

Transportation Advisory Committee

Report

7th Meeting of the Transportation Advisory Committee

August 3, 2021

Advisory Committee Virtual Meeting - during the COVID-19 Emergency

Attendance PRESENT: D. Foster (Chair), A. Abiola, D. Doroshenko, B. Gibson, T. Kerr, T. Khan, P. Moore, M. Rice, M.D. Ross and S Wraight and J. Bunn (Committee Clerk)

ABSENT: G. Bikas

ALSO PRESENT: J. Kostyniuk, T. Macbeth, D. MacRae, A. Miller, E. Oladejo, J. Stanford and B. Westlake-Power

The meeting was called to order at 12:16 PM.

1. Call to Order

1.1 Disclosures of Pecuniary Interest

That it BE NOTED that no pecuniary interests were disclosed.

2. Consent

2.1 6th Report of the Transportation Advisory Committee

That it BE NOTED that the 6th Report of the Transportation Advisory Committee, from its meeting held on June 29, 2021, was received.

3. Sub-Committees and Working Groups

3.1 Presentation of TAC 20.8 Worksheet

That it BE NOTED that a verbal update from A. Abiola with respect to the Transportation Advisory Committee Work Plan Item 20.8 related to Managing Transport-Related green house gas emissions, was received.

3.2 TAC Evolution and Recommendation

That the following actions be taken with respect to the Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) Evolution and Recommendation document, from D. Foster, as appended to the Agenda:

a) the City Clerk BE ADVISED that the TAC has completed its evolution into a model Advisory Committee and should, therefore, maintain its current Terms of Reference make up and “at large” pilot;

b) the City Clerk BE ADVISED that the progress of the TAC should be evaluated concurrently with the proposed, but as yet untested, Community Engagement Panel pilot concept; and,

c) the above-noted document BE RECEIVED.

3.3 eBike Working Group Update - Verbal Update

That it BE NOTED that a verbal update from T Khan, D. Doroshenko and T. Kerr, and the attached E-Scooters Working Group Report, with respect to E-Scooters in London, were received.

3.4 Advisory Committee Pilots - SWOT Comparison

That it BE NOTED that the Strengths-Weaknesses-Opportunities-Threats (SWOT) Comparison document, from D. Foster, as appended to the Agenda, with respect to the Advisory Committee Pilots, was received; it being noted that the sub-committee of the Transportation Advisory Committee will convene to review and populate the SWOT document.

4. Items for Discussion

None.

5. Additional Business

5.1 (ADDED) Dundas Place Traffic Diversion Feedback

That it BE NOTED that the Memo, dated July 29, 2021, from D. Hall, Active Transportation Manager, with respect to Dundas Place Traffic Diversion Feedback, was received.

6. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 1:41 PM.

TAC WG Report - E-Scooters for London

Recap

In the TAC meeting held on June 29, 2021 under agenda item # 2.1, a presentation was made by the staff on the pilot project regarding e-scooters and cargo e-bikes.

An e-scooters Working Group (EWG) was formed to study the topic in London's context and prepare a brief report for the consideration of the Transportation Advisory Committee in its Aug. 3, 2021 meeting.

EWG was composed of following members:

- 1) Tariq Khan
- 2) Trevor Kerr
- 3) Dan Doroshenko

EWG held its meeting on **July 6, 2021**. EWG also invited Mr. Ashfaq Kash into the meeting to provide input from the **disability community's perspective**.

On **July 14, 2021**, the City asked residents and businesses to provide feedback using an automated, easy-to-use interactive web-form at City's website (https://getinvolved.london.ca/e-scooter/survey_tools/feedback-form1), regarding how e-scooters and large cargo e-bikes could be used in London. A precise but comprehensive list of FAQs has also been published on the City's website at <https://getinvolved.london.ca/e-scooter/widgets/93625/faqs#17539>.

Ontario's Announcement

On November 27, 2019, the Ontario Ministry of Transportation announced, effective January 1, 2020, a 5-year pilot to permit Electric Kick Scooters (e-scooters) on Ontario's roads. The marketing pitch was toned to help businesses expand and allow consumers and commuters more choice.

Observations on Ontario's Announcement

Although municipalities can choose whether to allow e-scooters as a mode of transportation within their jurisdictions, the province has set out the broad rules and requirements for e-scooters entitled Best Practice Guidelines for Municipalities-1.

Every municipality in Ontario is unique in terms of its topography, road infrastructure, trails and walking and cycling paths. Municipalities that intend to allow e-scooters to operate on their roads **must determine** where they can operate most safely in each unique environment and pass by-laws to permit their use.

In late summer 2021, London City Council will determine if private and public shared e-scooters will be allowed, where they can be used and where they can be parked on public properties. If a pilot is approved by Council and by-laws are introduced, an e-scooter share pilot program could start in early **spring 2022**.

E-Scooters - Trendy Thingy of Twenty Twenties

Micro mobility devices are the mode of active transportation driven/operated by users personally. These devices generally refer to bicycles, kick scooters, skateboards, hover-boards, etc. They are low speed, lightweight and portable hence they are also known as Personal Transportation Devices (PTDs).¹ E-Scooters are the latest addition to the family of PTDs and are gaining popularity exponentially around the globe.

The E-Scooters Share System was initially introduced in Santa Monica, CA in September 2017 and Canadians were not far behind to give it a try. The first electric scooter sharing system in Canada was in operation in the City of Waterloo as of October 2018. Soon after, similar systems began operation throughout Canada, including Kelowna, Calgary, Edmonton, and Montreal to name a few.

Over the past three years, e-scooter sharing systems/programs have sprung up worldwide. Their popularity has increased with every passing day. Under shared micro mobility settings, e-scooters are generally rented through a mobile app or kiosk and are meant for short point-to-point trips. In 2018 in the US, according to a recent study³, there were collectively 84 million trips made using shared micro mobility and out of 84 million trips, e-scooter trips, although e-scooter programs were not as extensive as other micro mobility shared programs, accounted for 38.5 million trips (46%)..

The e-scooter share systems, throughout the world, have developed love-hate relationships with their communities right from their introduction. Though its popularity has been exponential, criticism/opposition also grew very fast in parallel. Initially, most of the cities were caught unprepared in terms of appropriate regulations and infrastructure. We saw cities very quickly banning e-scooters in the 2020s but in 2021 we have seen cities reconsidering e-scooter programs and giving it another try with more caution and a great degree of regulation.

Common observation indicates many people use e-scooters as a novelty rather than an active mode of transportation. The use and popularity of this mode of hi-tech transportation is a typical classic example of the government catching up to technology and science innovation.

For some of the public it may be a fun and environmentally friendly replacement of automobiles for short distances; but for others, especially people with disabilities, it may be a terrifying prospect - deadly, silent single-rider-vehicles running in the streets or just left cluttered on the sidewalks causing injuries to pedestrians and the disabled. On sidewalks/walkways/footpaths, e-scooters pose a danger to wheelchair users as well as pedestrians particularly people who are blind or need hearing aids.

From a commuter's perspective, it is an emission-free and efficient mode of personal transportation. On the other hand, the rise of e-scooter use has also caused the rise of related accidents. The exact number of crashes involving e-scooters is said to be under-reported. Accidents are on the rise wherever e-scooters are being used either privately or under some share systems⁴.

A similar situation involves offences and crimes. Due to their speed and noiselessness, local police forces report these PDTs have become an attractive vehicle for some criminals.

Motorcycle / Cycle / or what?

Most of the e-scooter models don't have license plates or signaling ability. That may be the reason they are being seen in the e-bikes class. In the UK, e-scooters are covered by the Road Traffic Act - riders need a driving license, a tax must be paid to own one and insurance is required. Even then they can only be used on private lands or in designated trial areas. Riders can be prosecuted and their e-scooters can be confiscated if they're found to be breaking the law.

Reemergence

There are many factors involved in the e-scooters' continuous acceptance as a mode of transportation and unprecedented popularity:

- **Reconsideration by Cities:** During pandemic times the cities which initially rejected e-scooter programs have begun to reconsidered this decision. For example, in the UK, they were banned but as of June 2021, new 12-month trials are in progress in more than 40 towns and cities across the country. In London, trials are in operation in four different areas in the city. In Canada, e-scooter popularity is soaring and now policing is more towards enforcement rather than the education side.
- **Pandemic factor:** Individual, socially-distanced PDTs are in the backdrop of general hesitancy among people to avoid public transport.
- Transit users have always been looking for some mode of transportation which may facilitate them for the "first mile" or the "last mile" of their journey.
- Fun, easy and independent ride.
- Faster journey times than cars in narrow/small streets areas. "I took one from City Hall to the mall, it took six minutes. I was actually quite surprised at how reliable, efficient and easy they are to ride. The advantage is they will cut down on traffic in the downtown core." Mayor of Vernon BC⁵
- Cleaner, low-carbon alternative for those who can't or don't want to bike.
- GHG reducer: Personal transportation is generally the largest source of greenhouse gas emissions.

- No licensing requirements.

* <https://www.bbc.com/future/article/20200608-how-sustainable-are-electric-scooters>

- **Convenient and office friendly** - in contrast with biking, people may travel from office to office in office-business dress without sweating.
- Overhead and ownership free.

E-Scooter Trials - Canada

Despite this resurgence, early this year, the City of Toronto declined yet again to participate in trials on the recommendation of their Accessibility Advisory Committee. Montreal ran the pilot in summer 2019 but banned e-scooters in 2020 because of parking and operation related reasons⁶. On the other hand, the e-scooter sharing company Bird Bikeshare has permits in Kelowna and Neuron Mobility was given a permit in Vernon B.C. Permits were issued in Calgary, Edmonton, Ottawa and Windsor while Hamilton, Brampton and Mississauga are considering e-scooters. Calgary which ran a pilot between 2019 and 2020 recently decided to let e-scooters stay while Edmonton has continued its third trial season and . Waterloo continues to run its pilot From the mixed response in Canada, it is evident that ***e-scooters are an emerging mode of active transportation worldwide hence may not be ignored/banned without very valid and compelling reasons.***

Municipalities have both the authority and the responsibility to protect public health and ensure safety for its residents. As mentioned above, cities in Canada have taken varied approaches to managing shared micro-mobility on their streets and chosen to exercise their authority in different ways. Ontario has also provided a pilot framework and best practices document for the use of e-scooters in the province.

To allow pilots to be run within municipalities, there are provincial requirements and local considerations. Every municipality is required to satisfy provincial requirements while at the same time framing by-laws as per local requirements and considerations. If Council wishes to consider trials in London then, keeping in view the topography, infrastructure and local weather, the following recommendations may be considered

Consumer Reports Survey Results¹⁰ (conducted in March 2019 in the USA):

- 51% of e-scooter users ride on the sidewalk
- 27% of riders are uncertain of the traffic laws they should follow
- 26% ride in a bike lane
- 25% of riders say that pedestrians got in the way
- 18% of users ride in the street, but not a bike lane
- 20% of riders reportedly feel unsafe around car traffic
- 8% reported an e-scooter malfunctioned or didn't work properly

TAC Recommendations:

- Further study on the issues of public safety, liability and the licensing of Individual owners is required; therefore, e-scooters should not be approved for individual use at this time.
- A multi-staged third party Pilot program should be approved following the guidelines listed below.
- A budget should be established to ensure proper funding for a project co-ordinator to supervise the pilot, additional staff and operating expenses and enhanced enforcement capability.
- Trials may be multi-stage. In each stage, records of injuries, accidents, bylaw enforcement stats including fines and actual observations of rider behaviours and interactions with other modes of transportation should be closely monitored **8**
- A stage-gate approval process must be put in place to review results prior to any expansion of the pilot.
- Educational Institutions such as Western University and Fanshawe college should be invited to study/participate in the Pilot program.
- Public outreach plans should be developed and designed to engage, explain, educate and then enforce.
- The pilot should be added to the Work Plan of TAC and any other relevant Advisory Committee for evaluation, study and input.

Guidelines:

- Absolutely no compromise on safety and accessibility issues. The MTO's guidelines⁷ should be strictly followed.
- Pilot areas should initially be few and small in size (1-2 km in radius) and limited to:
 - established Bicycle lanes and pathways and /or temporary, created lanes
 - quiet roads in neighbourhoods with lower volumes of traffic
- The numbers of e-scooters in any trial jurisdiction should be kept low to avoid any traffic/congestion related issues.
- Each e-scooter participating in trails must have a **highly visible and unique identification number** and decals with raised lettering to make it easier to report improperly parked/left e-scooters (whether within or outside of geo-fenced areas).

- To encourage take-up during any such pilot, general permit fees for third-party providers should allow for incentives tied to increased ridership, a portion of which should allow for a reduction of user fees.
- **Parking:** A Docked system is preferred over the Dockless version but in the event they are ignored by user, e-scooters should be able to be parked upright and stabilized with a kickstand. Special emphasis should be given when selecting Docking/Parking spots to make sure that those parking spots may not cause any problems to road/street users. They should not block: disability parking and transfer zones, building/property entrances, pedestrian ramps and walkways, driveways, loading zones, transit stops, crosswalks, benches, parking meters, etc.
- **Liability:** This is a complex issue. Generally speaking, city approved third party e-scooter providers are well insured. Furthermore, users must agree to the terms of usage of the e-scooter. Accidents may occur due to malfunction, riders error, other road user's error, repair related issues on the road/paths, etc. so the City should require authorized e-scooter providers to demonstrate proof of insurance before they can operate legally. The City should also seek legal counsel on the development of contract language designed to limit liability risk to the City itself.
- Selected areas in terms of "first mile" & "last mile" for transit, especially in those new subdivisions where transit is not available or not planned, may be used for trials.
- School zones should be avoided in the initial stages of the pilot, however if and when they consider for study, operation timing should be after school hours.
- Best practices/lessons learned and experiences from other cities should be taken into consideration while planning for the pilot. Region of Waterloo has conducted a feasibility study⁹ on shared micro mobility, the points discussed/analyzed in the study may be considered from a London perspective while designing the trials.

References:

- 1) <https://news.ontario.ca/en/release/54754/ontario-announces-e-scooter-pilot-to-help-grow-ontarios-economy>
- 2) <https://www.berkley-tech.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/E-ScooterWhitepaper.pdf>
- 3) <https://nacto.org/shared-micromobility-2018/>
- 4) <https://ottawa.ctvnews.ca/ottawa-police-move-from-education-to-enforcement-as-e-scooter-popularity-soars-1.5527610>
- 5) <https://www.castanet.net/news/Vernon/341441/City-of-Vernon-launches-electric-scooter-program>
- 6) <https://www.toronto.com/news-story/10420394-e-scooter-companies-bullish-on-canada/>
- 7) <http://www.mto.gov.on.ca/english/vehicles/pdf/e-scooter-best-practices.pdf>
- 8) <https://www.publichealthontario.ca/-/media/documents/e/2021/e-scooter-injuries.pdf?la=en>
- 9) https://ehq-production-canada.s3.ca-central-1.amazonaws.com/0a0ae35cb7740b7c8e0a8a578d960f83e805289a/original/1616510983/5161543fb49015d332f8296a08b91389_Final_Report_-_Region_of_Waterloo_Shared_Micromobility_Feasibility_Study_2020_-_MCIP_15708_-_3205057.pdf?X-Amz-Algorithm=AWS4-HMAC-SHA256&X-Amz-Credential=AKIAIBJCUK4ZO4WUUA%2F20210730%2Fca-central-1%2Fs3%2Faws4_request&X-Amz-Date=20210730T203524Z&X-Amz-Expires=300&X-Amz-SignedHeaders=host&X-Amz-Signature=255b72f15e306c4cf22f3656adb7807a3b0fe8d844d0d5c7e069bf32db5db2f3
- 10) <https://www.consumerreports.org/product-safety/deaths-tied-to-e-scooters/> “