
From: Web NoReply
Sent: September 04, 2021 12:34 PM
To: City Council
Subject: Email - Communication - Peter Gallen - Residential Speed Limit Review - Speed Limit and Eligible Streets - CK 6320-1
Attachments: gallensubmission.docx
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Submitted on Saturday, September 4, 2021 - 12:33

Submitted by user: Anonymous

Submitted values are:

Date Saturday, September 04, 2021
To His Worship the Mayor and Members of City Council
First Name Peter
Last Name Gallen
Phone Number (306) [REDACTED]
Email [REDACTED]
Address [REDACTED] Haight Crescent
City Saskatoon
Province Saskatchewan
Postal Code [REDACTED]
Name of the organization or agency you are representing (if applicable)
Subject Lower Speed Limit Review
Meeting (if known) SPC-Transportation & subsequent City Council
Comments

The Chair, Your Worship, Members of Committee and Council: With my arguments in the attached written submission I hope to make a few points that seem to have been missed by the press as well as many submissions in the engagement. I trust that the Committee and Council will carefully weigh the benefits to people in the public realm (i.e., fewer deaths, injuries and livable residential streets) against a small inconvenience for motorists (i.e., potentially slightly longer trip times).

[REDACTED]
Will you be submitting a video to be vetted prior to council meeting? No

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

It is remarkable how differently people can look at the same data and reach very different conclusions. A case in point is provided by the City of Saskatoon's current Speed Limit Review.

There are over 7000 collisions involving motor vehicles in Saskatoon every year. More than 150 documented collisions involve a pedestrian or cyclist, resulting in a few fatalities and 10-15 serious injuries. It is seldom mentioned, however, that on top of the known collisions, there are always many more near misses and a still larger, unknown number of people who decide not to walk or cycle because it feels unsafe. In this scenario most people, who are motorists, focus on the fatalities and conclude that maintenance of current speed limits for their own convenience is important enough to justify the current amount of annual 'collateral damage' to pedestrians/cyclists and innocent bystanders.

I disagree with this typical motorist viewpoint and would like to make three points based on the data:

- Regardless of how the collision statistics are classified and analyzed, it is clear that a whopping one-third of all 7,000+ collisions in the city occur on streets where people have their homes, with most collisions occurring on residential streets that should be safe for use by pedestrians, cyclists and people living there. This is a disturbingly high proportion given that the purpose of Local and Collector streets is to provide vehicle access to properties and not necessarily move traffic efficiently. It is easy to see why many Saskatoon families are reluctant to let their children play on the street in front of their home, walk and bike to school, or take transit to get places.
- Some 650 speed measurements conducted to date in Neighbourhood Traffic Reviews (NTRs) consistently point out that motorists do not exceed the posted speed limit on these residential streets. Yet even more significantly, the residents taking part in these reviews insist with equal consistency that the actual speeds are too high. The obvious conclusion from these two facts would seem to be that the posted speed limits do not allow residents to feel comfortable and safe on their neighbourhood streets. The problem is not people driving above the posted speed limit, but the likelihood that posted speed limits are too high.
- Although 150 annual collisions between motor vehicles and pedestrians/cyclists may seem like a comparatively low number to some, the consequences of these collisions are much more severe for the pedestrian/cyclist than they are for the motorist, who typically escapes without a scratch. It is the unprotected pedestrian, cyclist or bystander who risks death or severe injury, and research clearly shows that fatalities and serious injuries are directly correlated with the speed of the vehicle. The slower the vehicle is moving, the fewer the number of collisions and the less serious the collision will be for the pedestrian, cyclist or bystander who is hit. With current speed limits, about 10% of those hit by a vehicle die or are severely injured in Saskatoon and many more are less severely injured, with all the consequences that entails for themselves, their families, friends, employers, etc. This heavy toll of more than fifteen victims every year falls far below the much higher standard of safety put forward by movements like Vision Zero.

Based on this understanding of the data, I strongly advocate for lower posted speed limits in Saskatoon's residential neighbourhoods (which might include prudent exception of certain Collector streets).