

Brown School Parent Council
454 Avenue Road
Toronto, ON
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brownparentcouncil@gmail.com

April 7, 2023

Dear Members of the Toronto East York Community Council,

We, the Co-Chairs of the Brown J.P.S School Council, are writing to you on behalf of the Brown J.P.S. School Council and parents/guardians within our school, in full support to the recommendations for Avenue Road between St. Clair Avenue West and Bloor Street West as put forward by Councillor Dianne Saxe, Councillor Josh Matlow, and the Avenue Road Safety Coalition (ARSC). That is, we fully support reducing the speed limit to 40 km/h; we fully support installing physical barriers in front of the Church of Messiah at 240 Avenue Road; and, we fully support a road safety project to increase the widths of the sidewalks to make the community more walk-friendly.

For the Brown Junior Public School families and community, having safer streets and wider sidewalks is of utmost importance since a large proportion of our students walk on Avenue Road to get to and from school. However, students and families often feel that they are walking along an expressway given the fast speed driven by cars. Our school resides right at 454 Avenue Road, and so, it is imperative to reduce the speed limit to 40 km/h given that there are so many children and families. In fact, there are 5 schools and 4 senior residences on or within walking distance to Avenue Road, which means that there are many young children and elderly people living in the area who would be at risk of pedestrian injuries and fatalities caused by high-speeding cars.

The ARSC also requests that physical barriers be established at the curb lane in front of the Church of Messiah, which would protect pedestrians from speeding cars who are lining up for the food bank on the narrow sidewalk. Brown School also fully supports this motion as we completely understand the benefit and importance of a physical barrier since there are currently metal barriers on Avenue Road north and south of the school. For our families, these physical barriers are effective to prevent pedestrians from accidentally walking onto the road and as well, they create a much safer and walk-friendly environment.

Lastly, widening sidewalks to meet City standards is essential so that all people and as many people can enjoy walking on Avenue Road. Currently, there are some sections that are obstructed by utility poles and sign posts that may impede passage by strollers and people with mobility devices. Given that there will be an increased number of residents in the area due to several condo developments, it is essential to widen sidewalks to accommodate the increased number of pedestrians. We believe that sidewalk enhancement and reconfiguration can be achieved as they do not require major changes underground infrastructure.

We believe in a safer Avenue Road and hopes that all our students will one day be able to walk on Avenue Road without any fear of pedestrian injury. We also believe in Vision Zero, and to obtain Vision Zero, an immediate speed reduction must be made, physical barriers must be installed, and sidewalks must be widened. Avenue Road is a major thoroughfare for drivers into downtown and for students attending Brown JPS, so let us create a safer space for everyone to share and enjoy. In all, we at Brown JPS and the Parent Council fully support the proposal by the ARSC and look forward to seeing the implementation of these recommendations.

Sincerely,

Lynn Thomson and Laura Petronzi, Co-Chairs of the Brown JPS School Council
and Members of the Brown Junior Public School community