enhanced safety for TTC buses turning left onto Don Mills Road from Freshmeadow Drive. The installation of traffic control signals is also justified based on pedestrian activity in the vicinity of the intersection, including a seniors building and schools, the approximate 560 metre distance between crossing protection, TTC bus stops at the intersection, a five lane cross section on Don Mills Road, the high traffic volume on Don Mills Road and by installing signals we will likely draw pedestrians to cross at the intersection.

While traffic controls signals will enhance safety for TTC buses, motorists and pedestrians crossing at the intersection, this installation will increase delays for motorists on Don Mills Road, as north/south traffic will no longer operate with free flow.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Acting Director, Traffic Management, Transportation Services recommends that:

1. City Council authorize the installation of traffic control signals at Don Mills Road and Freshmeadow Drive.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

Adopting the above-noted recommendation will not result in any financial impact to Transportation Services as the TTC will be funding the approximate \$200,000 cost of the installation of the traffic control signals at Don Mills Road and Freshmeadow Drive.

DECISION HISTORY

This report addresses a new initiative.

COMMENTS

Transportation Services was requested by the area Councillor as well as the Toronto Transit Commission (TTC) to review the feasibility of installing traffic control signals at the intersection of Don Mills Road and Freshmeadow Drive. The requested traffic control signals are intended to address safety concerns for pedestrians, including TTC passengers, as well as to accommodate TTC buses and other motorists attempting to turn onto Don Mills Road from Freshmeadow Drive.

Don Mills Road is classified as a major arterial street that provides two lanes in each direction, with a centre left turn lane. The posted speed limit on this section of Don Mills Road is 50 km/h, which was reduced in 2019 under the Vision Zero 2.0 - Road Safety Plan Update report (Item IE6.8). The daily two-way traffic volume is approximately 28,000 vehicles. This section of Don Mills Road is designated as a Senior Safety Zone and signed accordingly as housing for seniors is located south of Steeles Avenue. There are sidewalks on both sides of the street. The distance between the existing traffic control signals on Don Mills Road at Steeles Avenue East and at Cliffwood Road is approximately 560 metres. Transit service on this section of Don Mills Road is provided by the 25 Don Mills, the 325 Don Mills and the 51 Leslie.

Freshmeadow Drive is classified as a local street that provides one lane in each direction between Don Mills Road and Hollyberry Trail. Freshmeadow Drive intersects Don Mills Road from the east as a T type intersection and is stop controlled at the intersection. It has a posted speed limit of 40 km/h and a daily traffic volume of approximately 2,300 vehicles. Arbor Glen Public School is located on the south side of Freshmeadow Drive to the east of Don Mills Road and the area near the school is designated as a Community Safety Zone with appropriate regulatory signs and pavement markings. There are sidewalks on both sides of the street. TTC operates bus services 25 Leslie, 51 Leslie and 925 Don Mills Express southbound on Townsend Road to Freshmeadow Drive, and then westbound to Don Mills Road.

TTC operating personnel on the 51 Leslie, 25 Don Mills and 925 Don Mills Express bus routes advised Transportation Services of delays when making the west-to-south left turn from Freshmeadow Drive onto Don Mills Road. The delays are due to northbound vehicle queues from Steeles Avenue East extending south and blocking the Don Mills

Road and Freshmeadow Drive intersection. During the weekday, there are 19 buses in the a.m. peak hour, 12 buses during the mid-day peak hour and 20 buses during the p.m. peak hour that exit by turning left from Freshmeadow Drive onto Don Mills Road. TTC staff conducted observations at the intersection and found that buses experience average delays of 49 seconds and as high as two minutes to exit onto Don Mills Road.

Traffic Control Signals

Transportation Services staff reviewed the intersection of Don Mills Road and Freshmeadow Drive for the installation of traffic control signals. The studies were undertaken during the busiest eight hour period of a typical weekday in May 9, 2019. The traffic studies were used to review the numerical warrants for the installation of traffic control signals. The results are summarized as follows:

Table 1: Traffic Control Signal Warrant Criteria and Compliance - Don Mills Road and Freshmeadow Drive

Location	Minimum Vehicular Volume	Delay to Cross Traffic	Collision Hazard	TCS Warrant?
Don Mills Road and Freshmeadow Drive	33 percent	78 percent	7 percent	No

To meet the numerical warrants for the installation of traffic control signals, either one of the “Minimum Vehicular Volume” or “Delay to Cross Traffic” warrants must be 100 percent satisfied or both must be at least 80 per cent satisfied.

The “Collision Hazard” warrant is based on the number of collisions potentially preventable by the installation of traffic control signals and must be 100 percent satisfied. Collision statistics provided by the Toronto Police Service for the three-year period ending April 30, 2020 disclosed one collision at the intersection of Don Mills Road and Freshmeadow Drive that was potentially preventable by the installation of traffic control signals.

Notwithstanding the above, Transportation Services further considered the installation of traffic signals at the intersection for the following reasons:

- To provide safe turning movements for TTC buses turning left onto Don Mills Road from Freshmeadow Drive;
- Pedestrian activity near the intersection on these streets with both seniors (Clifford Manor on Don Mills Road, south of Steeles Avenue East) and school children (Arbor Glen Public School on Freshmeadow Drive, east of Don Mills Road);
- The approximate 560 metre distance between protected pedestrian crossings (traffic control signals) on Don Mills Road;
- Northbound, southbound and westbound near-side transit stop at the intersection;
- Five lane cross-section and high traffic volume on Don Mills Road; and

- Installation of traffic control signals would likely draw pedestrians to the intersection since it would be a safer location to cross than mid-block.

Based on the above, Transportation Services supports the installation of traffic control signals at the intersection of Don Mills Road and Freshmeadow Drive. Also, considering the distance between the existing traffic control signals on Don Mills Road at Steeles Avenue East and at Cliffwood Road is approximately 560 metres these signals will also provide pedestrians with a protected crossing protection at this location as opposed to having to walk approximately 280 metres to the nearest traffic control signals to cross Don Mills Road.

The Ward Councillor has been advised of this recommendation.

CONTACT

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SIGNATURE

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ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1: Map - Traffic Control Signals - Don Mills Road and Freshmeadow Drive

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