



FARAZ GHOLIZADEH, Safe Parkside Co-Chair

193 Parkside Drive, Toronto, ON M6R 2Z1

416-419-9493 / gholizadeh.faraz@gmail.com

TO: Infrastructure and Environment Committee

DATE: June 27, 2023

Dear Infrastructure and Environment Committee Members,

RE: IE5.4 - Parkside Drive Study Update

We are writing to show our support for a Complete Streets redesign of Parkside Drive for 2024.

On October 12, 2021, a horrific 5-vehicle crash on Parkside Drive took the lives of Valdemar and Fatima Avila. It was a day the community had feared. One that we had predicted. We did everything in our power to try and get the city to act and save lives, but no action was taken despite what was literally hundreds of warnings from dozens and dozens of concerned residents over the course of many years. 2 innocent people, loving parents and doting grandparents, and their family paid the ultimate price.

Our community witnessed the chilling aftermath and it was Parkside residents who had to play the role of first responders. It was a truly shocking and saddening scene. A scene you would only expect to see on a highway, not a street that is sandwiched between beautiful High Park on the west side and exclusively residential family homes on the east.

In response to this incredibly sad and completely preventable loss of life, a speed camera was installed on Parkside Drive. The speed camera in question has done a much better job of informing the public about just how dangerous Parkside Drive is rather than actually making it safe. **The numbers speak for themselves: the Parkside speed camera has issued the highest number of tickets in the entire city for 10 out of 12 months, issuing nearly 25,000 speeding tickets in the process, which accounts for nearly 10% of all tickets issued in the entire City of Toronto.**

That's because Parkside Drive's issues stem from one of design, and a speed camera can not overcome such a dangerous design. It's a design that promotes speeding. A design that makes it feel comfortable and normal to drive at very dangerous and often deadly speeds. A design that has very little consideration for pedestrians and absolutely no consideration at all for cyclists. In short, it's a design that kills.

That is why it is imperative that the Parkside Drive Study implement interim safety measures for 2024 such as dedicated/protected bike lanes and vehicle lane reductions in order to control speeds, protect our vulnerable road users, and save lives. These changes are urgently needed. This fact is supported by the city's own data.

We ask that Councillor Gord Perks, Transportation Services, and the Infrastructure and Environment Committee show their commitment to Vision Zero and their statement that "human life should be prioritized over all other objectives within all aspects of the transportation system." We ask that this commitment be met through a Complete Streets redesign that prioritizes people walking and biking on Parkside Drive in 2024.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'Faraz Gholizadeh', written in a cursive style.

Faraz Gholizadeh on behalf of Safe Parkside