

7
TURN PROHIBITION
HIGHWAY 7 AND SWANSEA ROAD
TOWN OF MARKHAM

The Transportation and Works Committee recommends the adoption of the recommendations contained in the following report, February 21, 2007, from the Commissioner of Transportation and Works:

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that:

1. The following turn restrictions (buses excepted) in the Town of Markham be approved for implementation:
 - 1.1 A westbound left turn prohibition (7:00 am to 9:00 am Monday to Friday) on Highway 7 (Y.R. 7) at Swansea Road.
2. The Regional Solicitor prepare the necessary by-law.
3. The Regional Clerk forward this report to the Clerk of the Town of Markham and the Chief of York Regional Police, with a request to enforce as their resources permit.

2. PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to obtain approval, for a request from the Town of Markham's Council, to implement a left turn restriction (buses excepted) during specific times of the day, on weekdays only, at the intersection of Highway 7 and Swansea Road in the Town of Markham. In accordance with the *Highway Traffic Act*, a Regional by-law is required before any traffic restriction can be signed and enforced. A location plan is provided as *Attachment 1*.

3. BACKGROUND

Town of Markham staff were directed by Markham Council to undertake public consultation to determine community support for implementing a left turn restriction at the intersection of Highway 7 and Swansea Road as a result of concerns from residents in the area located in the southeast corner of Highway 7 and Kennedy Road.

On September 18, 2006, Markham Council requested their staff to undertake the required studies and conduct the necessary public consultation to determine the feasibility of

implementing a westbound left turn prohibition at the intersection of Highway 7 and Swansea Road and a northbound right turn prohibition at the intersection of Kennedy Road and Avoca Drive.

Town of Markham staff conducted various traffic studies and observations to determine the need and justification for these turn prohibitions. These studies found that during the morning peak traffic period, 8:00 am to 9:00 am, 92% of vehicles turning onto Swansea Road can be considered as cut-through traffic from Highway 7. After review of the studies, it was concluded that some motorists are choosing this route to avoid the intersection of Highway 7 and Kennedy Road.

Upon completion of the studies, Town of Markham staff concluded that the potential northbound right turn prohibition at the intersection of Kennedy Road and Avoca Drive was not a viable option and would not be supported by the area residents.

The implementation of any turn prohibition is intended to reduce the amount of cut-through traffic within the residential development, however; these prohibitions will also prevent residents of the area from accessing the local streets during the prohibited times.

4. ANALYSIS AND OPTIONS

Regional staff has reviewed the existing land use in the area of Highway 7 and Swansea Road. This area is mostly residential; however, there is a seniors living centre at the southwest corner of Highway 7 and Swansea Road which can only be accessed via Swansea Road. Any visitors, delivery vehicles, and service vehicles destined for this seniors residence must pass through the signalized intersection of Highway 7 and Swansea Road. During the prohibited hours, these vehicles will not be able to turn left at this intersection to access this residence. These vehicles will need to change their delivery route or time to conform to the restrictions, for example, by approaching from the west and making a right turn from Highway 7 to Swansea Road.

The residents of the area affected by such turning prohibitions were polled by the local municipality. Markham staff concurs with these turning prohibitions and circulated a survey to 634 area residents to determine a consensus before the prohibitions are implemented. Town of Markham staff received 166 completed surveys, for a response rate of 26%. The results of this survey indicate that 72% of residents who returned the survey are in favour of the turn prohibition.

Typically, Regional staff uses a 66% majority in favour of any turn and through movement restrictions before it is recommended to Regional Council that the prohibition be implemented. In this case, the results exceed that requirement; however, the response rate is very low. This low response rate may indicate that area residents are not interested in the potential prohibition or may not be aware of the impact this prohibition has. In order to address any prospective negative feedback resulting from the prohibition,

Regional staff will meet with the Town of Markham staff to co-ordinate the implementation of these prohibitions and to develop a process to review and respond to any complaints.

If the Town of Markham determines that these turn and through movement prohibitions are not performing well or are causing other concerns, a Council resolution will be required from the Town of Markham requesting the Region to remove all related signage at the intersection and to have the necessary by-law rescinded.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The financial implication to the Region is limited to the cost of manufacturing and implementing the turn restriction signs, which is included in the 2007 Roads Program Budget.

6. LOCAL MUNICIPAL IMPACT

The Town of Markham's Council requested the implementation of a turn prohibition (buses excepted) at the intersection of Highway 7 and Swansea Road. In light of a potential reaction from the affected community, Regional staff will work closely with town staff to monitor traffic. Any adjustments to these prohibitions will require a resolution from Markham Council.

7. CONCLUSION

The residents of the area located in the southeast corner of Highway 7 and Kennedy Road have been concerned about the amount of cut-through traffic infiltrating through their neighbourhood. As a result, the Town of Markham Council requested that the Region approve and implement the following turning restrictions (buses excepted):

- A westbound left turn prohibition (7:00 am to 9:00 am Monday to Friday) on Highway 7 at Swansea Road.

In accordance with the *Highway Traffic Act*, a Regional by-law is required before any traffic restriction can be signed and enforced.

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

Report No. 3 of the Transportation and Works Committee
Regional Council Meeting of March 29, 2007

The Senior Management Group has reviewed this report.

(The attachment referred to in this clause was included in the agenda for the March 7, 2007 Committee meeting.)