

RECEIVED VIA EMAIL

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, August 10, 2020 9:28 AM
To: Alar Soever [REDACTED]
Subject: Georgian Trail bikes and pedestrians

Good morning,

The attached article from the Toronto Star newspaper "The Fixer" was well written about pathways that are used by both pedestrians and people riding bikes. There is nothing worse than someone on a bike that comes from behind you, while you are walking and shouts

" on your right/left " or just whiz by you.

The article states The Highway Traffic Act requires you to have a "bell, horn or gong in good working order" to alert people that they are approaching. Failure to do so has a fine of \$85.00.

Can we have 2 signs on Bruce Street and Georgian Trail east and west stating all bikes must have bells etc? Let's hope if the bikers have them they will use them.

It has always been an issue but with the increase of people using The Georgian Trail due to the " stay vacationers" prompted by COVID 19 virus it seemed now was the right time to bring this to your attention.

Many thanks

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Thornbury, N0H 2P0
[REDACTED]

Bikes need bells or horns to warn pedestrians

JACK LAKEY
SPECIAL TO THE STAR

Everybody appreciates being warned of oncoming danger, a truth that seems to be lost on all but a few cyclists.

The relentless sunshine and fine weather, along with a need to exercise our way out of the COVID-19 blues, has produced droves of bike riders who compete with pedestrians for space on recreational trails and sidewalks.

Canadian Tire and Walmart reported last spring that they could barely keep up with the demand from people who wanted a new bike, which only added to the ever-increasing volume of riders around here.

But how many are aware of a Highway Traffic Act requirement that every bike must have a "bell, horn or gong in good working order" to alert people

that they're approaching from behind? Or that it's enforceable with a fine of \$85?

Not nearly enough, based on what I've seen.

Last week, I went for a stroll on the Bestview hiking and recreational trail in North York to check out a problem with a bridge (more on that soon), which put me and other hikers in proximity to bike riders sharing the path.

I had just spotted two women who were well into their senior years on the other side of trail when I suddenly heard a soft humming sound that I thought was sort of odd.

About two seconds later, a cyclist wearing gear that would not be out of place on the Tour de France blew past me from behind, so close that I could feel the breeze of his passing.

The women saw him coming

and were not in danger. But I had no clue, other than the hum of his tires. It had me wondering what might have happened if the roles were reversed and the cyclist had approached the women from behind.

What if one had suddenly moved toward the centre of the path? She would have been mowed down like a dog in the street.

It reminded me of a situation on a sidewalk last spring, when I was walking and heard a bell behind me, along with the voice of a woman who said, "behind you," warning me of her approach on a bike.

Even though sidewalks are exclusively for pedestrians, I don't mind sharing them with cyclists who are respectful when overtaking people on foot. The bell and the shout-out were plenty of warning.

But when guys on \$2,000 bicycles, wearing a helmet and spandex that likely cost \$500, zoom past pedestrians just inches away, without any warning, they are cooking up trouble.

With all the fish that Toronto police are frying, it figures that enforcing the law on bike bells is not very high on their list. As of July 24, police had issued 47 tickets and 15 warnings for not having a bell, or a defective bell. The 2019 total was 122 tickets and 34 warnings.

I'd like to hear from people who have had close shaves with speeding bikes that they didn't know were coming, and from cyclists who would defend the right to zip along without warning pedestrians.

What's broken in your neighbourhood? We want to know. Email jlakey@thestar.ca or follow @TOStarFixer on Twitter

TORONTO STAR - AUGUST 1, 2020

> THE FIXER

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