



Sent via email: <alicia.davenport@hamilton.ca>

November 4, 2020

% Ms. Alicia Davenport, Staff Liaison  
Advisory Committee for Persons with Disabilities  
City of Hamilton  
71 Main St W.  
Hamilton, ON L8P 4Y5

**RE: Motion 6.4(c) Ban of Electric Scooters from Public Property (City Wide)**

Dear Advisory Committee for Persons with Disabilities,

As you may know, Bird Canada Inc. is a first KM / last KM, electric scooter sharing company dedicated to bringing affordable, environmentally friendly transportation solutions to Canadian municipalities. We provide shared e-scooter services in Edmonton, Calgary and most recently this summer, in Ottawa.

In my government relations role at Bird Canada, I have been following the important work of your Advisory Committee. In this letter, I have shared with you below some constructive reflections on the Motion 6.4(c) re Ban of Electric Scooters from Public Property, which I understand was referred back to an internal Transportation Working Group for further discussion and review. I am also sharing additional background material for your review as well.

Although the opportunity for virtual deputation before your Advisory Committee does not exist in Hamilton, in September 2020, I had the opportunity to speak virtually before the Ottawa Accessibility Advisory Committee and this month, in collaboration with the Canadian National Institute for the Blind (CNIB), I am participating in a virtual roundtable with members of the accessibility community in Toronto on the topic of shared e-scooters.

Sincerely,

**Chris Schafer**

Vice President, Government Affairs

Bird Canada

(647) 389-8052

[www.birdcanada.co](http://www.birdcanada.co)



Persons with Disabilities Advisory Committee Motion	Bird Canada Response
<p>WHEREAS, other Canadian cities such as Montreal and Toronto have implemented a ban on the use of electric scooters in their communities;</p>	<p>To date, BC, AB, ON, and QC have permitted shared e-scooters on public roads with shared e-scooter programs present to date in Kelowna, Calgary, Edmonton, Ottawa, Waterloo, and Montreal.</p> <p>Toronto put a ban in place on private and shared/rented e-scooters until such time as city staff could develop a regulatory framework:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● April 2019 - Council directed city staff to develop a regulatory framework for e-scooters</li> <li>● September 2019 - Council temporarily bans e-scooters until such time as a regulatory framework is in place</li> <li>● July 2020 - City staff recommend an e-scooter pilot for May 2021 (Item referred to staff for further research)</li> </ul> <p>Montreal paused their e-scooter program for 2020:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Montreal’s e-scooter program mandated parking of e-scooters in a limited # of on-road designated parking spots (painted boxes) only.</li> <li>● The <a href="#">City staff report</a> reviewing the 2019 program found: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ While a majority of riders did not park e-scooters in the mandatory painted on-road boxes, most parked e-scooters safely in the “street furniture zone” of sidewalks (where planters, newspaper boxes, etc. are located and does not interfere with pedestrians walking on sidewalks).</li> <li>○ The e-scooter mandatory parking spots were insufficient in number and inconveniently located.</li> <li>○ 27% of e-scooter trips started or ended at public transit (metro stations).</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p>WHEREAS, there are no provincial regulations in place, especially for commercially rented electric scooters, regarding the use of electric scooters on roads and sidewalks apart from an age limit of 16 years to operate;</p>	<p>The province’s <a href="#">pilot regulations</a> for e-scooters has an array of regulations concerning the operation of e-scooters (i.e. no double riding), the e-scooter equipment itself (i.e. weight, etc.), duty to report accident, etc.</p> <p>Municipal programs for shared e-scooters (permit agreements) in cities such as Kelowna, Calgary, Edmonton, and Ottawa have extensive regulations in place for shared e-scooter programs.</p>
<p>WHEREAS, electric scooters can run at a speed of close to, or in excess of, 30km/hour</p>	<p>Cities with regulated shared e-scooter programs in place in Canada have mandated shared e-scooters travel no faster than 20 km/h (The Province of Ontario mandated 24 km/h as a max</p>



<p>posing a significant safety risk to persons with disabilities particularly those with mobility or sensory disabilities;</p>	<p>speed but cities can deviate from that maximum - they just can't exceed it).</p> <p>The risk with personally owned e-scooters is that it is more challenging to regulate things like speed because privately sold e-scooters are sold at various max speeds or are mechanically changed to go faster after purchase.</p> <p>On the other hand, with a shared e-scooter program, the City can through a permit, mandate shared e-scooters travel at certain speeds (max 20 km/h) in addition to mandating geo-fenced no park zones, slow down zones and/or no ride zones. These can all be enforced through a permit from the City. Enforcing these things against private e-scooters is next to impossible.</p>
<p>WHEREAS, there are no provincial regulations requiring operators of electric scooters, particularly rental electric scooters, to possess either a license or insurance to operate;</p>	<p>Cities across Canada and Ontario permit residents to ride bicycles without a rider having a licence or insurance for that purpose. The same goes for cities with an existing bikeshare program: no separate licence required by the rider or unique insurance required by the rider.</p> <p>Cities across Canada with e-scooter share programs all require e-scooter operators to possess Commercial General Liability insurance. All the required insurance is carried by e-scooter operators in Canada as required by municipalities with shared e-scooter programs to date in Canada.</p>
<p>WHEREAS, the province does not require operators of electric scooters, especially rental electric scooters, to undertake any specific or regulated training in order to own or operate an electric scooter; and,</p>	<p>The province does not mandate bike or e-bike riders to undertake specific or regulated training. In fact, bikeshare programs (with traditional pedal bikes and/or e-bikes) are in place in Canada and across the world, including e-scooter share programs in over 100 cities globally, none of which require bike, e-bike or e-scooter riders undertake any specific/regulated training.</p> <p>With that said, e-scooter operators provide initial and on-going training via the app, in addition to things such as:</p> <p><b><u>“Warm Up Mode”</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Warm Up mode automatically softens a Bird scooter’s acceleration, allowing riders to slowly work their way up to full speed. This is ideal for first time riders as they learn to get comfortable with riding an e-scooter.</li> </ul> <p><b><u>“Helmet Selfie”</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Riders are asked to take a selfie showcasing their helmet to receive an incentive. Incentives can include future rider credit, rewarding riders for best practices.</li> </ul>

There are several features that city staff could recommend be part of a shared e-scooter program to address safety.

- **Slow Down Zones:** Most Canadian cities have set scooters to a maximum of 20 km/h and some cities have implemented slow down zones for highly pedestrianized areas of the City so that scooters travel slower in these zones (i.e. 15 km/h in Calgary).
- **No Ride Zones:** Some cities have established no rides zones where upon entering the zone the scooter slows down gradually and stops safely to discourage riding. For example, Ottawa has mandated this for all National Capital Commission (NCC) pathways in the City to prevent shared e-scooters from being ridden on these pathways (e-bikes are also not currently permitted on NCC pathways as well) .

E-scooter companies provide public training information sessions:

- Bird Canada Safe Streets events are designed to promote responsible riding by:
  - Providing residents an opportunity to test ride an e-scooter at no cost (where permissible with local COVID-19 precautions)
  - Educating residents on safe and responsible riding including local rules like no sidewalk riding and how to park responsibly in the "street furniture zone" of sidewalks
  - Free helmets will be given away to local residents





(Image is of Bird Canada’s Safe Streets event in Ottawa’s Byward Market)

E-scooter companies like Bird Canada operate “Safe Streets” patrols of uniformed staff out in the public in key areas of the City to ensure e-scooters are parked properly and riders are riding safely and providing general public education:



(Image is of a Bird Canada employee conducting a “Safe Streets” Patrol on Elgin Street in Ottawa. The employee is wearing a Bird Canada hat and sweater that reads, “Safe Streets Team: Don’t ride on sidewalks!” while talking to two local Ottawa residents about safe e-scooter riding and proper parking in compliance with local Ottawa rules).



**BIRD**  
CANADA

**Hamilton:  
Advisory Committee for Persons with Disabilities**

**Chris Schafer, VP Government Affairs  
Bird Canada**

November 4, 2020





# Who We Are

**Bird Canada Inc.** is a first KM / last KM, electric scooter sharing company dedicated to bringing affordable, environmentally-friendly transportation solutions to Canadian municipalities.

We are a **Canadian owned and operated** venture that provides – in conjunction with Bird Rides Inc. in the United States – e-scooter sharing programs globally.



# The Good, the Bad, and the Bumpy: why ignore us?

Ryan Lythall

Since my column in June, there have been some new developments in getting around in downtown Ottawa during this pandemic.

Bank and Somerset Streets are being closed to cars during weekends to allow patios to open up more space, while maintaining physical distancing. Every Saturday, a 15-block stretch of Bank Street is shut down to traffic to allow people to walk and roam freely on the street and, hopefully, support local businesses in the area.

For those of us with a disability, options for where we can dine or shop on Bank Street are limited, especially for those of us who use a wheelchair or other mobility devices. Many businesses don't always acknowledge people with disabilities. I've been in stores and restaurants with the full intent of purchasing an item and have been completely ignored, while other customers around me were being helped.

I have become more optimistic,

however, with a company called Bird Canada, which opened in Ottawa on July 16 as part of a pilot project in partnership with the city. Bird Canada is one of three companies renting e-scooters. For anyone living in Centretown, you've probably seen these black e-scooters parked on the street.

When I first heard that they were coming to Ottawa, I was worried. My first thought was how these scooters on the street would affect people with disabilities in terms of getting around. As it is, we already have to contend with bicyclists, rollerbladers, skateboarders, and regular scooters when we're out on the streets. These e-scooters would add another barrier to our difficulties in navigating the streets and sidewalks of Ottawa.

Three days after Bird Canada started operating in Ottawa, I was contacted on Twitter by Austin Spademan, the AGM for Ottawa for Bird Canada. He reached out to me to find out what he can do to address accessibility concerns raised by people with disabilities in Ottawa. I was also pleased to learn that Austin had been in touch with the CNIB regard-

ing similar safety concerns and accessibility issues. The issue of accessibility regarding these e-scooters blocking sidewalks was also mentioned in a live segment during the morning news.

So I ask, if an e-scooter company can take the time to acknowledge people with disabilities and our concerns regarding accessibility, why can't other businesses do the same? I'm not expecting a press release or issues about people with disabilities to be on the daily news. But I'm asking for an acknowledgement.

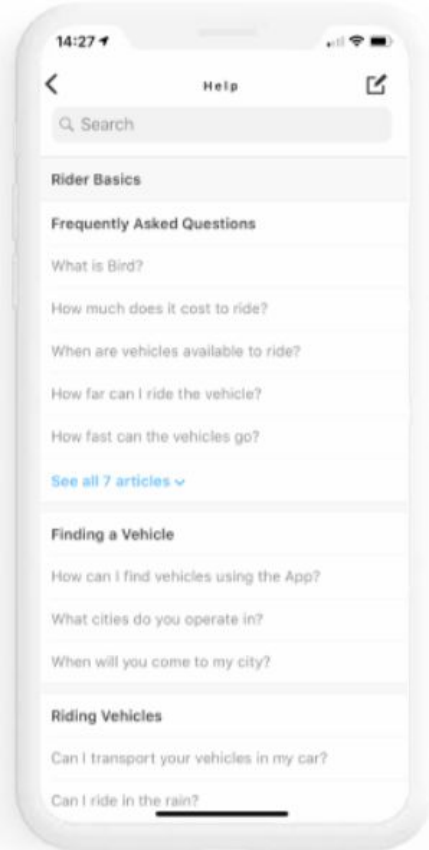
Sooner or later, local businesses and restaurants will see us everywhere in the community, online, and in their store or restaurant. So why ignore us?

Even if we can't buy what you're selling or renting, such as an e-scooter, a good relationship with different community members not only makes good business sense, but it also shows that you see us and acknowledge our concerns. Also, we can recommend your business to our friends, on Social Media, or in an online column.

*Find Ryan on Twitter:  
@rolling\_enigma*



# Accessibility



## ACCESSIBILITY

- The Bird app is accessible and compatible with screen readers. It offers voiceover support for both iOS and Android users, on-page navigation, captions and text alternatives to images, and closed captioning for all videos.

## WEBSITE ACCESSIBILITY

- Bird's website adheres to accessibility standards.

## PHONE SUPPORT SERVICE

- Our staffed, toll-free customer service line (1-866-205-2442) provides support 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Translation services are available in 21 languages, including Spanish, Polish, Korean, Arabic, Hindi and Mandarin.
- It also accommodates TTY relay services.

# Bird E-scooter



**Kick stand + tip over  
technology**

**Manual warning bell**

**Front & rear lights - visible up  
to 300 feet.**

CANADA

## **‘This is one of those things that gives us a bit of cool’: E-scooters are on a roll in Ottawa**

By **Gloria Galloway** Special to the Star  
Mon., Oct. 19, 2020 | 🕒 4 min. read

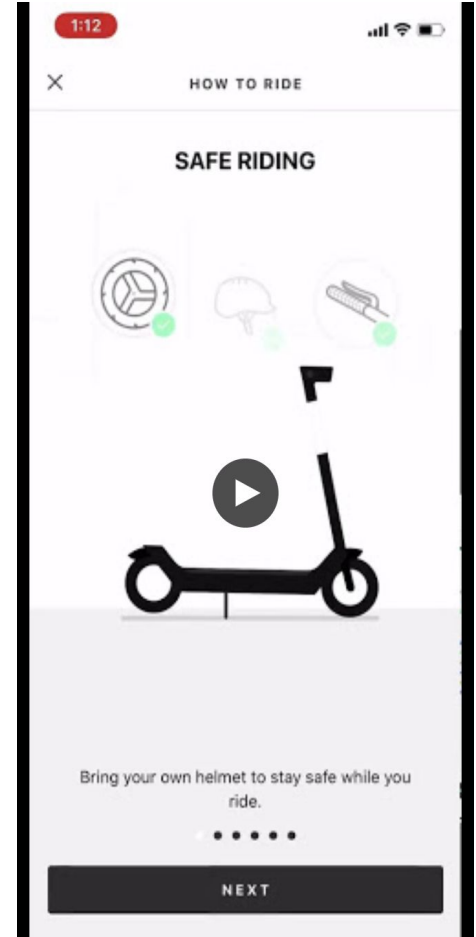
***“There’s a been a lot of thought put into this and, touch wood, it’s probably been one of the more successful pilot scooter projects across the country if not throughout North America”***

~ Councillor Tim Tierney, Chair Transportation Committee, Ottawa City Hall



# E-scooter Rider Education

- Providing residents an opportunity to test ride an e-scooter at no cost
- Educating residents on safe and responsible riding including local rules like no sidewalk riding
- Free helmets will be given away to local residents



# Safe Streets Patrol



- Uniformed Bird Canada staff physically patrols on foot key areas of the City identified in collaboration with City staff.
- To date, Bird Canada's Safe Streets Team has had thousands of conversations and interactions with local riders to educate them on local rules in cities in which we operate.





# Geofencing

- **Slow Down Zones:** Most Canadian cities have set scooters to a maximum of 20 km/h and some cities have implemented slow down zones for highly pedestrianized areas of the City so that scooters travel slower in these zones (i.e. 15 km/h in Calgary and 8 km/h-15km/h in Ottawa).
- **No Ride Zones:** Some cities have established no rides zones where upon entering the zone the scooter slows down gradually and stops safely to discourage riding. For example, Ottawa has mandated this for all National Capital Commission pathways in the City to prevent shared e-scooters from being ridden on these pathways (e-bikes also not permitted on NCC Pathways).

# Bird Canada is Responsive



**Michael H Vickers** @mhbvickers · Aug 8  
@MarnaNightingal, gotta admit they're responsive.

Also saw one of their reps (the only ones with helmets) reminding people not to go on the NCC MUP alongside the Canal.

**BirdCanada** @BirdRideCanada · Aug 8  
Replying to @mhbvickers  
Moved. Thanks for flagging



6:19 LTE

**Tweet**

in the designated spots.

1 6

**Dr. Ladybugspicnic** @ladybugs... · 2d ...  
I have seen Bird ppl out quite a bit moving scooters around. But yes, a more permanent and dedicated space would be nice. but i have a hard time thinking the city will go for that!

1 2

**Doug van den Ham** @DvdHam · 2d ...  
Bird is amazingly responsive on this issue. If you complain about the position of one of their scooters, they literally send someone out within like 20 min to fix it.

If only bylaw was that quick on illegally parked cars.

1 11

**BirdCanada** @BirdRideCanada · 10m ...  
We are just seeing this now and appreciate the compliment! We are out right now on Elgin with our Safe Streets Team

1 1



Tweet your reply

Home Search Notifications Mail



5:11 LTE


**James st - Accessibility issue - 202000865652**

Thanks for the quick dispatch Austin, we owe you one!

Reid Tait,  
Roll Operations Ottawa

On Sep 2, 2020, at 4:55 PM, Austin Spademan  
<[austin.spademan@birdcanada.co](mailto:austin.spademan@birdcanada.co)> wrote:

All- them my team has located a scooter and moved it well out of the public right of way. Before and afters below. Thank you for flagging Alain.



Home Mail Reply Compose



**BIRD**  
CANADA

**Chris Schafer, VP Government Affairs**

**Bird Canada**

[chris.schafer@birdcanada.co](mailto:chris.schafer@birdcanada.co)

