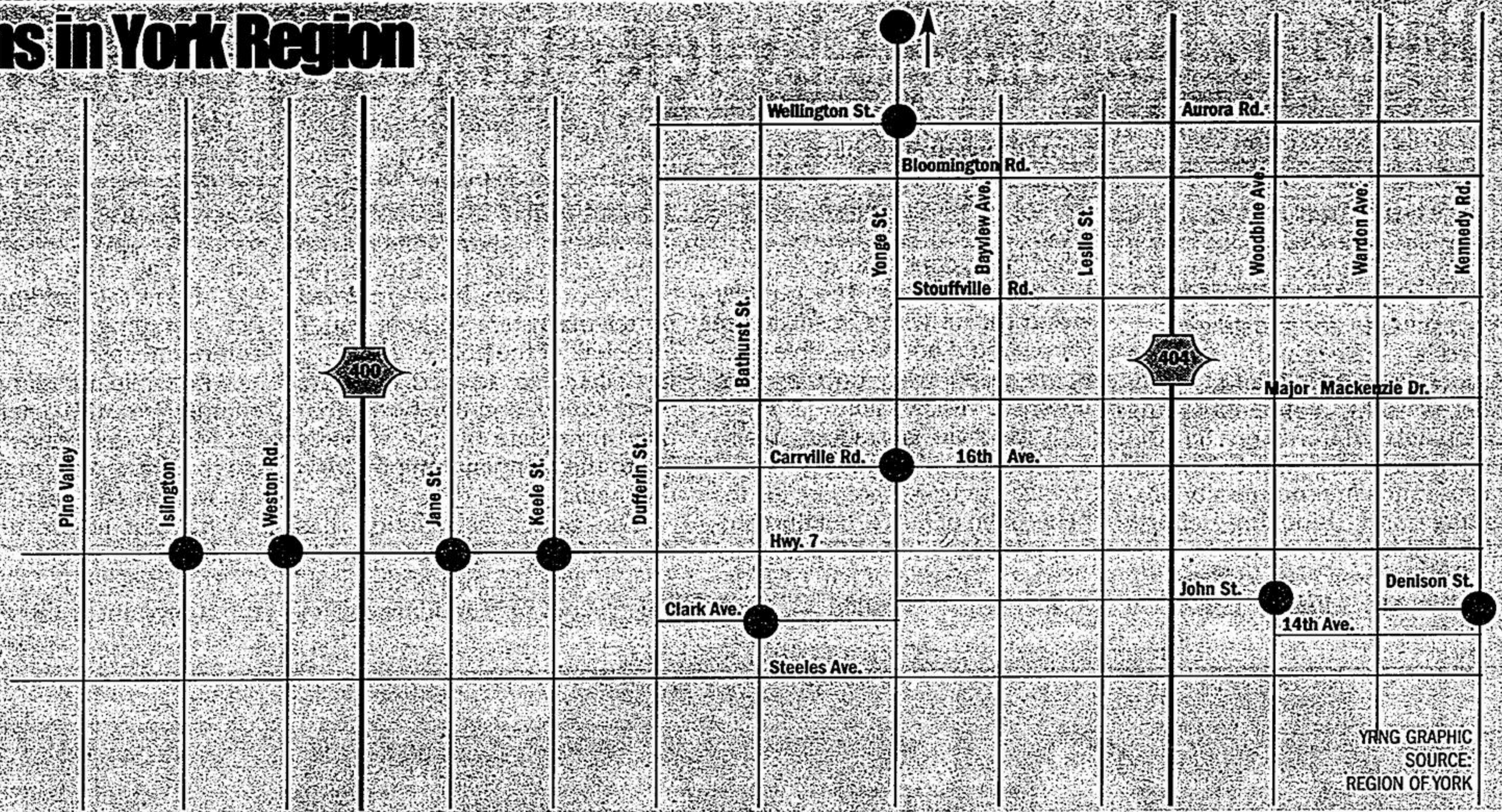


# Major accident locations in York Region

- Hwy. 7 and Weston Road
- Hwy. 7 and Jane Street
- Hwy. 7 and Islington Avenue
- Hwy. 7 and Keele Street
- Yonge and Wellington streets
- Bathurst Street and Clark Avenue
- Yonge Street and Carrville Road
- Woodbine Avenue and John Street
- Kennedy Road Denison Street
- Ravenshoe Road and Woodbine Avenue



# York tracks drivers' nightmares

List of worst intersections shows traffic analysts ways to cut down on collisions

BY ROGER VARLEY  
Staff Writer

York Region identified Hwy. 7 and Weston Road as the most dangerous intersection in the region in November 2001. Just 2 1/2 years earlier, the crossroad didn't even make the top 10 list.

The reason for the change was the way in which the region's transportation and works department analysed its data.

Zorin Postic, a traffic safety supervisor, says a new list will be issued this spring that could radically alter the top 10 list again because of a continuing evolution in the way data is analysed.

Prior to 2001, intersections were rated simply on the rate of collisions. Using that criterion, the top 10 worst intersections in the region were:

- Hwy. 7 and Pine Valley Drive, Vaughan;
- Hwy. 7 and Woodbine Avenue, Markham;
- Yonge Street and Wellington Street, Aurora;
- Yonge Street and Eagle Street, Newmarket;
- Hwy. 7 and Kennedy Road, Markham;
- Yonge Street and Carrville Road, Richmond Hill;
- Yonge Street and Clark Avenue, Thornhill;
- Yonge Street and Mulock Drive, Newmarket;

- Yonge Street and Major Mackenzie Drive, Richmond Hill and;
- Major Mackenzie Drive and Leslie Street, Richmond Hill

Mr. Postic said that list did not take into account other factors such as traffic volume and the severity of collisions, including the amount of property damage or whether there were injuries or fatalities.

The fact an intersection has lots of fender benders doesn't make it more dangerous than another that has fewer collisions, but more fatalities, he said.

Using the new data analysis, Hwy. 7 and Weston Road moved to the top of the list.

The transportation and works department showed the intersection had a "potential for operational improvement" factor of 33. Simply put, that meant the intersection had 33 more collisions a year than should be expected.

"Believe it or not, they are expected," Mr. Postic said.

The November 2001 list, which included only two of the intersections listed earlier, showed the intersections motorists should approach with caution, were:

- Hwy. 7 and Weston Road, Vaughan;
- Hwy. 7 and Jane Street, Vaughan;
- Hwy. 7 and Islington Avenue, Vaughan;
- Hwy. 7 and Keele Street, Vaughan;
- Yonge Street and Wellington Street, Aurora;
- Bathurst Street and Clark Avenue,

- Thornhill;
- Yonge Street and Carrville Road, Richmond Hill;
- Woodbine Avenue and John Street, Markham;
- Kennedy Road and Denison Street, Markham and;
- Ravenshoe Road and Woodbine Avenue, Georgina

*'Last year, there were more fatalities than homicides in York Region. We wouldn't tolerate that number of homicides, so when it comes to fatalities, why do we accept that?'*

Mr. Postic said the list is used to prioritize where resources should be used, whether in terms of traffic enforcement or physical changes to intersections.

Improvements to intersections could be any combination of additional or improved signage, pavement markings, resurfacing, changes to the timing of signal lights or parking and turning restrictions.

If such measures are not adequate, physical modifications are considered, such as additional left turn lanes.

The list is also used by York

Regional Police to target areas for greater surveillance and enforcement.

But Sgt. Tom Carrique of the traffic management unit said although the intersections have potential for a large number of collisions, it doesn't necessarily make them more dangerous in terms of the severity of accidents.

"My experience is the more volume you have, the more collisions," Sgt. Carrique said.

"Normally, the more severe the accident, the more speed was involved. So if you have an intersection where the speed limit is higher and the traffic volume is lower, the potential is greater for a serious collision."

Which is why Mr. Postic is not just concerned with major intersections. Unrolling wide aerial photos of York Region roads across a table in his office, he showed how all intersections are marked to show traffic analysts the number of collisions at each one.

The data also shows the direction of traffic, the severity of the collision, whether private vehicles or trucks were involved and numerous other pieces of information.

The photos help analysts determine what physical factors might be contributing to the collisions.

Pointing to the aerial photograph of Warden Road and Aurora Road, he showed there have been numerous accidents over the past five years. Part of the reason, he

indicated, was poor sightlines at the intersection.

A straight section of the road was analysed because there have been several winter accidents. Mr. Postic pointed out the trees on the south side of the road were blocking the sun from melting snow on the pavement. That information could be used to order more salt or sand on that section of road.

He said changes made several years ago to the intersection of Ravenshoe Road and Woodbine Avenue resulted in more collisions.

Traffic analysts determined by widening Woodbine at the intersection, motorists were taking advantage and increasing their speeds.

The intersection has since been revamped with designated left turn lanes.

"We learn more from our mistakes than our successes," Mr. Postic said.

"We don't export our mistakes to other intersections. I really believe we're making a difference."

So which intersections does Mr. Postic try to avoid?

"I don't avoid any roads, I try to avoid people," he said. "I don't trust other drivers."

"Last year, there were more fatalities than homicides in York Region," he added.

"We wouldn't tolerate that number of homicides, so when it comes to fatalities, why do we accept that?"

It's the people that make the difference.

**Jay Wilson,**  
Funeral Director

Jay is our newest staff member at Chapel Ridge, having trained and worked at two of Toronto's finest funeral firms, Turner & Porter and Humphrey Funeral Homes. Jay is a graduate of the University of Toronto, and also did a certificate in human resources management prior to entering funeral service. Jay has done volunteer work with the disabled over the years. We are proud to have him as part of the Chapel Ridge family.

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