

September 9, 2020

BY E-MAIL

Hon. Caroline Mulroney
Minister of Transportation
777 Bay St., 5th Floor
Toronto, ON M7A 1Z8

SUBJECT: Request for immediate mitigation of the **Westbound QEW Dixie off-ramp** conditions at North Service Road in Mississauga - Further to the instant **Death of cyclist Ahmed Kamal** on the evening of August 6, 2020 at this location.

Dear Minister Mulroney:

We are Mississauga residents who supported the Ghost Bike Memorial Ride in honour of deceased Mississauga cyclist Ahmed Kamal, which was organized by **Advocacy for Respect for Cyclists (ARC)** on August 13, 2020. There was shock among the attendees upon witnessing first-hand the danger presented at the three-way junction of the North Service Road (NSR), Dixie Road and the westbound QEW Dixie off-ramp.

View the location via Google Maps: <https://goo.gl/maps/MYs5dvdhVXPq6TXw5>

The unsafe configuration allows highway-speed vehicles exiting the westbound QEW at Dixie Road to aim (without a stop) straight for slower local drivers and cyclists on eastbound NSR, who must turn across the foot of the exit ramp in order to proceed northbound on Dixie Road. This is what happened to Ahmed; the infrastructure failed.

OBSERVATIONS:

1. There are more active transportation users now due to the pandemic, including many inexperienced cyclists unprepared for such a confusing junction and mix of traffic speeds. But here, even experienced cyclists and indeed drivers are imperiled, as shown by the vehicle debris littering the grass strip along the NSR sound barrier.
2. New users to the area (both drivers and cyclists) would not expect traffic to be required to stop *only* in the eastbound direction. Most intersections in the province require stop conditions for *both* opposing directions of travel. A two-way stop could well have saved the life of this cyclist.
3. The QEW Dixie interchange was built many years ago (mid-20th century) when traffic volumes were much lower and few (if any) cyclists were anticipated. Piecemeal changes have been made over time, perhaps explaining why such a configuration remains in use despite reduced operational safety levels.

REQUEST:

That MTO review the westbound QEW Dixie off-ramp and implement all possible short-term improvements, to help prevent future death or serious injury. We also ask MTO to work with the City and the Region collectively to improve safety on the municipal roads entered from the off-ramp, utilizing the principles of Vision Zero.

We understand there are three jurisdictions involved at this location:

City of Mississauga (North Service Road), **Region of Peel** (Dixie Road), and the provincial **Ministry of Transportation** (QEW and ramps). While each jurisdiction may technically fulfill the requirements for their portion of the adjoining roadways, the functional nexus of these is open to disaster. This is where collaboration is essential.

The gravest and most obvious danger is the westbound QEW Dixie off-ramp. The much-needed and planned reconfiguration of the QEW - Dixie Road Interchange, including modifications to local municipal roads, is some years away. *Ref:* MTO website: <http://www.gewdixiedetaildesign.ca/>. Mitigation is urgently needed now.

MITIGATION OPTIONS TO CONSIDER:

- 1. Installation of a full stop** at the end of the QEW Dixie off-ramp, with advance warning that vehicles will need to stop before proceeding into the neighbourhood. The existing stop sign at NSR would be retained/repositioned for a two-way stop condition.
- 2. Merge the two lanes exiting the QEW** into one channel that must go north on Dixie Road via the slip lane, with no option to continue westbound on NSR.
- 3. Elimination of the QEW Dixie exit** entirely, with the Cawthra exit sufficing.

We note that both the City of Mississauga and the Region of Peel have adopted **Vision Zero** traffic safety policies, including road safety by design so that user errors are not fatal nor severely injurious.

We trust that immediate mitigation of the proven hazard at the QEW Dixie off-ramp to local roads might give some comfort to the deceased's family, in that Ahmed's death would lead to positive change and future lives may be saved.

Please see Appendices for further references and selected images of the present road conditions which we studied and drove in order to understand the traffic flow.

Sincerely,

Dorothy Tomiuk | Leonard Verwey | Jonathan Giggs | Glenn Voakes | Natalie Halfff
 Creators of platform <https://twitter.com/MissCyclingNow> (addresses supplied only in Minister's letter)

COPIED:

Hon. Kinga Surma, Associate Minister of Transportation

Rudy Cuzzetto, MPP Mississauga-Lakeshore

Stephen Dasko, City and Regional Councillor, Mississauga Ward 1

Geoff Wright, Commissioner, Transportation & Works, City of Mississauga

Stephanie Smith, Legislative Coordinator, Mississauga Cycling Advisory Committee

Allyson D'Ovidio, Legislative Coordinator, Mississauga Road Safety Committee

Andrew Farr, Commissioner of Public Works, Region of Peel

Joey Schwartz, Volunteer, Advocacy for Respect for Cyclists (ARC)

Aly Kamal and Ali Kamal, Father and Brother of the Deceased

APPENDIX 1: REFERENCES

Biography of Ahmed Kamal, a cybersecurity specialist who moved here from Egypt in 2014 with his wife and two young children to make a new and successful life in Canada: <https://makemore.laps.yorku.ca/iep-students-quotes/kamal-ahmed-senior-business-analyst-cyber-security-rogers-communication-inc/>

Mississauga News article (August 7, 2020): **Cyclist struck and killed after Mississauga head-on collision** <https://www.mississauga.com/news-story/10133202-cyclist-struck-and-killed-after-mississauga-head-on-collision/>

To virtually "drive" the QEW Dixie exit ramp via Google Maps Streetview, use the link: <https://www.google.ca/maps/@43.600633,-79.5648647,3a,75y,224.39h,97.62t/data=!3m6!1e1!3m4!1se36V3QucMcqqmDaUdV0qUw!2e0!7i16384!8i8192>

Full-size images embedded in Appendix 2 may be viewed in sequence 1-19 on Google Drive (*not all images are reproduced in this Letter*). Public with this link: https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1BJuxZivW5Re5hjpDB_9xQIW6e615ijFc?usp=sharing

APPENDIX 2: IMAGES

Photograph 1: It doesn't start well at the QEW Dixie exit! There is an initial merge from a stop condition onto the QEW exit ramp from an old piece of NSR. Vehicles are flying past at highway speed yet it is necessary to merge onto the ramp from a stop.



Photograph 3: We observed many cars exiting the westbound QEW off-ramp without slowing to 60 km/h as posted. Very residential feel to what is essentially an industrial off-ramp with many large trucks at high speed.



Photograph 4: No indication of the presence of turning cyclists or drivers at the end of the ramp. Full speed ahead!



Photograph 6: The right lane gets a warning for the northbound slip lane to Dixie Road. No warning at all for the left lane NSR exit which is far more dangerous.



Photograph 8: The right lane gets a second, strong warning for the northbound slip lane to Dixie Road. No slow-down warning for the imminent left lane exit at NSR.



Photograph 9: The right lane gets a big sign for the northbound slip lane to Dixie Road. Still no warning for the left lane NSR exit which is now visible.



Photograph 10: Lots of way-finding signage for the right lane. Nothing at all for the left lane NSR exit which looks benign, with no stop nor warning of local traffic that may cross the path unexpectedly. The onus is placed on local traffic to stop and yield to the oncoming higher-speed traffic, rather than the other way around. A turning NSR driver or cyclist could misjudge time needed to clear the innocuous-looking QEW exit lane.



Photograph 13: Exit, lane left! A turning cyclist or car would be the last thing an exiting highway driver would expect to see here, suddenly right in front of them, and far too late to slow down! Eastbound stop sign is not easily visible from the WB ramp.



Photograph 16: A wider view shows how far the stop sign is from the danger lying ahead. A cyclist might think that once past the stop sign, it is clear sailing. “Do not Enter” symbol seems small and routine, “Keep Turning” (checkered diamond) seems clear, but the “Opposing Traffic has Right of Way” statement, which must be read, up so high, is inadequate to convey the severe danger of oncoming high-speed traffic.



Photograph 17: From the set-back position at the stop sign on eastbound NSR, with obstructing eye-level signage at the corner, it is hard to even see the oncoming traffic.



Photograph 18: Heavy vehicles come off the QEW Dixie off-ramp at high speed. The small stop sign set so far back, and the ambiguous warning signs and flashing light further on and up the pole, beyond a cyclist's view while attempting to navigate the turn, don't convey the extreme danger that could arrive at any minute. Ironically, the eastbound traffic side has all the signs and warnings but misses the point.



Photograph 19: Ahmed Kamal R I P. Rest in Peace. Ride in Peace.

