

April 6, 2024
Etobicoke York Community Council
Etobicoke Civic Centre
399 The West Mall
Etobicoke, ON M9C 2Y2

RE: EY 12.17: Burnhamthorpe Rd - Speed Limit Amendment

Dear Councillor Holyday, Councillor Perruzza, Councillor Crisanti, Councillor Morley and Councillor Nunziata,

Friends and Families for Safe Streets (FFSS) is a group of people whose loved ones were senselessly killed in violent traffic crashes, and people who survived a preventable crash with severe, life altering injuries. All of the trauma, violence and loss that was inflicted on us, very suddenly and utterly against our will, could have been prevented with effective Vision Zero design changes to our streets.

We write today to **strongly disagree with staff's recommendation not to decrease the speed limit on Burnhamthorpe Rd** between Kipling Ave and Dundas St W.

We implore you to **do the right thing and take a preventative Vision Zero approach** to eliminate the risk for someone to be severely injured or killed in a preventable crash.

[Toronto Police's All-Collision Database](#) shows **399 recorded collisions** on the 900m stretch of Burnhamthorpe Rd, a jaw-dropping number, nearly 40 collisions per year, or one crash every nine days. Those collisions caused **injuries to 59 people, most of them (51) being motorists**. 9 people walking were struck, of whom 8 were recorded as being injured, and 1 person on a bike was struck. Two of the 399 crashes inflicted injuries so severe they were included in the [Killed or Severely Injured database](#): on June 12, 2023, [a 12 year old girl was struck](#) and nearly killed at Burnhamthorpe Rd and Kipling Ave in 2023, and on November 29 2021 a 20-24 year old motorist was nearly killed in a crash at Burnhamthorpe Rd and Dundas St W. Local residents have shared shocking photos of post-crash wreckage, with drivers having slammed their cars at high speeds into houses, transit shelters, and hydro and light poles. The horrifying wreckage, along with the recency of those two KSI near-deaths, show that Burnhamthorpe Rd is desperately crying out for safety upgrades before a human being is violently killed.

The reason the number of collisions on Burnhamthorpe Rd is so high is the obsolete high-speed car-centric design of the road. The wide lanes for cars encourage drivers to travel at speeds much higher than the posted speed limit. The 85th speed percentile has been [so thoroughly debunked](#) it is hard to understand why

Transportation Services appeals to in their March 19 2024 Report for Action to deny a speed reduction by a mere 10km/h. In any case, the 85th speed percentile was found to be 65km/h, a speed that guarantees violent death to anyone struck by a driver traveling at that speed. As elected leaders, you can't possibly be satisfied with the prospect of your constituents' families and lives being shattered by such predictable and preventable violent injury and death, when **you can do something effective to prevent it.**

[As reported in The Local](#) in 2023, City Council voted to ease traffic warrant restrictions to make "any location with even a single collision injury or death more eligible for safety improvements". That should make it easy to make safety upgrades to this stretch of Burnhamthorpe Rd, with it having not one but *two* KSI-level injuries inflicted in preventable crashes within the last 2.5 years.

We urge you strongly not only to reduce the posted speed limit to 40km/h, but also **follow it up with simple and inexpensive Vision Zero design change:** narrower lanes for cars to discourage speeding and make the design speed match the posted speed limit, left turn calming measures, curb extensions at all crosswalks, raised crosswalks, tightened turning radii at all corners, and ideally transformation into a Complete Street with dedicated infrastructure for Active Transportation, to support getting back on track to meet TransformTO's climate goals.

We urge you to try to empathize with victims of road violence to understand the moral urgency of moving as quickly and boldly as possible to improve road safety. Families are shattered and lives are ruined. Survivors of road violence are left to suffer with chronic debilitating pain. Mental and physical health are destroyed. Victims are left unable to work, and relegated to a cruel ODSP system. Families are shackled with a lifetime of grief, having to face the empty space at their tables, and grapple with what to do with the silent, empty bedrooms and bloodstained clothing they got back. **You can prevent all of that anguish and tragedy by building safe streets.** If you got into politics to make this city a better place, you must override staff's baffling recommendation to maintain a failed and dangerous status quo, and work to make Burnhamthorpe Rd safer for every road user.

Thank you,



Jessica Spieker
Spokesperson, Friends and Families for Safe Streets