



Report to: General Committee

Date Report Authored: July 6, 2015

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

**PREPARED BY:** David Porretta, Manager (Acting), Business & Technical Services, 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 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 the Region of York be requested to report back to City of Markham staff regarding their recommendation;
- 4) 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 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 now using Steele Valley Road, where no such concerns previously existed;

- Non-compliance of the turn restriction.

**The existing restriction is displacing traffic to adjacent municipal roadways.**

Vehicular access from Bayview Avenue into the Thornhill community is limited to two collector roads: John Street and Proctor Avenue. Following implementation of the turn restriction at Proctor in 2005, the expectation was that drivers would either remain on Bayview Avenue or use John Street as an alternate access into the community. During peak periods, John Street regularly exceeds capacity, with significant queuing occurring. As such, the only remaining access into the community from Bayview Avenue is via Steele Valley Road. Classified as a local road, Steele Valley Road is not intended to carry through traffic. However, drivers are using it to circumvent the restriction at Proctor Avenue. As noted in *Figure 1*, the average daily traffic volume (ADT) on Proctor Avenue continues to operate within its intended design capacity while volume on both John Street and Steele Valley Road are above their intended design parameters.

**Figure 1: Comparison of Design ADT vs. Actual ADT**

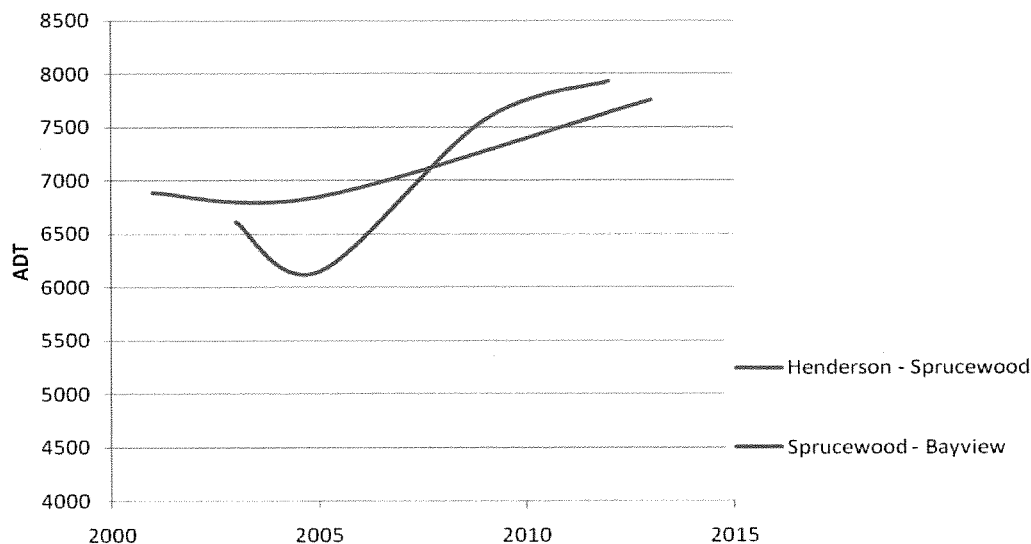
STREET	ROAD CLASSIFICATION	DESIGN ADT*	ACTUAL ADT
John Street	Collector	8,000	16,000
Proctor Avenue	Collector	8,000	7,800
Steele Valley Road	Local	1,000	1,100

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

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

The primary 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 over the past decade.

**Figure 2: Proctor Ave - Average Daily Traffic Volume (ADT) Trends**



Upon implementation of the turn restriction in 2005, there was an immediate reduction in traffic using Proctor Avenue between Bayview Avenue and Sprucewood Drive. However, the section between Sprucewood Drive and Henderson Avenue experienced only a slight reduction. The difference between the two sections can be attributed to traffic using Steele Valley Road to by-pass the turn restriction and therefore, 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.

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

In Fall 2011, Operations staff conducted a vehicular infiltration survey during the weekday peak period of 8AM – 9AM (see Attachment “B”). The study results had identified approximately 48 of 55 vehicles (87%) entering Steele Valley Road from southbound Bayview Avenue destined to Proctor Avenue. An additional study conducted in Fall 2014 yielded similar results. This is an indication that drivers are intentionally avoiding the restriction on a regular basis.

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

Since its inception, City staff routinely receives inquiries and/or complaints about the turn restriction at Bayview and Proctor Avenue, specifically when or why the restriction was implemented. 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 were ignoring the restriction. While this is not necessarily a measure of the restriction’s effectiveness (it’s possible many more drivers are compliant), drivers regularly ignore the restriction. Signs are clearly posted approaching, and also at, the intersection.

**OPTIONS/DISCUSSION:**

**Removal of the turn restriction at Bayview Ave. & Proctor Ave. is recommended.**

As outlined in the 2014 Official Plan, the City’s transportation infrastructure should be seen as a key element in community building. The collector road system allows connectivity between neighbourhoods for all modes of transportation. As such, it is integral that that Markham’s collector road system be maintained to function as intended to facilitate this objective.

Proctor Avenue is a collector roadway, intended to provide access between arterial, collector and local roadways. This is especially critical in this community, due to the lack of alternative routes to/from Bayview Avenue. Through the aforementioned traffic studies conducted, Proctor Avenue continues to be used during peak periods, despite the restriction. Drivers are avoiding the restriction by using Steele Valley Road, or choose to ignore the restriction altogether and proceed with making an illegal turn. Steele Valley Road is operating beyond its intended function and John Street cannot sustain additional traffic volume.

There is no technical merit in maintaining a turn restriction at the intersection of Bayview Avenue & Proctor Avenue. Therefore, it is recommended that the restriction be removed.

**York Region Transportation does not support turn restrictions on Regional roads.**

The intersection of Bayview Avenue & Proctor Avenue falls within the jurisdiction of York Region. York Region Transportation's objective is to maximize the efficiency of the Regional transportation network to discourage motorists from diverting through local streets. However, as communities continue to grow, the municipal road network plays a key role in assisting with distributing traffic. Both Regional and municipal roads are not mutually exclusive; they comprise an integrated network that needs to accommodate trips for all purposes.

Both Regional and Municipal staff are in agreement that the continued practice of implementing turn restrictions to mitigate cut-through traffic is not in the City or Region's greater interest. Turn restrictions typically satisfy only a localized area, as the restrictions inevitably push the problem to other roads or neighbourhoods, introducing erratic driving behaviour and compromise the transportation network.

**Removing a turn restriction requires approval from Regional Council.**

For the Region to remove a turn restriction at a Regional intersection, a Council resolution from the local municipality would need to be received, requesting such. Therefore, it is recommended that the Region consider removal of the restriction at Bayview Avenue and Proctor Avenue.

**FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS AND TEMPLATE:**

Not Applicable.

**HUMAN RESOURCES CONSIDERATIONS:**

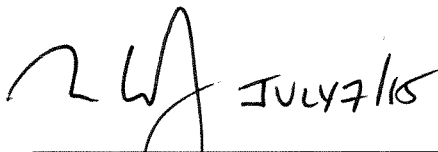
Not Applicable.

**ALIGNMENT WITH STRATEGIC PRIORITIES:**

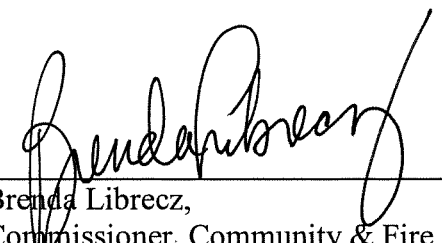
This report aligns with the community safety component of Markham's transportation strategic priority.

**BUSINESS UNITS CONSULTED AND AFFECTED:**

York Region Transportation has been consulted regarding the cut-through traffic concerns on Steele Valley Road and the existing turn restriction at Bayview Avenue & Proctor Avenue.

**RECOMMENDED BY:**

Morgan Jones,  
Acting Director, Operations



Brenda Librecz,  
Commissioner, Community & Fire Services

**ATTACHMENTS:**

Attachment "A" – Map: Thornhill Subject Area

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