

Improving Pedestrian Safety and Signal Timing Operations at Steeles Avenue East and Bayview Avenue

Date: March 17, 2024

To: North York Community Council

From: Director, Planning, Design and Management, Transportation Services

Wards: Ward 17 - Don Valley North, Ward 18 - Willowdale

SUMMARY

On December 17 and 18, 2024, City Council adopted Item NY19.29, approving the installation of pedestrian crossovers at three right-turn channel locations at the northeast, northwest, and southeast corners of the intersection of Steeles Avenue East and Bayview Avenue, and pedestrian crossovers at two right-turn channel locations at the southeast and southwest corners of Steeles Avenue East and Leslie Street. These pedestrian crossovers aim to improve safety at these right-turn channels by making drivers more aware of the presence of pedestrians and reinforcing pedestrians' right-of-way to cross.

At the same meeting, City Council requested that the General Manager, Transportation Services, place a visual notice at the intersection of Steeles Avenue East and Bayview Avenue, to educate pedestrians on the use and function of truck aprons, investigate potential changes to improve traffic operations for eastbound vehicles at the intersection and report to the North York Community Council at its meeting on April 2, 2025.

As requested by City Council, this report provides updates on the following:

- Pedestrian education initiatives: Efforts to inform pedestrians on how to safely navigate truck aprons and where to wait to cross the intersection.
- Traffic signal modifications: Planned changes to the traffic signal timings at Steeles Avenue East and Bayview Avenue to enhance traffic flow and safety.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Director, Planning, Design and Management, Transportation Services recommends that:

1. North York Community Council receive this report for information.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

The estimated cost for installing approximately five (5) visual notice boards at the intersection of Steeles Avenue East and Bayview Avenue is \$1,500. The funding for these signs is available in the Transportation Services 2025 Capital Budget.

DECISION HISTORY

On December 17 and 18, 2024, City Council adopted NY19.29 - Steeles Avenue East and Bayview Avenue; Steeles Avenue East and Leslie Street - Pedestrian Crossing Protection, authorizing the installation of:

- three pedestrian crossovers at the right-turn channels at the northeast, northwest and southeast corners at Steeles Avenue East and Bayview Avenue, and
- two pedestrian crossovers at the right-turn channels at the southeast and southwest corners at Steeles Avenue East and Leslie Street.

[NY19.29 - Steeles Avenue East and Bayview Avenue; Steeles Avenue East and Leslie Street - Pedestrian Crossing Protection](#)

City Council also directed the General Manager, Transportation Services to place a visual notice at the intersection of Steeles Avenue East and Bayview Avenue to educate pedestrians on the use and function of truck aprons, investigate potential changes to improve traffic operations for eastbound vehicles at the intersection, and report to the North York Community Council at its meeting on April 2, 2025.

COMMENTS

Truck Aprons

As part of the 2024 road resurfacing project on Steeles Avenue East from Bayview Avenue to Townsend Road, Transportation Services included various safety improvements to enhance safety for all road users. One such measure was the installation of truck aprons at the northeast, southeast, and southwest corners of Steeles Avenue East and Bayview Avenue.

A truck apron is a raised and mountable area on the road, at an intersection corner, reserved for motorized traffic. It enables large vehicles, such as trucks, to make right-turns by mounting the area. Smaller vehicles, such as passenger cars, typically make right-turns by travelling around the truck apron, without the need to mount the apron.

Truck aprons are a safety feature designed to promote slower vehicle speeds. The design encourages most drivers to make right turns around the smaller corner radius, which helps reduce speeds. Lower vehicle speeds enhance visibility and reaction time for all road users, improving overall safety at intersections

Improving Pedestrian Navigation and Truck Apron Awareness at Steeles Avenue East and Bayview Avenue

Pedestrians waiting to cross the street should stand on the concrete sidewalk; pedestrians should not stand in the truck apron, as larger vehicles may use this space for right-turns.

Given that truck aprons are a relatively new road safety design, a visual notice will be temporarily installed at the northeast, southeast, and southwest corners of Steeles Avenue East and Bayview Avenue to guide pedestrians on how to safely navigate across the truck aprons and where to wait on the sidewalk before crossing the intersection. The signs are planned to be in place for approximately two months.

The notice will provide clear visual instructions to enhance pedestrian awareness and safety, ensuring they understand the function of the truck apron and designated waiting areas for pedestrians on the sidewalk.

A sample of the visual notice that will be placed at the intersection of Steeles Avenue East and Bayview Avenue is included in Attachment 1. Similar signs will also be temporarily mounted at other intersections across the City where truck aprons are being installed.

Planned changes to the Traffic Signals at Steeles Avenue East and Bayview Avenue

Steeles Avenue East, between Yonge Street and Ninth Line, has been identified as a corridor to implement the SCATS (Sydney Coordinated Adaptive Traffic System) traffic adaptive system. SCATS is a traffic management system that adjusts signal timings based on real-time data from sensors at approaches to signalized intersections. It replaces TransSuite, which relies on fixed signal timing plans. SCATS improves traffic flow by dynamically adapting to current conditions and implementing optimal signal timings using vehicle detectors on each approach to the signalized intersections.

Due to its ability to dynamically adapt to changing traffic patterns across the entire corridor, the system is expected to enhance traffic efficiency along the corridor, including at the intersection of Steeles Avenue East and Bayview Avenue. A comprehensive review of signal timing at the intersection of Steeles Avenue and Bayview Avenue will also be undertaken at the same time. It is anticipated that this enhanced adaptive traffic signal system will be implemented at this location by the end of 2025.

The Ward Councillors have been advised of this staff report.

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SIGNATURE

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ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1: Sample visual notice to enhance pedestrian safety around truck aprons

VISIONZERO

New Intersection Feature! Truck Aprons

Truck aprons have been installed at this intersection, as part of the recent intersection reconfiguration.

A truck apron is an area on the road, at an intersection corner, that motor vehicles can drive on. Larger vehicles such as trucks may need to drive over the truck apron to make right-turns, whereas cars can typically make right-turns by travelling around the truck apron.

Truck aprons are a safety feature that promote slower vehicle speeds by encouraging drivers to make their turns around the truck apron where possible. Slower vehicle speeds help with visibility and reaction time for all road users.



For pedestrians waiting to cross the street - please stand on the concrete sidewalk, as shown in the picture.

Do not stand in the truck apron, as vehicles may use this space for right-turns.



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