



Report to: Development Services Committee

Report Date: April 10, 2017

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**SUBJECT:** Bayview Avenue at Proctor Avenue – Removal of Existing “No Right Turn” Restriction

**PREPARED BY:** David Porretta, Supervisor, Traffic Operations, ext. 2040

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**RECOMMENDATION:**

- 1) That the report entitled “Bayview Avenue at Proctor Avenue – Removal of Existing No Right Turn Restriction”, be received;
- 2) And that the Region of York be requested to rescind the southbound right turn restriction at the intersection of Bayview Avenue & Proctor Avenue, weekdays, between 6:30 AM and 9:00 AM;
- 3) And that Staff be authorized and directed to do all things necessary to give effect to this resolution.

**PURPOSE:**

This report recommends that York Region Transportation remove the southbound right-turn restriction at the intersection of Bayview Avenue & Proctor Avenue, weekdays, between 6:30 AM and 9:00 AM. The intent of removing the restriction would be to reduce cut-through traffic on Steele Valley Road and Sprucewood Drive and to improve accessibility to the Thornhill community.

**BACKGROUND:**

For over 30 years, the City of Markham has received numerous concerns from Thornhill residents regarding vehicular infiltration in their community, bounded by John Street, Steeles Avenue, Bayview Avenue and Yonge Street (See Attachment “A”).

In 2005, at the request of the City, York Region implemented a series of restrictions at Regional-Municipal intersections as a means to provide a long-term solution to traffic infiltration in the community. A majority of these restrictions were implemented in the Grandview area of Thornhill and have been effective and generally well received. However, staff continues to receive concerns from the public about the validity of the southbound right turn restriction at Bayview Avenue and Proctor Avenue.

Primary concerns received from the public about this restriction are as follows:

- The restriction impedes access to the community for both local and non-local traffic;
- Cut-through traffic is using Steele Valley Road and Sprucewood Drive, both local residential streets, where no such concerns previously existed;
- Increased traffic volume on Steele Valley Road and Sprucewood Drive is compromising pedestrian safety;
- Non-compliance of the turn restriction, rendering it ineffective.

**The existing restriction is diverting traffic from Proctor Avenue to Steele Valley Road and Sprucewood Drive.**

Vehicular access from Bayview Avenue into the Thornhill community is limited to two east-west roads (John Street and Proctor Avenue) and one arterial road (Steeles Avenue). Following implementation of the turn restriction at Proctor Avenue in 2005, the expectation was that drivers would use either John Street or Steeles Avenue as an alternate access into the community. During peak periods, John Street regularly exceeds capacity, with significant queuing occurring. Drivers are using Steele Valley Road, together with Sprucewood Drive, to circumvent the restriction at Proctor Avenue, as it is the only remaining municipal access into the community from Bayview Avenue. Classified as a local road with no sidewalks, Steele Valley Road is designed for local access only, and not intended to carry through traffic that is bypassing Proctor Avenue.

*Figure 1: Comparison of Traffic Volumes*

STREET	FUNCTION	FUNCTIONAL ADT*	ACTUAL ADT (2015)
John Street	Collector	8,000	16,000
Proctor Avenue	Collector	8,000	7,800
Steele Valley Road	Local	1,000	1,100

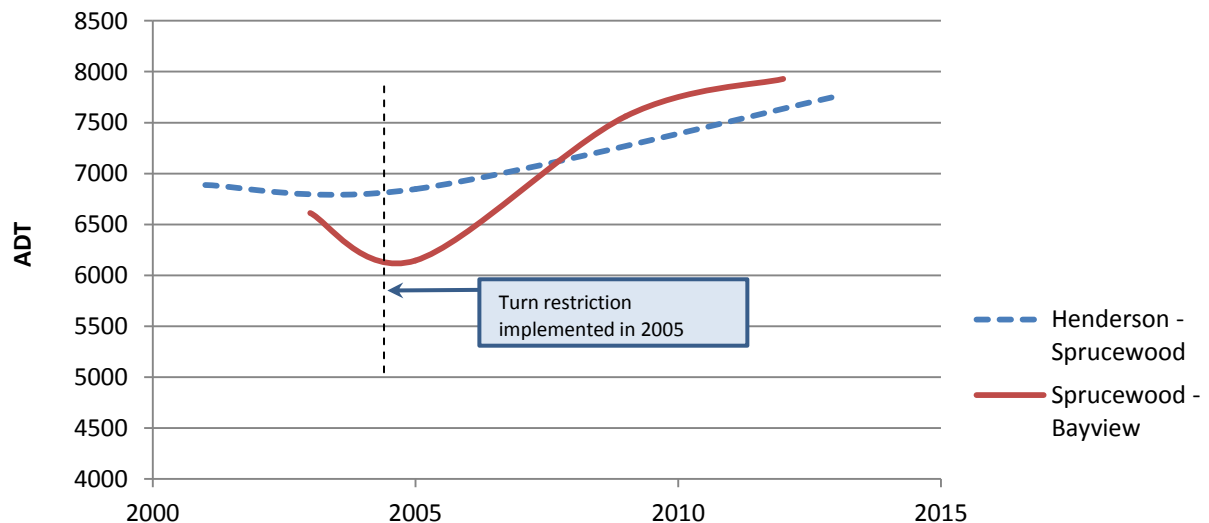
\* Source: Transportation Association of Canada Geometric Design Guidelines for Canadian Roads

As noted in *Figure 1*, the average daily traffic volume (ADT) on Proctor Avenue continues to operate within its functional capacity while volume on both John Street and Steele Valley Road are above the functional capacity.

**The turn restriction has had no effect on reducing traffic on Proctor Avenue.**

The objective of implementing the turn restriction was to eliminate cut-through traffic during the AM peak period, and thereby reducing overall traffic volume on Proctor Avenue. The graph identified in *Figure 2* represents the overall traffic volume growth trend on Proctor Avenue, from Bayview Avenue to Henderson Avenue, in two segments, over the past decade.

*Figure 2: Average Daily Traffic Volume (ADT) trends on Proctor Ave, by section*



Upon implementation of the turn restriction in 2005, there was a noticeable volume reduction on the Bayview-Sprucewood section. However, the Sprucewood-Henderson section was minimally impacted. This can be attributed to traffic using Steele Valley Road and Sprucewood Drive to by-pass the turn restriction and thereby avoiding the Bayview-Sprucewood section entirely. From 2006 to present, there has been a gradual increase in traffic on both road sections, presumably a result of growth in the area and increased traffic pressures on the arterials.

**Steele Valley Road is being used as a cut-through route to access Proctor Avenue.**

In September 2016, Operations staff conducted a vehicular infiltration survey during the weekday peak period of 8AM – 9AM (see Attachment “B”). The study results had identified approximately 32 of 36 vehicles (89%) entering Steele Valley Road from southbound Bayview Avenue was destined to Proctor Avenue. This is consistent with results from the 2014 study (87%). The results clearly indicate that drivers are intentionally avoiding the restriction on a regular basis.

**Non-compliance of the turn restriction is a regular occurrence.**

The turn restriction is not effective, and non-compliance of this traffic bylaw occurs frequently. Since its inception, City staff routinely receives inquiries and/or complaints about the turn restriction. These inquiries are typically due to drivers being charged for non-compliance. York Regional Police have advised City staff that non-compliance is a regular occurrence during the morning peak period (8AM – 9AM). Observations by City staff during Spring 2015 confirmed approximately 30 vehicles during the morning peak period were ignoring or not aware of the restriction. This non-compliance raises the question about the effectiveness of the turn restriction.

**The Yonge-Steeles Corridor Transportation Study supports network connectivity.**

A staff recommendation to request that York Region remove the turn restriction was brought forward to General Committee on September 9, 2015. With the Yonge-Steeles Corridor Transportation Study underway at that time, Committee directed that this issue be addressed as part of that study.

The Yonge-Steeles Transportation Study is a long range, strategic study for the proposed Yonge-Steeles Secondary Plan. Phase 1 of the Study has now been completed, and has set transportation policy directions for the re-development area under the pre-subway planning horizon. Due to a number of uncertainties such as the timing of the Yonge Subway Extension, planning visions in the City of Toronto and City of Vaughan, and the review of the Provincial Growth documents, it was decided that the ultimate Yonge Steeles Secondary Plan cannot be finalized in the near future, and therefore, the transportation study need not proceed at this stage. In addition, the Region’s Yonge-Steeles Area Regional Transportation Study (2016) and its recommendations identified that only a limited amount of growth can be accommodated within the City of Markham Yonge-Steeles area prior to the subway extension.

**OPTIONS/DISCUSSION:****Proctor Avenue is an important connection between Thornhill and the rest of Markham.**

Proctor Avenue functions as an important east-west collector roadway, providing connectivity between Bayview Avenue and Henderson Avenue. This connects the Thornhill area with the rest of Markham, and provides access and connection to the neighbourhood.

Through the aforementioned traffic studies conducted, Proctor Avenue continues to be utilized during peak periods, despite the restriction. Drivers continue to use Proctor Avenue by infiltrating the neighborhood streets of Steele Valley Road and Sprucewood Drive, or choosing to ignore the restriction altogether and proceeding with making an illegal turn. By having Steele Valley Road being used to facilitate the movement of through traffic, it is operating beyond its intended function. There is no technical merit in maintaining a turn restriction at the intersection of Bayview Avenue & Proctor Avenue, especially at the expense of Steele Valley Road and Sprucewood Drive residents. Therefore, it is recommended that the restriction be removed.

**York Region's Transportation Master Plan does not support turn restrictions.**

The intersection of Bayview Avenue & Proctor Avenue falls within the jurisdiction of York Region. The York Region 2016 Transportation Master Plan (TMP) was endorsed by Regional Council in June 2016. One of the key objectives outlined in the TMP is to create and maintain connectivity of the road network. In general, this objective is impeded by the implementation of turning restrictions. As such, it is Regional policy that future implementation of restrictions will be discouraged, and existing restrictions considered for removal if such restrictions are unwarranted.

York Region's transportation objective is to maximize the efficiency of the Regional transportation network. As communities continue to grow, the municipal road network plays a key role in assisting with distributing traffic and providing connections for transit vehicles, cyclists, and pedestrians. Both Regional and municipal roads are not mutually exclusive; they are part of an integrated network that needs to accommodate trips based on its functional classifications.

Both Regional and City staff are in agreement that the continued practice of implementing turn restrictions to reduce traffic, regardless of the road function, is not in the City's or Region's greater interest. Turn restrictions typically satisfy only a localized area, as the restrictions inevitably force traffic which has to use a certain road to other streets or neighbourhoods. Neighbourhoods need to be integrated and not segregated.

**Removing this turn restriction requires approval from both City and Regional Councils.**

Removing this turn restriction will require York Region Council to repeal the current Regional By-law. However, since the original request to have this turn restriction came from Markham Council, York Region will need Markham Council to issue a similar request to remove it.

**FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS AND TEMPLATE:**

Not Applicable.

**HUMAN RESOURCES CONSIDERATIONS:**

Not Applicable.

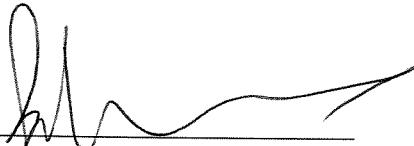
**ALIGNMENT WITH STRATEGIC PRIORITIES:**

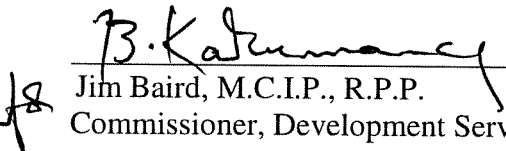
The recommendation to remove the turn restriction aligns with the strategic focus for a Safe & Sustainable Community, through the ongoing management of the City's transportation network. This recommendation is also consistent with the policy of the Region's Transportation Master Plan.

**BUSINESS UNITS CONSULTED AND AFFECTED:**

York Region Transportation Services has been consulted regarding the removal of the existing turn restriction at Bayview Avenue & Proctor Avenue, and Regional staff has indicated that such removal is consistent with its transportation policy.

**RECOMMENDED BY:**

  
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Brian Lee, P.Eng  
Director, Engineering

  
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Jim Baird, M.C.I.P., R.P.P.  
Commissioner, Development Services

**ATTACHMENTS:**

Attachment "A" – Map: Thornhill Subject Area

Attachment "B" – Map: Steele Valley Road Infiltration Route



KEY MAP

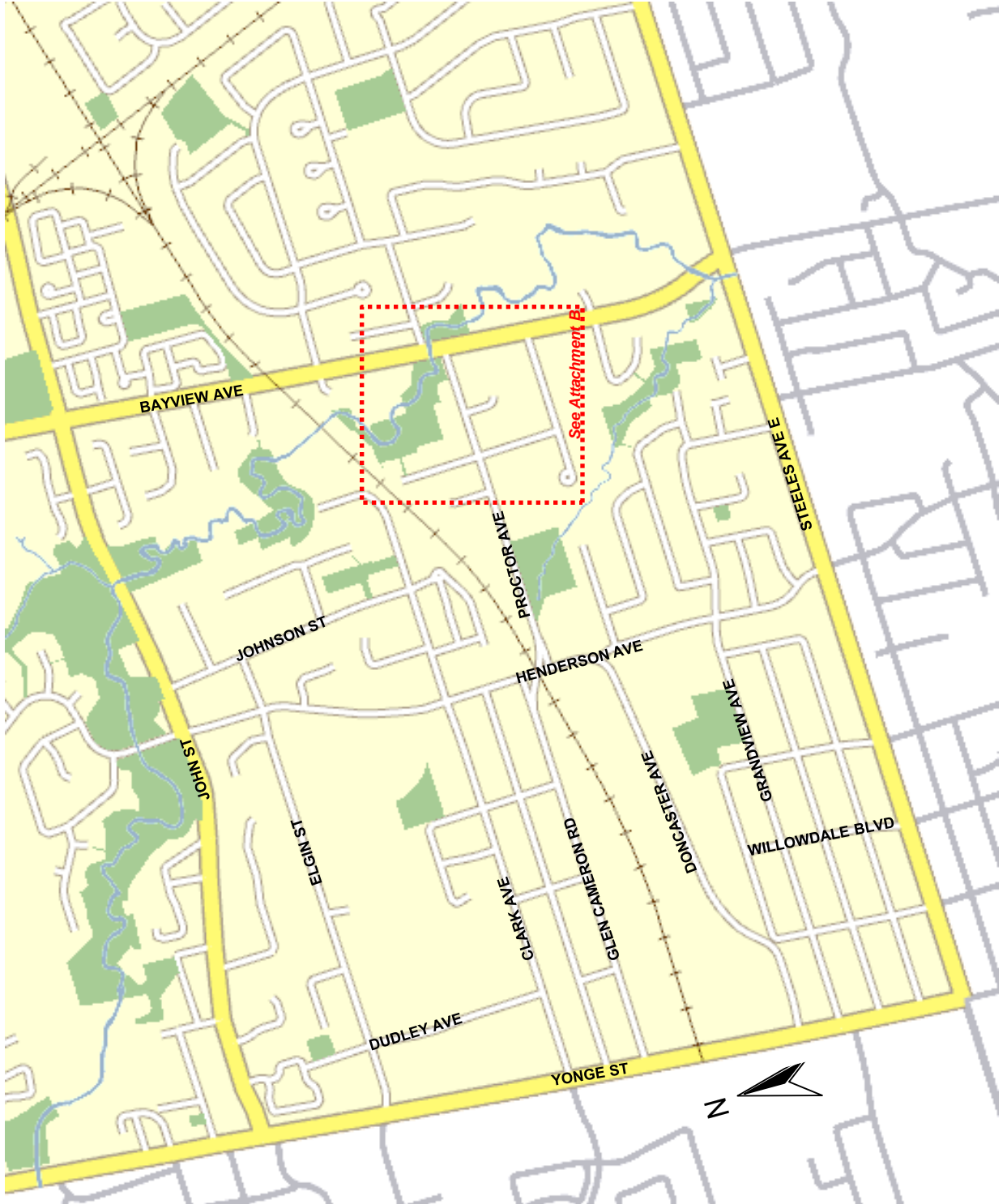
Thornhill Subject Area

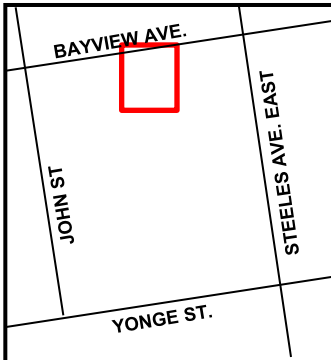


Traffic Operations

April 2017

**ATTACHMENT "A"**





# LEGEND

Infiltration  
Route



Steele Valley Road  
Infiltration Route



Traffic Operations  
April 2017

ATTACHMENT "B"

Bayview @ Proctor  
Existing  
Southbound Right Turn  
6:30am – 9:00am  
Mon - Fri

Steele Valley Rd

During the 8AM – 9AM peak  
period, 89% of traffic on Steele  
Valley is infiltrating

