



City of Richmond

Report to Committee

To: Public Works and Transportation Committee
From: Lloyd Bie, P.Eng.
 Director, Transportation
Re: E-Scooter Pilot Project Update

Date: February 21, 2024
File: 10-6490-01/2024-Vol
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Staff Recommendation

1. That the extension of the City's E-Scooter Pilot Project as described in the staff report titled "E-Scooter Pilot Project Update" dated February 21, 2024 from the Director, Transportation, be endorsed; and
2. That staff advise the Province that the City of Richmond consents to the Electric Kick Scooter Pilot Project taking place within the City, effective April 5, 2024.

Lloyd Bie, P.Eng.
 Director, Transportation
 (604-276-4131)

Att.1

REPORT CONCURRENCE		
ROUTED TO:	CONCURRENCE	CONCURRENCE OF GENERAL MANAGER
Parks Services RCMP Corporate Communications	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
SENIOR STAFF REPORT REVIEW	INITIALS: 	APPROVED BY CAO

Staff Report

Origin

In July 2021, Council endorsed bylaw amendments to enable participation in the three-year Provincial E-Scooter Pilot Project (“the Project”). The provincial government is extending the e-scooter project for another four-year period, effective April 5, 2024. This second phase will assist the Province in determining how e-scooters should be permanently authorized for use in B.C. Staff recommend the City’s continued participation in the Provincial E-Scooter Pilot Project. Council resolution is a requirement for community participation. This report addresses the Provincial requirement.

This report supports Council’s Strategic Plan 2022-2026 Focus Area #2 Strategic and Sustainable Community Growth:

Strategic and sustainable growth that supports long-term community needs and a well-planned and prosperous City.

2.3 Ensure that both built and natural infrastructure supports sustainable development throughout the City.

This report supports Council’s Strategic Plan 2022-2026 Focus Area #6 A Vibrant, Resilient and Active Community:

Vibrant, resilient and active communities supported by a wide variety of opportunities to get involved, build relationships and access resources.

Analysis

Background

The use of e-scooters is gaining popularity across the region, regardless of legal status within a community. The benefit of legalizing e-scooters is the ability to manage the use of these devices within the City.

The City’s E-Scooter Pilot Project began in July 2021 allowing the public to legally ride an e-scooter on streets with cycling facilities and on shared pathways in Richmond. City bylaws were amended to identify the conditions of where and how e-scooter users may operate. These regulations facilitate the management and enforcement of e-scooters in Richmond. The City was one of the first municipalities to participate in the provincial pilot project. Currently, there are 13 pilot project communities. The Province has streamlined the process for participation during the next four-year period to encourage more communities to permit the use of e-scooters.

Shared E-Scooter Program

The City was the first municipality in Metro Vancouver to offer a public shared e-scooter service. In May 2022, Lime launched both e-scooters and e-bikes in Richmond.

The program has been well received by the community. Lime has expanded from 75 to 200 devices (e-scooters and e-bikes) now in service.

The Lime Access program provides discounted rides to eligible riders, including those receiving support from the government who are unemployed. To date, over 500 discounted Lime Access trips have been taken. Outreach to raise awareness of this service is planned in 2024 through community pop-ups and partnerships with the Richmond Recreation Fee Subsidy Program.

Program Monitoring

Ridership

While private e-scooter trip metrics in Richmond are not available, data from the shared e-scooter service demonstrates interest in the community for e-scooters. Since the shared system's deployment, over 107,000 e-scooter trips have been taken, along with 13,000 e-bike rides. Trip data collected from the shared e-scooter service helps to identify the most popular cycling corridors and desire lines (Attachment 1). These devices are providing a new mode of travel for access to community services and transit in City Centre.

A high number of trips start and end near the Canada Line stations. This supports the use of this service for first and last kilometre connection to transit. There is also an equal distribution of weekday and weekend trips, which suggests the shared e-scooter service is being used for both commuter and recreational purposes.

Community Feedback

A Let's Talk Richmond survey from June 12 to July 23, 2023, enabled staff to collect feedback from the public regarding e-scooters. During the survey period, 427 responses were collected.

The majority of respondents indicated:

- Interest and support of this new personal mobility option;
- The convenience of e-scooters as an alternative transport option; and
- Suggestions for expanding the cycling network to support such devices.
- Sidewalk riding and enforcement of e-scooters were the primary concerns respondents had with e-scooters.

Safety and Education Campaigns

Activities to encourage and promote the safe use of e-scooters in compliance with the City's regulations are an integral part of the e-scooter pilot project. Staff regularly post messaging on the City's social media channels to deploy safety and education regarding the use of e-scooters. A blitz campaign is planned for spring 2024, combining social media videos, interspersed with static posts and other communication materials.

Staff continue to collaborate with the Richmond RCMP to educate and inform residents on the safe and lawful operation of e-scooters. Information handouts are distributed on shared pathways, at road side and at community events (Figure 1).

In partnership with HUB Cycling, Lime offers in-person First Ride events. These are interactive sessions to train riders on the safe use and operation of e-scooters. There are thirteen safety and education events planned by Lime in 2024. Lime provides in-app education and safety tips to avoid accidents.



Figure 1: E Scooter Safety Information Card

E-Scooter Safety

Currently, e-scooter collision data is not available from Vancouver Coastal Health (VCH). VCH is in the process of developing data collection and analysis of emergency room visits to Richmond General Hospital to capture e-scooter related incidents. The incident rate for Lime devices since launching in May 2022 is 0.02 per cent (20 incidents for 100,000 e-scooter and e-bike trips). Most incidents resulted in minor scrapes or bruises to the rider that did not require hospital or clinic treatment and one incident required less than 24 hours of medical attention.

During the next phase of the provincial e-scooter project, the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure will lead an ongoing safety evaluation, in partnership with ICBC and the BC Injury Research and Prevention Unit (BCIRPU).

E-Scooter Enforcement

Since the launch of the e-scooter pilot project, the Richmond RCMP have issued two tickets for lack of helmet use and two for excessive speeds. To date, the RCMP have been focusing on educating users rather than issuing tickets. Additional updates pertaining to the enforcement efforts related to e-scooter devices can be provided by the Richmond RCMP upon Council's request.

Financial Impact

None.

Conclusion

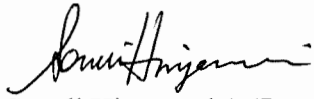
The City's E-Scooter Pilot Project permits the use of both personal and shared e-scooters on select streets and shared pathways in the City. Electrified micro-mobility is growing in popularity, regardless of whether these devices are legal or not. The benefit of continuing in the provincial pilot project is that the use of these devices can be managed through the City's established regulations and enforcement.

The E-Scooter Pilot Project has provided a popular travel option for the community with over 107,000 public shared e-scooter trips taken in Richmond since May 2022. Through monitoring and evaluation, the Project is an opportunity to inform future micro-mobility and active transportation initiatives.

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Staff recommend continued participation in the Province's four-year extension of the pilot project that supports a low carbon mobility option for Richmond residents, employees and visitors.



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Att.1: Shared E-Scooter Trip Data

Shared E-Scooter Trip Data

