

**From:** Stephen Benjamin  
**To:** Sellors, Chris  
**Date:** 11/24/03 2:58pm  
**Subject:** Dead Ending of Woodlawn Avenue West at Farnham Avenue or One-way Operation

To Chris Sellors of Councillor Walker's office.

I had provided you with comments some time ago about the feasibility of closing the north/south section of Woodlawn Avenue West at Farnham Avenue. You have recently requested that I update this response in light of a recent request to make the short north/south section of Woodlawn Avenue West one-way (I believe that the request was for a one-way northbound operation of this section of road). I have revised my comments to reflect both options.

We have in the past looked at ways to reduce traffic volumes on both Farnham and on Woodlawn W. To control speeds, we have installed speed humps in the mid 1970's on Balmoral and Farnham (these were the first streets in the City to ever get speed humps). From past council minutes from 1974 and 1976, I discovered that when the original plan for speed humps (bumps) was approved for both Balmoral and for Farnham, Woodlawn West was included in the plan. However, the Council minutes indicated that the local Alderman at the time, Colin Vaughan, had requested that the humps not go in on Woodlawn Ave. W. due to resident opposition. We are currently awaiting new traffic counts for Woodlawn Ave. W. to determine if speed humps are currently warranted for Woodlawn Avenue West.

With respect to dead-ending Woodlawn Avenue West at Farnham Avenue, I do not think that this is a good idea for the following reasons:

1) There are traffic control signals at Woodlawn Ave W. and Yonge Street. Residents of both streets (i.e. Woodlawn and Farnham) use these signals to safely access Yonge Street. As traffic volumes and congestion increases in the City, this access via signals is more desirable. Also, residents of both streets use the Farnham Ave. to access Avenue Road.

2) Residents on Woodlawn would lose direct access to Avenue Road and would only be able to get to Avenue Road by making a left turn to northbound Yonge Street and then left on to Farnham and/or Balmoral. This would add to increased congestion on Yonge Street as the northbound to westbound left turn demand would increase at Farnham and Yonge and at Balmoral and Yonge. Further, while traffic volumes on Woodlawn Ave. W. would no doubt decrease, traffic volumes on both Balmoral and Farnham would increase, a situation that would not be acceptable to the residents on those streets, who have expressed concerns in the past respecting traffic volumes on their streets.

3) De Lasalle College takes its vehicular access from Woodlawn W and also from Farnham. Ditto to my comments in Item 2. as motorists destined to Woodlawn Ave. W. would have to come across Farnham from Avenue Rd. to Yonge Street, turn right at Yonge and right again at Woodlawn. This would create inconvenience, increase congestion on Yonge Street, and lead to increases in fuel consumption and emissions. The school and/or its parents may object to the partial loss of access to Avenue Road/Yonge Street.

4) to physically dead-end a street, we need a turning circle at the dead-end section in order to turn around our garbage trucks, snow ploughing equipment, etc. There is physically insufficient space to construct such a turning circle without expropriating land from adjacent land owners.

5) Access for emergency vehicles would be restricted to Yonge Street whereas now they can access Woodlawn Ave. W. from both Yonge Street and from Avenue Road. This could result in potentially longer response times in the event of an emergency.

With respect to making Woodlawn Avenue West one-way, similar concerns would be raised with this issue except that we obviously would not have to construct a turning circle on Woodlawn W., south of Farnham.

The impact of this proposal would be difficult to calculate and would depend upon which direction traffic will operate (northbound or southbound). While one could expect to see traffic volumes drop by about half (current daily volumes are in the 1,600 - 1,700 range per day, about half as much on either Balmoral or Farnham), residents of both Farnham and Woodlawn W. would have to potentially travel more circuitous routes to/from their homes. Again, we would anticipate higher traffic volumes on the easterly portion of Farnham and on Balmoral as motorists seek alternative routes. We would anticipate increased left turn demand from Yonge Street to both Balmoral and to Farnham, resulting in increased congestion on Yonge Street (due to the narrow width of Yonge Street, there is insufficient road space to maintain 4 lanes of traffic and also to install exclusive left turn lanes from northbound Yonge to Balmoral and to Farnham - exclusive turn lanes would be necessary to mitigate the delays that increased left turn demand from Yonge Street would create).

Notwithstanding, should your constituent wish to proceed with either proposal to close Woodlawn Avenue West at Farnham Avenue, or to make the north/south section of Woodlawn Avenue West one-way, then I would suggest that she get a petition together signed by as many households which take access from the street indicating support. I would also suggest that your office convene a public meeting of all residents on Farnham as well as Woodlawn as implementing this closure would impact on them as well. Assuming that consensus is achieved in favour of the closure, then we could report to Community Council to get by-law approval. However, due to the negative impacts noted above, we do not, from a technical traffic engineering perspective, support either of the proposals.

We are not ruling out the implementation of speed humps at this time until we have a chance to review the most recent traffic counts. Should speed humps be warranted, we believe that this option would present the least intrusive option for all residents, while ensuring that lower operating speeds are experienced on Woodlawn West, similar to those seen on both Balmoral Avenue and Farnham Ave.

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