HARBORD VILLAGE
RESIDENTS'
ASSOCIATION
Box 68522, 360A Bloor St. W.
Toronto, ON M5S 1X1

June 19, 2018.

On Tuesday of last week—the day two cyclists and one pedestrian died as a result of street accidents in Toronto—thirty volunteers from the Harbord Village Residents' Association observed the interactions between cars and pedestrians at intersections in our neighbourhood to try to better understand the local risks to pedestrian safety. We spent from 7am to 10am and from 3pm to 7pm at eight intersections of residential streets and at the corner of Harbord and Robert Street. We recorded over 6000 events and were shocked at what we saw:

- about 45% of vehicles did not stop at stop signs.
- about 35% did not stop at the crosswalk at Harbord and Robert when it was occupied
- vehicles were observed to go the wrong way on one way streets more than 50 times (although the same vehicle may have been counted twice if it went the wrong way through more than one intersection!)

We all saw near-misses. Some volunteers watched a garbage truck hit a parked car and keep on going. Although we were not actively monitoring cyclists, we all observed that the majority disregard one-way signs, stop signs and crosswalks. We couldn't help noticing that there is no enforcement, and indeed a police car was seen making a rolling stop.

These initial findings suggest residents in downtown neighbourhoods are facing an unacceptable and so far invisible level of daily risk on our inner streets. Injury or death should not be left to luck or watchful walking; rather we need the further protection of responsible driver behaviour, effective police enforcement and street design.

In summary, we suggest there is an urgent need for:

1. **Enforcement** of existing laws
2. **New street design and signage**
3. A systematic and rigorous **study** of the issues
4. **Education** of the public about existing laws

Given that we have this baseline information, Harbord Village would seem to be an ideal site for a pilot safety audit and for testing the efficacy of various solutions.

DETAILS

The neighbours in Harbord Village are very concerned with pedestrian safety. At the biannual meetings of HVRA, we hear frequent complaints about cars travelling the wrong way on our

one-way streets and failing to stop for stop signs. The Transportation Committee of HVRA undertook to determine the extent of these problems and to seek solutions.

WHAT WE DID

On June 12, 2018, 30 volunteers were assigned to 8 intersections in the HV maze. They were to record all instances of vehicles travelling the wrong way on one-way streets and all occasions on which drivers failed to make a complete stop at a stop sign. No attempt was made to identify individual vehicles: rather, the focus was on determining the frequency of risky driving at each corner relative to the number of vehicles passing through it.

WHAT WE OBSERVED ON INTERNAL STREETS

A total of 6513 observations were made at the 7 intersections where two one way residential streets met. Vehicles travelling the wrong way on one way streets were observed 54 times. Vehicles failing to come to a complete stop were observed 2881 times (44.2%) at these intersections.

WHAT WE OBSERVED ON HARBORD

The same observations were made at the intersection of Robert St (residential one way north-south) and Harbord Street (a busy east-west commercial and commuter street). There is also a signal-controlled crosswalk at the intersection. Vehicles travelling the wrong way north or south on Robert Street were observed 3 times. Of the 246 vehicles observed on Robert Street, 52 (21%) failed to come to a complete stop at the stop signs at Harbord Street. For the most part, vehicles from Robert only stopped when the traffic was so heavy on Harbord Street that they could not immediately merge with it.

WHAT WE OBSERVED AT HARBORD CROSSWALK

The frequency with which pedestrians crossed Harbord using the crosswalk was recorded between 3:30 pm and 5:30 pm. 226 crossings were observed. On 81 occasions (35.8%) the traffic did not come to a complete stop at the crosswalk to permit pedestrians to finish crossing. Between 5:30 and 7:00 pm the number of individuals entering the crosswalk, not merely the number of crossings, was observed. In total during that period, 192 people attempted to cross. For 55 pedestrians (28.6%), vehicles on Harbord did not make a complete stop.

Although these data are preliminary, they are convincing. We will be releasing a more comprehensive report in the near future.

Carolee Orme

for the Transportation Committee
Harbord Village Residents' Association
harbordvillage.com