

Electric Scooters Framework Viability Review

ISSUE

This report explores the feasibility of an electric scooter framework for operations in Saskatoon.

BACKGROUND

The Standing Policy Committee on Transportation, at its meeting held on February 1, 2021, considered correspondence from Benjamin Quattrini regarding Micro Mobility Sharing and resolved:

“That the Administration provide a report on the viability of a framework, outlining how a complete pilot project can be delivered, and that the Administration continue to engage with SGI and appropriate provincial counterparts for necessary steps to allow e-scooters in communities in Saskatchewan.”

CURRENT STATUS

In Canada, the current status of electric scooter operators is as follows:

	City	Bird	Lime	Roll
With Active Electric Scooters	Calgary	X	X	X
	Edmonton	X	X	
	Ottawa	X	X	X
	Kelowna	X	X	X
	Montreal	X		
	Westmount	X		
	Waterloo Region	X		

Cities at different stages of regulatory development include Winnipeg, Mississauga, Hamilton, Brampton, London, Windsor, Vaughn, Halifax, and North Vancouver.

The Traffic Safety Act (the “*Act*”) primarily regulates the use of motor vehicles (and vehicles as defined) on a “highway” which is defined in the *Act* as:

“a road, parkway, driveway, square or place designed and intended for or used by the general public for the passage of vehicles, but does not include any area, whether privately or publicly owned, that is primarily intended to be used for the parking of vehicles and the necessary passageways on that area.”

The application of the *Act* is therefore limited and does not extend to sidewalks, except where specifically referenced. SGI has given the opinion that electric scooters are non-compliant motor vehicles which cannot be legally operated on a highway in Saskatchewan. In discussions with SGI, they stated that they had no position on the operation of electric scooters on sidewalks or in parks as they do not regulate in those areas.

SGL indicated that an exemption permitting electric scooters on highways is not a course of action they would support or recommend, neither are they planning on proposing amendments to the *Act* to permit electric scooters on a highway.

DISCUSSION/ANALYSIS

Jurisdictional Scan

A review of electric scooters in Canada identifies the cities of Calgary and Ottawa as having successfully delivered pilot projects.

The Ottawa pilot project framework is included as Appendix 1. The Ottawa pilot project framework included the following:

1. Pilot Overview
2. Application Process
3. Requested Information of Applicants – General, Fleet Operations, Support Staff, Data, Low GHG Emissions Plan, and App Information
4. Pilot Agreement Requirements – Regulatory Requirements, Fleet Size, Data Requirements, Communications and Education Requirements, Parking and Stations, Technical Requirements/In-app, Vehicles, Geofencing, COVID-19 Specific Requirements, Security, and Insurance and Liability
5. Fee Schedule – Vehicle Fee, Communications and Engagement Fee, Non-refundable application fee to operate a shared micro mobility program within the City of Ottawa, Non-refundable application fee to request an increase to existing fleet, Security, and Station Encroachment Fee

Calgary’s City Council did not request a framework development from their administration.

The scope of the two pilot projects are summarized below:

	Ottawa	Calgary
When was pilot?	July 16, 2020 to October 31, 2020	2019 and 2020
Where can you ride?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multi-use pathways • Cycling facilities like cycle tracks and bike lanes • Roads with a speed limit of 50 km/h or lower • Not permitted on sidewalks, unless allowed by an official sign 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sidewalks • Bike lanes • Pathways • The operational areas have been determined by the companies • Not permitted to ride on the roadway (note: starting in 2021 allowed to ride on roadway with no lane markings)
Regulations and Safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Riders must be 16 years or older • The operating speed limit is 20 km/h • Shared electric scooters from providers can be used daily from 6 am to 11 pm • For riders under 18, a helmet is required to ride the electric scooters • Each scooter is allowed a single rider at a time 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The minimum age to ride is 18+ • The operating speed is 20 km/h • Helmets are encouraged • One person per device
Procurement Philosophy	Competitive with multiple licenses available	Competitive with multiple licenses available
Provincial Law	Ontario regulations permits electric scooters. Each municipality must pass by-laws to allow their use and determine where they can operate most safely in each unique environment.	Required an exemption from the Province of Alberta <i>Traffic Safety Act</i> to operate the e-scooters on any facility (sidewalk)

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A summary of the Ottawa pilot project results is provided in Appendix 2. A summary of the Calgary pilot project results is provided in Appendix 3. The timelines of the two pilot projects are summarized below:

Ottawa	Calgary
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> January 1, 2020 - Province of Ontario starts a five-year electric kick scooter pilot allowing municipalities to opt in. The City of Ottawa's participation requires a new bylaw regulating the use of private and shared electric scooters. June 2020 – Administration report Electric Kick Scooter Strategy and Pilot Project (included framework and draft bylaw). July 16 to October 31, 2020 – Year 1 of pilot. February 2021 – Report on pilot. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> July 2018 – City Council directs administration to conduct a two-year pilot. February 2019 – Council approved several updates to charter and non-charter bylaws. These changes allowed for the legal operation of micro mobility devices in Calgary. 2019 – Year 1 of pilot. 2020 – Year 2 of pilot. December 2020 – Report on pilot.

The outcomes of the two pilot projects are summarized below:

	Ottawa	Calgary
Vehicles	2020: 600 electric scooters (note: for 2021 recommendation is 1,200 to 1,500)	2019 – 1,500 electric scooters, 500 e-bikes 2020 – 2,800 electric scooters, 0 e-bikes
Number of trips per year	2020: 238,000	2019 – 918,000 2020 – 956,000
Operating Days	107	2019 – 110 2020 – 162
Number of unique riders	72,720	200,000+
Total number of trips during the pilot	238,000	1,874,000
Routes	n/a	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 60% on pathway or cycling infrastructure 40% on sidewalks and/or roadways
Trip Length and Duration	Average trip length = 1.9 km Average trip duration = 15 minutes	Information not available
311 Issues (phone in complaints)	Information not available	Two most common complaints: rider behaviour/conflict with pedestrians and parking
Trip Purpose	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Fun or leisure To try out the service Getting to and from social activities 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> To/from errands or social gatherings Fun/recreation Getting to/from work
Safety and electric scooter Injuries	Staff aware of seven minor injuries caused by electric scooter falls or collisions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 71/75 of people injured during the pilot were riding an electric scooter, three incidents involved pedestrians and one involved a cyclist Average age of person injured was 35 years
Mobility objectives	46% reporting they drove less 33% reporting travelling less as a car passenger	Information not found/available
Facilitating Transit and Multimodal Trips	2% of all trips were combined with transit trips	Information not found/available
Local Business Support	48% of trips started in a Business Improvement Area (BIA) and 45% ended in a Neighbourhood Improvement Area	Information not found/available

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The Ottawa reporting notes the following “Consultation with other municipalities indicates one-to-two FTEs, seven-to-nine months of the year, are needed to run the program with significant and ongoing support from an internal staff working group, as well as operational staff.”

Preliminary Program Components

The following outlines the preliminarily identified program components to be determined prior to a pilot project starting. All these components would require significant engagement.

Item	Considerations (Preliminary)	External Stakeholders (Preliminary)
		Internal Stakeholders (Preliminary)
Regulatory	Require exemption from Province to <i>The Traffic Safety Act</i> and regulations to ride on streets City Bylaws require revision to ride on sidewalks, pathways, cycle tracks and bike lanes.	SGI ----- Solicitors Licensing and Permitting Transportation
Where can you ride?	Facility type – Sidewalks, multi-use pathways, cycle tracks, protected bicycle lane, bikeway, and street? Geographical area – Downtown, BID areas, educational sites, health sites, Meewasin, parks?	Saskatoon Accessibility Advisory Committee Saskatoon Council on Aging Saskatoon Tourism BIDs Saskatoon Environmental Advisory Committee Saskatoon Safety Council School Divisions
Regulations and Safety	Age limit Operating speed Hours of operation Helmets Number of people on electric scooters Parking (electric scooter)	SGI Meewasin Valley Authority Saskatchewan Polytechnic University of Saskatchewan Saskatoon Cycles Walking Saskatoon Saskatchewan Health Authority Electric scooter companies ----- Solicitors Licensing and Permitting Bylaw Enforcement Saskatoon Police Service Planning and Development Transit Parks Transportation
Procurement	Insurance Type: competitive, sole source Financial: revenue neutral, revenue generating	SGI ----- Solicitors Supply Chain Management Transportation
Data Requirements	Trip information – origins, destinations, length, duration,	Electric scooter companies ----- Information Technology Transportation
Communication Plan	Pilot project information Issues management	Electric scooter companies ----- Communications Licensing and Permitting Bylaw Enforcement Saskatoon Police Service Transportation

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Item	Considerations (Preliminary)	External Stakeholders (Preliminary)
		Internal Stakeholders (Preliminary)
Assessment Plan	Trip characteristics – trip information, – trip purpose Facilitating transit Health and mobility Support for local businesses	Electric scooter companies BIDs Saskatoon Tourism Saskatchewan Health Authority ----- Transportation
Staffing Requirements	Confirm pilot project staffing framework Confirm number of staff Confirm job requirements	Communications Licensing and Permitting Bylaw Enforcement Transportation

Viability of Framework for Saskatoon

1. Regulations - A framework to allow electric scooters on sidewalks, pathways or in parks appears viable in the short-term in Saskatoon as an amendment to the *Act* is not required. The viability of allowing electric scooters on highways is dependent on the Province providing an amendment to the *Act* and regulations.
2. Timing - It appears that Ottawa and Calgary's administrations took five-to-seven months to prepare the pilot project framework. Assuming a similar timeline to address the considerations for a Saskatoon pilot project, and if having electric scooters ride on the highway is not possible in the near-term, the following pilot project schedule is outlined below:
 - Planning
 1. April, Year 1 – Receive direction from City Council to proceed.
 2. May to October, Year 1 – Address the following items: Regulatory, Where can you Ride, Regulations and Safety, Procurement, Data Requirements, Communication Plan, and Assessment Plan. These items would be developed through a significant engagement process.
 3. January, Year 2 – Bring report addressing required bylaw revisions, presenting the complete project plan, request further direction.
 - Execution
 4. April to October, Year 2– Pilot project.
 - Assessment and Report Back
 5. February, Year 3 – Provide pilot project assessment report to City Council.

At this time, it is not feasible to provide a potential pilot project schedule that permits electric scooters on highways as the time to amend the *Act* is unknown.

3. Resources – Transportation, Community Standards, and Communication staff are completely committed to prior assigned work until the end of 2021. Two options to addressing resourcing are:
 - a. The Administration report back with a list of other initiatives that can be delayed for one year to free staff time to complete the development of the program

components. The project could begin this spring with a go-live date of spring 2022 for electric scooters potentially on sidewalks, pathways and in parks.

- b. The Administration begin work on this project as part of 2022 department workplans, with work beginning the spring 2022 with a go-live pilot project date of spring 2023 for electric scooters.

Retaining a consultant or hiring of additional staff to specifically develop an electric scooter program may not be options due to the managerial level of discussions required to develop the program components, and the number and complexity of the inter-departmental relationships.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

To undertake the planning phase of the pilot project, it is estimated that \$100,000 in funding is required to complete this phase. This may be new funding required, or funding re-assigned from other capital projects.

Both Ottawa and Calgary administer their programs to be revenue neutral. As per *The Cities Act*, a Saskatoon program would most likely be required to be revenue neutral; therefore, no additional funding is required once the program is operating. However, additional FTEs would be required to administer the program, and would be paid for by licencing fees charged per electric scooter.

OTHER IMPLICATIONS

The legal implications require further assessment. Privacy, social, and environmental implications were not reviewed as part of the preparation of this report.

NEXT STEPS

At present no additional steps are planned by the Administration as direction from City Council is required.

APPENDICES

1. City of Ottawa 2021 E-scooter Pilot Project
2. City of Calgary Project Review Summary
3. City of Ottawa Project Review Summary

Report Approval

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