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May 7, 2018

Jaye Robinson, Chair
Public Works & Infrastructure Committee
Toronto City Council
% Nancy Martins, Clerk of the Committee
Via email: pwic@toronto.ca

**Re: 2018.PW29.6
Next steps on Traffic Safety Measures**

Dear Chair Robinson and Committee members:

We are writing to express our support for the traffic safety measures proposed under item PW29.6 and to share three recommendations for their implementation.

Friends and Families for Safe Streets (FFSS) was founded to turn grief and anger into action following the life-altering loss of our partners and friends in senseless, preventable traffic collisions. FFSS is working to end traffic violence in Toronto by changing laws, enforcement, street design, public attitudes and traffic culture to make our vibrant streets safer and more equitable for all road users, while supporting those who are survivors. Our members include survivors of traffic collisions in addition to friends and families whose loved ones have been killed or severely injured by careless drivers and dangerous conditions on Toronto's streets. Our goal is to end traffic violence in Toronto.

Summary of recommendations:

- 1. Approve the Staff report and ensure that safety camera (automated speed enforcement) expansion is implemented without delay.**
- 2. Ensure that safety camera programs are revenue neutral by directing revenues to street redesign projects that enhance safety for vulnerable road users.**
- 3. Designate the entire City of Toronto, except expressways, as a Community Safety Zone to create vibrant, liveable streets in all our neighbourhoods.**

We are pleased to see the City of Toronto working to move toward Vision Zero, that is, *zero traffic deaths and serious injuries on our streets*, with its next steps on traffic safety measures. The proposed changes would remove barriers that currently make it difficult to create safer streets. We are particularly pleased to see the proposal for Council to delegate the authority to implement traffic calming measures to City staff and Community Councils, a move to allow new Community Safety Zones and School Zones, and the enabling of safety cameras (automated speed enforcement) on a larger scale. We support these measures and the accompanying staff recommendations to Council, and we have three recommendations to complement the proposed next steps.

Recommendation 1: Approve the Staff report and ensure that safety camera (automated speed enforcement) expansion is implemented without delay.

In 2000, the City of Toronto placed a moratorium on new Community Safety Zones after determining that such designations had little impact on driver compliance with posted speed limits. Eighteen years later, we have even greater evidence of the need for measures that enhance compliance, namely, safer street design and automated enforcement. We are pleased to see the City consider new Community Safety Zones in conjunction with measures that enable better street design and the expansion of automated enforcement.

A major conclusion of the [2010 study conducted by the Deputy Chief Coroner of Ontario](#) was that speed kills: A pedestrian struck by a vehicle travelling 50 km/h is five times more likely to die than if they are hit at 30 km/h. We need to reduce motor vehicle speeds if we are going to eliminate deaths and serious injuries on our streets.

Last year, we appeared before the Ontario Government's Standing Committee on General Government to speak in favour of Bill 65, the *Safer School Zones Act*, which enabled many of the measures currently being considered by Toronto City Council, including the use of safety cameras in Community Safety Zones and School Zones, and municipally-established areas where default speed limits may be set lower than 50 kilometres per hour.

Given the number of deaths we have seen on our streets in the first few months of 2018, these new measures cannot come soon enough. We urge Council to approve the Staff report and ensure that safety camera expansion is implemented without delay.

Recommendation 2: Ensure that safety camera programs are revenue neutral by directing revenues to street redesign projects that enhance safety for vulnerable road users.

The 2000 City staff report that supported a moratorium on Community Safety Zones noted public hostility to these zones as a “cash grab” by governments. We also heard this view expressed during debate on Bill 65 last year.

We disagree with that position on the principle that people who endanger other people’s lives and break the law by speeding should pay the price. We also know that safety cameras actually slow down drivers. For instance, when New York City installed new cameras in 2014, at first each location issued an average of 192 violations per day. A year later, the number had decreased to an average of 69 summonses per day, or a [60 percent drop](#). Consider the lives saved at just one new camera location: safety cameras are not a “cash grab” but a life-saving device.

On a more pragmatic level, however, evidence has shown that the public is much more amenable to safety cameras if they know that all revenues from speeding fines are earmarked for safety-oriented street redesign projects, such as creating protected intersections or narrowing lane-widths to accommodate bicycle lanes, transit lanes, pedestrian islands, and/or widened sidewalks.

For this reason, we ask that the City of Toronto ensures that funds raised through the enforcement of Community Safety Zones and School Zones be directed to street redesign initiatives that keep vulnerable road users safe. The implementation of automated speed enforcement should be revenue-neutral for both the Province and the City.

Recommendation 3: Designate the entire City of Toronto, except expressways, as a Community Safety Zone to create vibrant, liveable streets in all our neighbourhoods.

A “School Speed Zone” is defined in the Highway Traffic Act as any section of road that is within 150 meters in either direction from the entrance/exit of a school. Community Safety Zones are defined as any area where, in Council’s view, public safety is of special concern. The Staff report indicates that recommendations will come to Council in June as to where these zones should be implemented.

Last year, we released our [three priority asks](#) for ending traffic violence, and one of them is for the City of Toronto to reduce the speed limit on all streets (except expressways) to 30 km/h, accompanied by a city-wide program of automatic safety cameras to ensure compliance with posted speed limits and red lights.

We noted above that our group fully supports the proposed traffic safety measures. In fact, given the evidence about where people are killed on our city streets--that is to say, throughout the city--we would urge you to give serious consideration to declaring the entire City of Toronto a Community Safety Zone.

Children, frail seniors, vulnerable persons who use mobility devices --these can be found on every street, not just near schools, retirement homes, and other targets of safety zones. Why not set a speed limit consistent with vibrant life on our streets and enforce it with safety cameras wherever we find vulnerable road users, that is to say people travelling without the benefit of steel cages and airbags?

Toronto continues to break its own records for the number of pedestrians killed by drivers on our streets. Each one of these deaths is preventable. Through better street design and automated safety enforcement throughout the city, we can end these deaths and injuries that have catastrophic effects on our lives, our families, and our neighbourhoods.

Conclusion

We urge Public Works & Infrastructure Committee, and all Council members, to take seriously the need to give safety and the value of human life greater priority on our streets. We strongly encourage you to adopt the proposed traffic safety measures without delay, to ensure that safety camera revenues are directed to safety-oriented street re-design, and to declare the entire city a Community Safety Zone. Adopting these recommendations would go a long way toward real progress on Vision Zero, the only acceptable number of deaths and serious injuries on our streets.

Sincerely,

(submitted electronically)

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Spokespersons, Friends and Families for Safe Streets (Toronto)