

Good Afternoon Madame Chairperson and Members of the Committee, thank you for taking the time to hear from me today. My name is James Kemp and I am here representing the Advisory Committee for Persons with Disabilities with regards to report (ped20134(b)) and commercial rental E-Scooters.

We came before you in May with serious reservations to the Commercial E-Scooter pilot project as it was presented in the previous report (ped20134(a)). We raised a number of concerns and made recommendations to this committee accordingly. While not all of our concerns were addressed, an effort was made to consider a number of them.

The disabled community will probably never be fully supportive of E-Scooter technology. It isn't designed for us, feels like an existential threat to our safe mobility and until helmets are fully mandated by the province, we fear that they will only make more disabled people. However, we also understand that technology is always changing and we have to learn how to adapt to those changes. The ACPD feel more positive about this new report and think it's a step in the right direction to make E-Scooters equitable for as many people as possible.

We have studied how other cities, in Canada, the United States and throughout Europe, have introduced E-Scooters and they all seem to make the same assumption: If riders are educated on how to ride properly and safely, then they will follow the rules and we can leave enforcement to the companies themselves. What actually happens is that after a few months, the Cities realize that an enforcement arm is required to keep riders in line. For the most part, this is addressed through blitz style enforcement drives, but some have also tried training officers to operate and incorporate E-Scooters as specialized units and these units have had measurable success.

Based on this report, the ACPD can make the following suggestions in order to be helpful and increase the odds of a successful rollout:

1. This report mentions data collection. We suggest that the City collect hospital data during the same period, paying particular attention to how, where and why people were injured from E-Scooter interactions. This would help by not only giving information on E-Scooter safety, but also where there are issues that need to be addressed. For example, if people are getting injured in a particular area due to poor road conditions, the City can use that data to address the issue and improve safety; or if there is a rash of pedestrians getting hit by E-Scooters in a particular area, perhaps that is an area that requires a dedicated bike lane.
2. The City plans on designating certain park paths as acceptable E-Scooter paths. We would suggest painting large images of E-Scooters in high contrast on the paths; something that would alert the visually impaired that they are on a path with fast moving vehicles so that they can be on their guard. Signage is not effective for some people and even this method will not warn everyone. Urban Braille is our preferred method of alerting the visually impaired to potential danger, but we recognize that it isn't possible during a pilot project. We highly recommend that Urban Braille be incorporated if E-Scooters are approved past the pilot project.
3. While the City cannot mandate helmet use for all riders, the ACPD would suggest that the City of Hamilton ask the province to amend the Highway Traffic Act to require helmet use at all times as they do with motorcycles. Studies from across the world have shown that this alone could greatly reduce the number and severity of injuries. E-Scooters often pitch their riders forward causing face and mouth injuries as well; for this reason we also suggest face or mouth guards, but recognize that this would be a personal choice.
4. While this report asks E-Scooter companies to try and address the digital divide and provide access without a smartphone, we would also suggest that they look into reporting improperly parked vehicles without a phone. This could be done by a "call

home” button that would alert home base that it needs to be picked up.

When the ACPD presented in May, a Councilor remarked that we didn’t want to be left behind by other Canadian cities. I would offer an alternative perspective to that. We should strive to be the first city that gets E-Scooters right, both for the drivers and the pedestrians around them; to make this program equitable to as many people as possible. Hamilton has a history of being at the forefront of disability issues and E-Scooters should be no different.

If Council accepts this amended report and decides to go forward with the pilot program the ACPD will support the changes. We would request that we be consulted periodically throughout the Pilot Program to address any unforeseen issues and allow us to provide suggestions for improvement. The changes in the RFP, while not perfect, are a vast improvement over the last report. I would ask that Transportation, Public Works and Council think of us as a resource in this. We are at your disposal.

We would also offer our assistance to any E-Scooter company that is submitting a proposal. Please think of us as a resource during this process. We would gladly work with you to improve the safety of your vehicles.

We wish to thank Brian Hollingworth, Peter Topolovic and everyone else involved in the preparation of this report for giving our concerns and recommendations serious and sober consideration. We also wish to thank this committee for recognizing that this issue is of great concern to our community. We ask for your continued patience and understanding as we navigate this new technology.

Thank you for your time and attention,

James Kemp

Advisory Committee for Persons with Disabilities