



Office of the Commissioner
Transportation Services

Memorandum

To: Committee of the Whole

From: Stephen Collins, Acting Commissioner, Transportation Services

Date: September 22, 2016

Re: **Markham Council Resolution – Ninth Line Truck Restriction**

This memo provides Council with background information regarding the City of Markham's Council resolution dated June 28, 2016. The resolution requests the truck restriction on Ninth Line between Highway 7 and 16th Avenue be reinstated and extended southerly to Highway 407. The resolution also requests that truck route signs be reinstated on Donald Cousens Parkway.

Council approved a report in September 2015, recommending the removal of the truck restriction on Ninth Line between Highway 7 and 16th Avenue and not extending the truck restriction southerly to Highway 407. The 2015 report also recommended the removal of truck route signs encouraging trucks to use Donald Cousens Parkway. The City of Markham resolution is in response to the September 2015 report. A copy of the report is attached (Attachment 1).

Background

The background of truck restrictions on Ninth Line is summarized as follows:

- In November 2000, Council instituted a truck restriction on Ninth Line, between Highway 7 and 16th Avenue
- From 2008 to 2010, Ninth Line was widened from two to four lanes from Highway 407 to 16th Avenue
- In 2012, the Region constructed noise barriers along the west side of Ninth Line, between Highway 407 and 16th Avenue, to mitigate traffic noise impacts including trucks
- The noise barriers were constructed at a total cost of approximately \$2.46 million

Analysis

The analysis of the request from the City of Markham to re-institute the truck restriction on Ninth Line is summarized as follows:

- North-south traffic and truck demands along Regional Roads in the City of Markham which necessitated the removal of the truck restriction have not changed since Council approved staff recommendations in September 2015.
- Since the removal of the truck restriction on Ninth Line, truck traffic has decreased by approximately one per cent on McCowan Road (currently 6 per cent or 3,000 trucks per day) and Donald Cousens Parkway (currently 2.5 per cent or 250 trucks per day) and redistributed onto Ninth Line (currently 3.5 per cent or 900 trucks per day). Ninth Line remains to experience significantly lower truck volumes in comparison. Regional roads facilitate goods movement, which supports employment areas that are critical to supporting the economic vitality of the Region and quality of life of the Region's residents.
- The approved Transportation Master Plan recommends a strategic network of truck routes that help prioritize improvements, while recognizing that all Regional roads are intended to move all types of vehicles.
- North-south goods movement is already constrained in Markham as a result of the truck restriction that the City of Markham has in place on Main Street, between Highway 7 and 16th Avenue, to ensure ongoing protection of the Heritage Conservation District.
- If the truck restriction is reinstated, north-south corridors such as McCowan Road and Donald Cousens Parkway will carry a larger burden of goods movement-related traffic without the benefit of Regionally-constructed noise barriers.
- Keeping Ninth Line open to all types of vehicles promotes a more equitable distribution of goods movement across all north-south Regional roads in the City of Markham.

Conclusion

Based on staff review of truck traffic distribution in the City of Markham, it was identified that residents on McCowan Road are exposed to a significantly higher volume of truck traffic in comparison to Ninth Line. Donald Cousens Parkway residents were also impacted by the truck restriction on Ninth Line due to signs encouraging truck traffic. These signs have since been removed. Staff's position ensures a well-connected network of Regional roads that accommodate trucks, supports goods movement, and desired employment uses within the Region.

Markham Council Resolution - Ninth Line Truck Restriction

To ensure an equitable distribution of goods movement-related traffic along all north-south Regional roads in the City of Markham, staff recommend that Council continue to support the decision from September 2015, and not reinstate the truck restriction on Ninth Line, between Highway 7 and 16th Avenue, nor approve an extension of the truck restriction between Highway 407 and Highway 7.

Stephen Collins, P.Eng.
Acting Commissioner, Transportation Services

NC/BT/jm

Attachment (1)

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Clause 7 in Report No. 13 of Committee of the Whole was adopted, without amendment, by the Council of The Regional Municipality of York at its meeting held on September 24, 2015.

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Ninth Line Truck Restriction Update

Committee of the Whole recommends adoption of the following recommendations contained in the report dated August 12, 2015 from the Commissioner of Transportation Services:

1. Recommendations

It is recommended that:

1. A truck restriction not be implemented on Ninth Line (Y.R. 69), between Highway 7 (Y.R. 7) and Highway 407, in the City of Markham.
2. The existing truck restriction on Ninth Line (Y.R. 69), between 16th Avenue (Y.R. 73) and Highway 7 (Y.R. 7), in the City of Markham, be rescinded.
3. The existing "Truck Route" signs on Donald Cousens Parkway (Y.R. 48) and Highway 7 (Y.R. 7), in the City of Markham, be removed.
4. The Regional Solicitor prepare the necessary bylaws.
5. The Regional Clerk forward this report to the City of Markham.

2. Purpose

This report provides an update to a petition received from the Sherwood-Amber Glen Ratepayers Association in 2010 to restrict trucks on Ninth Line between Highway 7 and Highway 407, in the City of Markham. The petition was received and referred for staff response by the then Transportation Services Committee.

In 2011, Council recommended that a decision on extending the truck restriction on Ninth Line, between Highway 7 and Highway 407, be deferred until the

construction activity associated with the Markham-Stouffville Hospital and Box Grove Collector Road were complete.

3. Background

Goods movement is supported on all Regional roads unless the road is not structurally capable to accommodate truck traffic

The Regional road network provides important linkages between provincial highways and local road networks. Regional roads are particularly important for goods movement to support local businesses. Most Regional roads are designed to accommodate higher truck traffic volumes and help minimize the need for trucks to use local roads. A well connected network of Regional roads that accommodate trucks, supports goods movement, and desired employment uses within the Region. Truck trips represent approximately seven per cent of all trips on the Regional road network.

There are a number of rural Regional roads which do not have the structural capacity to accommodate trucks. These roads restrict truck use through load restrictions. These load restrictions are lifted when the roads are improved.

Goods movement is already constrained in the City of Markham with existing truck restrictions on Markham Road and Ninth Line

Goods movement in north-south direction is constrained in the City of Markham from McCowan Road to Donald Cousens Parkway. This six kilometre stretch would typically have four Regional roads providing goods movement opportunities as part of a two kilometre grid network. However, McCowan Road and Donald Cousens Parkway are the only two viable options in the north-south direction for movements of goods as there are truck restrictions on Markham Road, between 16th Avenue and Highway 407 and on Ninth Line, between Highway 7 and 16th Avenue.

Council authorized a truck restriction in November of 2000, on Ninth Line between Highway 7 and 16th Avenue as a measure of noise mitigation. The truck restriction provided relief prior to the construction of noise barriers in conjunction with the Ninth Line road widening project between 2008 and 2012. Now that noise barriers are constructed, it is appropriate to remove the truck restriction on Ninth Line between Highway 7 and 16th Avenue.

Markham Road is the City of Markham's main street and is not intended to be a goods movement corridor

City of Markham recently reconstructed Markham Road, south of Highway 7 to be more restrictive for northbound motorists. There is only one through lane heading into the City's main street and has on-street parking for easy access to commercial shopping establishments. Construction on Markham Road north of Highway 7 was also recently completed with a "Main Street Design" which includes a two-lane cross-section, on-street parking and truck restriction. "Main Street Design" is aimed to transform Markham Road from a vehicular dominated street to one that better supports pedestrians, cyclists and commercial activities in the core and enhances Markham Village Heritage Conservation District (MVHCD). While the road can accommodate trucks destined to local businesses, its design is not conducive, nor intended to, accommodate longer journey goods movement traffic.

Ninth Line from Highway 407 to 16th Avenue was widened to four lanes and constructed with noise barriers from 2008 to 2012

Ninth Line was widened to four lanes and urbanized with sidewalks, illumination and curbs in two phases starting in 2008 with the road section from 16th Avenue to Rose Way. In 2010, the Ninth Line road improvements were extended south from Rose Way to Highway 407. The structure of the four-lane road was designed to Regional standards, which accommodate loads imposed by trucks.

In October 2012, the Region constructed noise barriers along both sides of Ninth Line between 16th Avenue and Highway 407, located on Regional property along the outer edges of the Ninth Line right-of-way. The noise barriers were constructed for Ninth Line residential landowners at a significant expense (approximately \$2.46 million) to reduce the noise levels generated by traffic, including trucks, on the widened Ninth Line.

Residents on Donald Cousens Parkway have expressed concerns regarding truck volumes, noise and speed

In 2014, the Region received a petition signed by local residents living on Donald Cousens Parkway, east of Ninth Line, seeking assistance for issues related to truck volumes, noise and vibration from trucks and speeding motorists.

Donald Cousens Parkway was originally intended as a bypass road, which accommodates higher volumes of traffic, including trucks. Higher traffic volumes are facilitated with fewer intersections, however, the adjacent land uses that have been constructed include fronting homes in close proximity to the road.

The resident concerns conflict with the intended bypass nature of the road design and are exacerbated by the lack of other goods movement corridors between

McCowan Road and Donald Cousens Parkway as traffic volumes continue to increase through the City of Markham. Additionally, truck volumes are expected to increase faster as a result of signs installed along other Regional roads promoting Donald Cousens Parkway for truck use.

4. Analysis and Options

The distribution of goods movement in the City of Markham is affected by truck restrictions on Ninth Line and Markham Road

Traffic data was collected on McCowan Road, Markham Road, Ninth Line and Donald Cousens Parkway between Highway 407 and 16th Avenue, and is summarized in Table 1.

**Table 1
Truck Volumes**

Location	Total Daily Volume	Truck Daily Volume	Truck Percentage
McCowan Road	45,000	3,000	6.5%
Markham Road*	20,000	400	2%
Ninth Line north of Highway 7*	20,000	500	2.5%
Ninth Line south of Highway 7	20,000	800	4%
Donald Cousens Parkway	8,000	160	2%

*Existing Truck Restriction

Data shows that the majority of traffic currently uses McCowan Road. This is expected to change as development in the City of Markham and York Region continue to grow, generating more traffic. As congestion increases on McCowan Road, traffic will be more evenly distributed on Ninth Line and Donald Cousens Parkway. Traffic growth on Main Street, Markham, will be constrained by measures taken to protect the heritage conservation district.

As employment demands increase in the Region, there will be an increasing need to distribute trucks across the grid of Regional roads. The current truck restrictions on Main Street in Markham will result in more focused truck trip growth on McCowan Road and Donald Cousens Parkway, both which include residential uses similar to Ninth Line.

Ninth Line Truck Restriction Update

A truck restriction is not recommended on Ninth Line between Highway 7 and Highway 407

Ninth Line, north of Highway 7, is a four-lane, major commuter road constructed to accommodate goods movement; however, trucks are currently restricted. Ninth Line, south of Highway 7 to Highway 407, carries similar truck volumes (500 trucks per day) to Markham Road (400 trucks per day), which is a two-lane downtown main street with on-street parking.

Ninth Line provides important road network connectivity to surrounding residential communities, Markham-Stouffville Hospital, commercial areas, and a full interchange with Highway 407. A truck restriction unnecessarily imposes a constraint on goods movement for a Regional road that was designed to accommodate trucks. The restriction also increases the burden for accommodating trucks on parallel roads that have similar residential development. Implementing this restriction is not supportive for goods movement and is not equitable for Markham area residents on McCowan Road or Donald Cousens Parkway.

Removal of the current truck restriction on Ninth Line north of Highway 7 will more equitably distribute goods movement

Since Ninth Line was widened, including significant noise mitigation measures, it is appropriate that the existing truck restriction be removed between Highway 7 and 16th Avenue. There is no need to constrain goods movement on a Regional road that is designed to accommodate trucks. This is even more important given the constraint already in place on Markham Road located immediately to the west.

A more equitable distribution of traffic could be achieved by removal of Truck Route signs promoting use of Donald Cousens Parkway

Truck Route signs, as shown in Figure 1, are currently installed on Donald Cousens Parkway and surrounding Regional roads. The locations of these signs are detailed in Attachment 1. It is recommended that these truck route signs be removed to allow goods movement to be more equally distributed on Regional roads.

Figure 1
Truck Route Sign



Link to key Council-approved plans

This report supports Vision 2051 to increase the Economic Vitality of the Region, and to improve mobility for users on Regional transportation corridors.

5. Financial Implications

The cost to remove the existing truck restriction signs and Truck Route signs is accommodated in the approved 2015 Transportation Services operating Budget.

6. Local Municipal Impact

It is the Region's practice to not have truck restrictions on Regional roads. This practice is intended to accommodate trucks and distribute goods movement more equally across Regional roads reducing truck use on local roads. Providing a grid of Regional goods movement supportive corridors ensures the associated burdens of trucks are distributed evenly.

City of Markham staff have been consulted and are supportive of the recommendations included in this report.

7. Conclusion

To promote more even distribution of goods movement across the Regional road network, it is recommended that a truck restriction not be implemented on Ninth Line south of Highway 7. It is also recommended that the existing truck restriction on Ninth Line, located north of Highway 7, be rescinded. Further, all Truck Route signs promoting truck use on Donald Cousens Parkway be removed.

Ninth Line Truck Restriction Update

For more information on this report, please contact Brian Titherington, Director, Roads and Traffic Operations at ext. 75901.

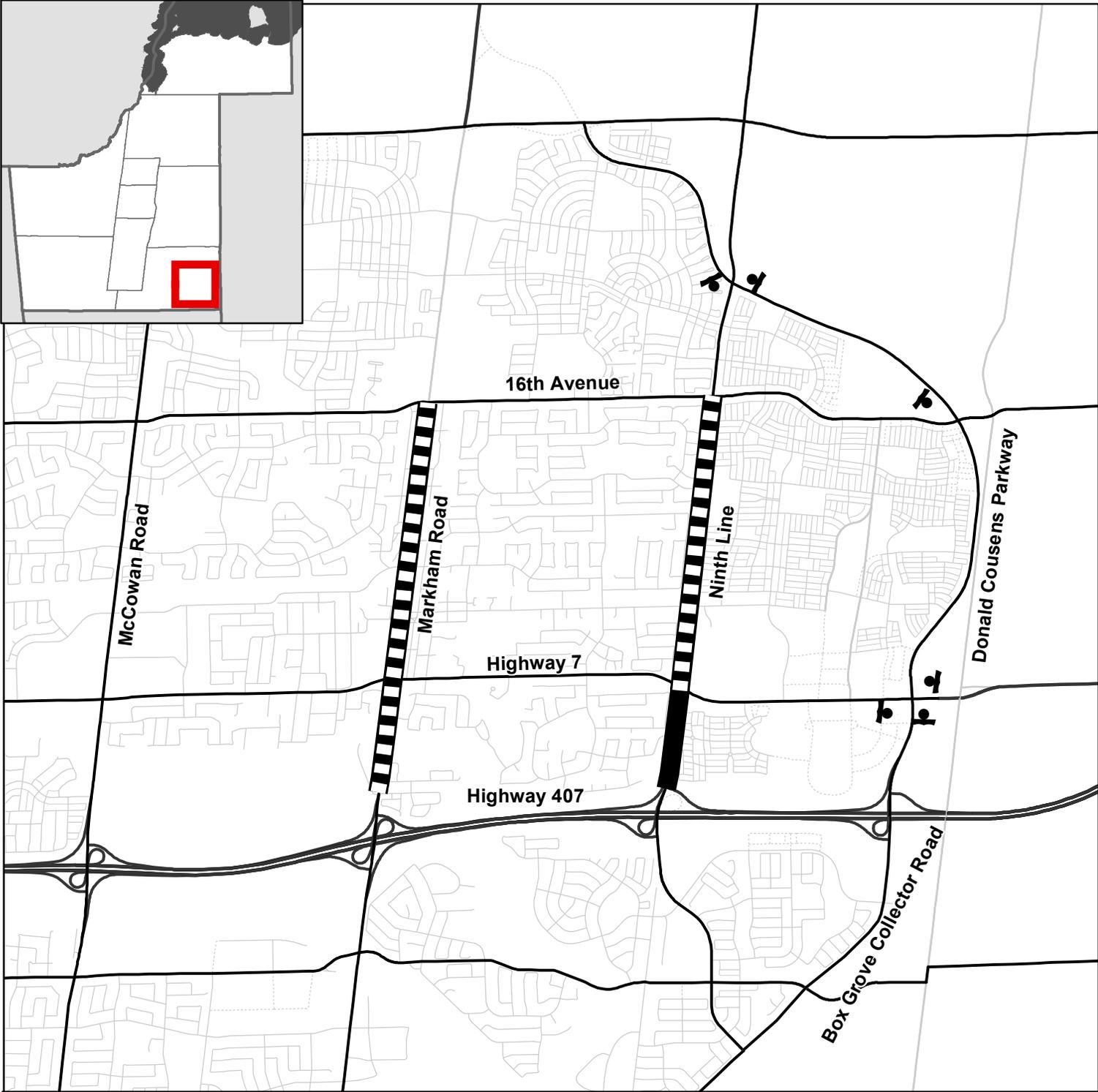
The Senior Management Group has reviewed this report.

August 12, 2015

Attachments (1)

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Accessible formats or communication supports are available upon request

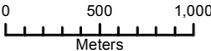


Location Map - Ninth Line

Ninth Line Truck Restriction Update
September 10, 2015



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Legend

-  Existing Truck Restriction
-  Requested Truck Restriction
-  Truck Route Signs to be Removed 

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