

10

REGIONAL ROAD TRUCK ROUTE GUIDANCE SIGNS TOWN OF WHITCHURCH-STOUFFVILLE

The Transportation and Works Committee recommends the adoption of the recommendations contained in the following report, January 23, 2008, from the Commissioner of Transportation Services:

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that:

1. Existing “Truck Route” guidance signs be enhanced at key locations on the Regional road network to promote trucks to use the following Regional roads:
 - Bloomington Road (Y.R. 40) between York/Durham Line (Y.R. 30) and Highway 404.
 - Davis Drive (Y.R. 31) between York/Durham Line (Y.R. 30) and Highway 404.
 - Stouffville Road (Y.R. 14) between Highway 48 and Highway 404.
 - Woodbine Avenue (Y.R. 8) between Bloomington Road (Y.R. 40) and Davis Drive (Y.R. 31).
 - York/Durham Line (Y.R. 30) between Bloomington Road (Y.R. 40) and Davis Drive (Y.R. 31).
2. The Regional Clerk forward this report to the Clerk of the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville.

2. PURPOSE

This report is to seek authorization to enhance truck route guidance signs in the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville to deter trucks from using Aurora Road. This report is in response to a communication from the residents of Aurora Road requesting a reduction in the amount of truck traffic on Aurora Road.

3. BACKGROUND

Truck route guidance signs are installed on Regional roads to provide guidance to truck drivers. These signs are placed to provide truck operators with directions to roads which

are capable of accommodating truck traffic and which do not go through communities. Previous reports have been adopted by Council dealing with truck traffic and guidance signage at other locations within the Region.

On February 2, 2000, the Transportation and Works Committee adopted a report titled “Regional Road Truck Route Guidance Signs”. That report responded to a resolution from the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville Council regarding the increased travel of large trucks going to and from surrounding aggregate pits in the Uxbridge vicinity.

The Region then designated Davis Drive, Bloomington Road and Stouffville Road as the primary east-west truck routes and York/Durham Line and Woodbine Avenue as the primary north-south truck routes. This report recommends the signage for these routes be enhanced and replaced.

4. ANALYSIS AND OPTIONS

Half Load Restrictions

The Regional road network is designed as an arterial road network capable of accommodating both car and truck traffic. Staff can recommend certain roads be posted for half load restrictions as required where there are road structures such as bridges or culverts that are only designed or capable of carrying reduced loads and the ability of the pavement structures to support full loads. Aurora Road neither has restrictive structures or a substandard pavement structure, therefore, a half load restriction is not recommended.

Intention of a Regional Road

The intention of a Regional road is to provide a high level of service minimizing flow interruption while maintaining a constant speed. These roads serve as key routes in a network connecting major economic centres, providing service for all types of vehicles including heavy trucks. This allows the truck traffic to be distributed more equally across the Regional road network. It is not recommended that trucks be restricted from any Regional arterial road.

Traffic Surveys

Staff conducted two separate surveys of truck traffic within the boundary of Davis Drive to the north, Stouffville Road to the south, Highway 404 in the west and York/Durham Road in the east. This survey consisted of vehicle counts including truck traffic on all major trucking corridors in the area and an evaluation of the existing truck route designations. The first study was conducted in 2003 and a subsequent study for the same road network was conducted in 2007. The result of the most recent survey is shown on *Attachment 1*.

Other Areas with Truck Route Guidance Signs

In previous situations where trucks were encouraged to avoid communities or certain road sections, truck route guidance signs have been used. These signs are advisory in nature and do not require a Regional by-law. Currently, truck route guidance signs exist in the Newmarket area for trucks travelling through the community to access Yonge Street to and from the north. These signs result in a positive guidance plan with sufficient compliance from trucking companies.

Regional Truck Traffic Averages

Heavy truck traffic throughout the entire Regional road network averages at approximately 7%. Typically, trucks will not travel an indirect route to get to their ultimate destination. There are various reasons that truck traffic can be found on any Regional road. Some trucks are avoiding other routes due to topography, traffic volumes and congestion, while others may be construction traffic related to an ongoing development in the vicinity.

Promote Alternate Routes

In accordance with the intent of a Regional road, Regional staff does not recommend a truck ban. Instead, staff proposes to replace existing truck route guidance signs at key locations on the Regional road network to deter trucks from using Aurora Road and to promote trucks to use alternate routes.

Access to Highway 404

Highway 404 was not open north of Davis Drive at the time these existing truck route guidance signs were installed. Truck traffic patterns have changed somewhat since Highway 404 was extended north to Green Lane. The connection of Green Lane allows an additional route for trucks therefore creating even greater distribution of truck traffic.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The costs associated with the manufacture and installation of the necessary truck route signs are contained in the 2008 Roads Budget.

6. LOCAL MUNICIPAL IMPACT

This report has no direct impact on the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville, however; the new signage may result in an increase in the volume of truck traffic on other Regional roads.

7. CONCLUSION

In response to a request from residents of Aurora Road requesting the reduction of trucks, a traffic review was carried out. The review concludes that existing truck route guidance signs be replaced at key locations on the Regional road network to encourage trucks to use alternate routes that will minimize the impact of truck traffic on Aurora Road.

For more information on this report, contact Brian Harrison, Director, Operations, Roads Branch at extension 5205 in the Transportation Services Department.

The Senior Management Group has reviewed this report.

(The attachment referred to in this clause was included in the agenda for the February 6, 2008 Committee meeting.)