

**SAFE PARKSIDE**



October 21, 2024

**Infrastructure and Environment Committee**

Toronto City Hall  
100 Queen Street West  
Toronto, ON M5G 1P5

Dear members of the Infrastructure and Environment Committee,

**Re: IE17.4 - Parkside Drive Study Final Report**

We wish this letter could have a celebratory tone, but it's been a long, frustrating and very tragic journey that brings us here. Concerned neighbourhood residents have been advocating for safety on Parkside Drive for well over a decade. Safe Parkside was formed prior to the deadly 2021 Parkside crash with the goal to prevent tragedy and save lives. We failed in that goal because our city did not support us in our effort. We are writing to you looking for that support with the hope to prevent further tragedy.

We appreciate Mayor Olivia Chow voicing her concerns about the dangerous conditions on Parkside Drive having recently said:

"Parkside Drive has seen fatalities, has seen serious injuries. We need to do something about Parkside Drive."

Councillor Gord Perks also shared his concerns having recently said:

"It's almost as if we have a highway that runs between peoples' homes and a city park, and that's just not a good circumstance."

With these acknowledgements of the unsafe conditions and the dangers that persist on Parkside Drive, Safe Parkside strongly supports the Complete Street redesign of Parkside Drive and kindly asks that the first phase, which involves the installation of bike lanes between Bloor Street and the High Park Trail, **be completed in 2025**, reflecting the clear need for urgency. If the Lake Shore intersection is too complex a project to deliver in 2025, it can be completed at a future time. The most important thing is doing what we can as quickly as we can to ensure no one else is seriously injured or killed in such a senseless and preventable way. Our Vision Zero commitment demands as much.

As currently designed, Parkside Drive is a fast, dangerous and deadly city-designated Community Safety Zone that doesn't meet any of the city's minimum safety requirements for an arterial road. Excessive vehicle speeds, reckless/careless driving and distracted driving remain serious safety concerns, especially considering the high number of families, children, schools, daycares, seniors, cyclists, residents, visitors and all the other vulnerable road users who are forced to endure Parkside Drive in order to access High Park.

We urge Mayor Chow, the IEC, Councillor Perks and Transportation Services to expedite these much-needed, long-overdue and life-saving measures by delivering safety on Parkside in 2025. We are asking for our city to prioritize peoples' health and safety, to prioritize our Vision Zero and TransformTO goals, and to prioritize human life. Such dangerous conditions should not exist anywhere on our city streets, let alone in a city-designated Community Safety Zone which is, inexplicably, lacking in all of the city's own minimum safety requirements for an arterial road and also happens to be located alongside the city's busiest park. This is a recipe for tragedy and tragedies are exactly what we have experienced on Parkside Drive. We have seen 3 innocent people die in recent years, many more seriously injured, and we care for 2 memorials on this short, 2km street.

We look forward to our City heeding residents' calls for safety, heeding our Mayor's and Councillor's calls for action, heeding their own data which indicate the urgent need for action, and finally delivering the much-needed, long-overdue and life-saving safety measures to Parkside Drive in 2025.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Faraz Gholizadeh', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Faraz Gholizadeh on behalf of Safe Parkside