

Good morning,

My name is Charles Matthews, and I am a proud resident of Brampton. I want to begin by expressing my gratitude to Councilor Rowena Santos for her unwavering dedication and hard work in bringing these important issues to light.

I've lived in Brampton for over 35 years—back when Blockbuster and Jumbo Video were still around. I attended Central Peel High School and even learned to drive through their teaching program, with my dad and the instructor ensuring I understood how to navigate Brampton's streets safely.

Today, I'm a father of two, with a son who recently obtained his G1 license. While he's filled with excitement about learning to drive, I have to admit—I'm filled with fear. The joy I once felt about teaching my child to drive on the streets of Brampton has been replaced by anxiety. Since he received his G1, I've only taken him to parking lots because I truly believe our roads are dangerously unsafe.

It's heartbreaking and embarrassing to see Brampton ranked among the top cities for dangerous drivers. This is a city once celebrated for its diversity, its family-friendly environment, and its growth. Now, we're making headlines for reckless driving, skyrocketing insurance rates, and viral social media videos showcasing the worst of our traffic violations. At this rate, YouTube might owe us royalties for the content—but honestly, I'd rather see my taxes reduced by improving road safety than fixing broken street lights.

The driving behavior in our city has reached alarming levels. I've seen drivers making left turns into oncoming traffic, driving on the wrong side of the road, crashing into storefronts, and, tragically, even ending up in people's backyards due to excessive speeding.

A significant part of the problem stems from fake driver's licenses and insurance scams, which are not just fraudulent but dangerously undermine public safety. I've experienced this firsthand. I recently had to pay a \$500 deductible for a hit-and-run in a grocery store parking lot involving an uninsured driver. Another incident occurred during the first week of school when a woman involved in a minor fender bender refused to produce her license or insurance.

While property damage is frustrating, my greatest concern is not the cars—it's the people. Cars can be repaired, but lives cannot. Loved ones cannot be replaced. Fatalities from preventable accidents leave scars that never heal. If we don't take decisive action now, we risk losing innocent lives to an issue we have the power to address.

So, I ask this council: Will Brampton's roads be safer in the next three years when my daughter begins her journey to obtain her license?

Thank You.