

***A community coalition of:
ABC, Annex, Republic of Rathnelly, and Cottingham Square Residents'
Associations, De La Salle College, Cottingham and Brown Junior Public Schools
Parent Councils, and Walk Toronto***

Friday, January 12, 2018

Councillor Wong-Tam
Councillor Josh Matlow
Councillor Joe Cressy
Toronto City Hall
100 Queen Street West, Suites A5, A17, and C50
Toronto, ON M5H 2N2

Sent electronically and by regular mail

Dear Councillors Wong-Tam, Matlow and Cressy,

Re: Recommendations by community groups for Corridor Safety Study - Avenue Road

We represent a community coalition that includes the ABC, Annex, Republic of Rathnelly, and Cottingham Square Residents' Associations, De La Salle College 'Oaklands,' Brown Junior Public School and Cottingham Junior Public School Parent Councils, and Walk Toronto.

We appreciate the opportunity to provide feedback on the Corridor Safety Study - Avenue Rd. prepared by Transportation Services, dated September 27, 2017. We believe that with the recommendations we outline below, the safety of pedestrians and other road users on Avenue Rd. can be significantly improved.

We would appreciate your assistance in arranging and facilitating a meeting with Transportation Services staff to discuss our recommendations.

From a pedestrian perspective, Avenue Rd. is an intimidating street with fast-moving motor traffic --- most of which travels at or exceeds the posted 50 km/h speed limit, according to the study. The area in review passes through a predominantly residential area with very narrow sidewalks.

Along the safety study area there are elementary and secondary schools, recreational facilities, seniors' homes, churches, and parks. De La Salle College, for example, has 650 students divided among grades 5 to 12; 100 Niagara University students (teacher candidates); and approximately 100 to 150 arena patrons during the week and 150 to 200 on weekends. The three seniors'

residences are home to over 300 people. Cottingham and Brown Public School have 158 and 600 students, respectively.

In addition to the existing residential population, a number of new apartment and condominium buildings are bringing thousands of new residents into the area.

Our recommendations:

A. Speed

A uniform speed limit of 40 km/h would be consistent with the goals of [Toronto's Vision Zero Road Safety Plan](#). For safety reasons, speed limits on many arterial roads have already been reduced to 40 km/h, including portions of Avenue Rd. and University Ave.

Although Avenue Rd. is considered an arterial route for motor traffic, it is nonetheless a residential area for many people, including ones with mobility issues, and a school zone for hundreds of children.

Lower speed limits are also consistent with [recommendations by Ontario's Chief Coroner in 2012](#) and have proven to be effective in saving lives and reducing injuries, especially for vulnerable road users. At 50 km/h an hour, a pedestrian hit by an automobile is likely to be killed, while the chance of survival for a pedestrian increases with every kilometer that the speed is decreased.

B. Wider sidewalks

In 1959, sidewalks on Avenue Rd. were narrowed to accommodate two additional lanes of motor traffic. The sidewalks now lack any buffer from the road, and even a small misstep by a senior or child can put them in harm's way. Sadly, we continue to see pedestrians killed or injured on Toronto sidewalks.

On some stretches of Avenue Rd., the sidewalk is so narrow that a parent with a baby stroller or a person in a wheelchair cannot pass another pedestrian. The sidewalks are further obstructed by utility poles and sign posts. During winter months, usable portions of the sidewalk are further narrowed with snow moved from the roadway.

We support the [recent call by a coalition of groups](#) for a minimum sidewalk width of 2.1 metres. Avenue Rd. sidewalks fall far short of this width at many locations. We agree that "people with mobility devices, wheelchairs, and walking with caregivers, guide dogs, shopping bags or children in large strollers deserve the right to move safely on our city sidewalks."

C. Enforcement

We are not confident that a request of the police to better enforce local speed limits will be effective. Over a period of two years, our requests for police enforcement have proved futile.

We believe that wider sidewalks, a reduction in the number of lanes, and the deployment of red light and speed cameras will be a more effective way to reduce speed and improve the safety of pedestrians and other vulnerable road users. We also support the full use of municipal powers, once fully enacted, to use red-light and speed cameras to enforce motor traffic laws, as provided for in [Ontario's Safer School Zones Act, 2017](#).

D. Lane Reduction

The current configuration of six motor lanes south of St. Clair and north of Davenport gives the distinct impression of a high-speed highway. Converting the roadway into a uniform two travel lanes in each direction would more effectively reduce the actual travel speeds of motorists.

By reducing these lanes to a consistent two lanes, sidewalks can be widened to a safer width. We believe our recommendation for wider sidewalks fulfills the [TO Core objective](#) to "Create the right balance of space for pedestrians, cyclists, transit and vehicles."

A pilot study may be the most effective way to confirm the effectiveness of our recommended changes.

E. Additional items

Additional, specific measures would also help facilitate the recommended pedestrian safety improvements.

By expanding service of the TTC's #5 and #142 Avenue Rd. buses --- and a reduction in the express service fare --- at least some of the motor traffic along Avenue Rd. can be converted from car to transit. This would also be consistent with Toronto's climate change goals.

The addition of school crossing guards for the Cottingham and Brown schools would help ensure the safety of our children.

Other measures listed in the Vision Zero Road Safety Plan would likewise add to the safety of pedestrians. These measures include advance green light signals for cyclists and pedestrians, the creation of seniors' safety zones, improvement in street lighting, automated pedestrian detection, and improvements in accessibility for the disabled.

We note that the Corridor Safety Study did not include safety data for the intersections of Avenue and Davenport Roads or for Avenue Road and St. Clair Avenue. We believe that such data would be useful for the decision-making process.

We look forward to discussing our recommendations with you and city staff. Please contact us by emailing albert@koehl.ca

Sincerely,



ABC Residents' Association,



Annex Residents' Association,



Republic of Rathnelly Residents' Association,




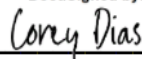
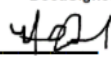
Cottingham Square Residents' Association (and for Cycle Toronto, Midtown),



De La Salle College,



Brown Junior Public School Parent Council,

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Cottingham Junior Public School Parent Council



Walk Toronto

cc. Bruce Clayton, Manager, Traffic Operations Toronto and East York District Transportation Services

Dave Twaddle, C.E.T., Acting Director, Transportation Services Toronto and East York District

Councillor Joe Mihevc