

Pilon, Janet

Subject: Unsafe streets in Hamilton

From: Larissa Ciupka

Sent: Tuesday, May 10, 2022 10:32 AM

To: clerk@hamilton.ca

Subject: Unsafe streets in Hamilton

Dear Sir or Madam,

My husband and I moved to Hamilton over 25 years ago. We first settled on St. Clair Avenue near Main and Sherman. Clear in my memory was walking our daughter along Main Street to her babysitter (short of cutting through other people's backyards, we had no other option but to walk along Main) and seeing near-miss after near-miss on this one-way highway in the middle of a residential neighbourhood. In one week, we witnessed two car accidents right in front of us.

I grew up in Toronto and went to both high school and university in downtown Toronto. I wasn't nervous or anxious about walking in Toronto.

Yet when we moved to Hamilton and I worked downtown, I only tried walking home once after dark (but at still a relatively early hour, before 9 pm). The one-way street system meant it was not pleasant to walk along either Main or King and as a result there were long stretches where there were no other pedestrians. Just me, and lots of cars whizzing by. I felt vulnerable and exposed.

We now live in Kirkendall and I often walk downtown to the Art Gallery of Hamilton, where I volunteer, and to the Market.

I am able-bodied. I have good eyesight and hearing. As a pedestrian, I have to be hyper-vigilant always. Between getting splashed on the south side of Aberdeen before Queen thanks to lousy drainage (why yes, I supposed I could try to turn left off Mapleside to cross at the Kent light, but the number of times vehicles run the red there....), waiting extra long before crossing south at Queen to ensure I'm not mowed down by someone running the advance green after it's done, or turning around and making eye contact with drivers turning right onto Queen after they no longer have the advance green (impossible if the car windows are tinted) and then running the gauntlet of drivers turning onto one-way streets and only looking to see if there are cars coming but not looking to see if there are any pedestrians crossing the opposite way, and good luck getting cars to stop at the crosswalks along the way, even with lights flashing.

In short, I can't remember the last time I walked downtown and DIDN'T have a near-miss with a car: drivers travelling over the speed limit; drivers running a red light/turning after the advance green is finished; drivers barely slowing down at stop signs; drivers blowing past crosswalks with lights flashing; drivers forcing me to walk into traffic because their cars are in the pedestrian cross over.

It's hard to be the best place to raise a child and age in place when it's not safe to take a walk in your city.

Stop the bloodshed.

Sincerely,

Larissa Ciupka (she/her)

