

From: [Jennifer Alexander](#)
To: [Etobicoke Community Council](#); [Councillor Holyday](#); [Councillor Nunziata](#); [Councillor Perruzza](#); [Councillor Morley](#); [Councillor Crisanti](#)
Subject: [External Sender] My comments for 2023.EY9.19 on November 13, 2023 Etobicoke York Community Council
Date: November 13, 2023 4:23:48 AM

To the City Clerk:

Please consider making this letter available to be read online.

Please add my comments to the agenda for the November 13, 2023 Etobicoke York Community Council meeting on item 2023.EY9.19, Renforth Drive and Toledo Road - Pedestrian Crossing Protection

I understand that my comments and the personal information in this email will form part of the public record and that my name will be listed as a correspondent on agendas and minutes of City Council or its committees. Also, I understand that agendas and minutes are posted online and my name may be indexed by search engines like Google.

Comments:

Dear Councillor Holyday, Councillor Nunziata, Councillor Perruzza, Councillor Crisanti, and Deputy Mayor Morley;

My name is Jennifer Alexander and I am a life long resident of Etobicoke Centre. I am a local road safety advocate, TDSB Volunteer, writer of community news, and Mom. I have been working for many years to get this specific crosswalk for my community to become a reality.

It started in the 2018-2019 school year when I was a School Council Chair at both Eatonville JS and Bloordale MS; both of these schools are greatly affected by the lack of a nearby proper crossing on Renforth Drive.

This location is very close to the Civic Centre and local drivers use this road as an alternative to The West Mall. The speeding is continuous throughout the day and traffic is extremely heavy at morning drop off and afternoon pickup. The road in this section connects the two schools I chaired and a third local school, Millwood JS. Other schools in this immediate area include Silverthorn CI and St. Clement, the local TCDSB elementary school. Parents fill the streets in this area everyday which makes traffic too heavy for what the roads were built to handle back in the late 50s and early 60s.

I started this work because the reality is that many families who have children that attend Eatonville feel it is necessary to drive to school once they graduate and start attending Bloordale because of the unsafe crossing on Renforth at Toledo Drive.

The majority who do walk start at The West Mall and use the lights at Eva Road. This crossing was adjusted once I started conversations with Councillor Holyday on these issues. The community found the advance for pedestrians to be very beneficial and this fixed part of the route.

Students then walk through Dennis Flynn Park which opens up to Sealcove Drive which is a direct route to Renforth. At this point in the route the students are required to cross but the only way is to J-walk. Your staff report gets in to the technical details and so I will not bore

you with repeat information.

What I do hope you take from this is how much a lack of a proper crossing here affects the community. I have done a lot of work over the past 5 years to find solutions to get more local kids to walk to school. The biggest concern of parents is the lack of a safe crossing in this specific spot.

Parents need to know that their kids will have a place to stop and wait for traffic to stop so that they can safely make their way to school. Drivers in the area speed regularly. Some drivers decide to stop for people in live lanes while everyone else around them continues driving as normal. So much is going on with the drivers that kids and teens just cannot read the road as they have a lack of experience that adults have dealing with drivers.

We need this crosswalk to keep our kids safe and this is why I have continued to push for this for years. I started when my oldest was in grade 6, I walked with her each morning and met up with her each afternoon to cross Renforth each day. I do not drive but I was not leaving her life to chance. The more I witnessed near misses the deeper I got into road safety. This grade 6 is now an eleventh grader, it's been a long time and I am happy that we are so close to finally seeing this crossing actually happen.

I share this story because a staff report does not capture the story of the local residents and so I hope that with this background story you see how much you will make a positive impact on a community by passing this motion today.

I will personally invite all of you to celebrate the installation of this crosswalk once in place as it will be a huge event for local school families and community members. I could go on further to talk about the local residents, many who are seniors, who will use this during the day but it would take far too long. I will just leave this with you, an entire community will have new options for active travel and will give even more people an option to leave the car at home for short trips.

As you deal with this motion please know I will make a point to be sitting in the chambers as this motion has been a long time in the making and I want to see this work make it to the finish line. I planned to speak but honestly I feel that writing this letter allows me to better express the story behind the report. Do not take my lack of public speaking to be a lack of concern.

Thank you for taking the time to help make my community a safer place for our kids and all other vulnerable road users.

Regards,
Jennifer Alexander

Ward 2 Resident
Local Road Safety Advocate
Head Writer of The Etobicoke Voice