

Shared Electric Kick Scooter Program Pilot – 2025 Update

ISSUE

The final operating season of the shared electric kick scooter (shared e-scooter) pilot project was completed in the fall of 2024. This report presents the outcomes of the pilot project and recommendations for permitting shared e-scooters moving forward.

BACKGROUND

History

The shared e-scooter pilot project began in the spring of 2023 and ended in the fall of 2024. The two vendors who operated shared e-scooters were Bird and Neuron.

Detailed background information on the shared e-scooter pilot project is included in Appendix 1. The approved shared e-scooter regulatory framework is included in Appendix 2. Highlights of the regulatory framework are included in Appendix 3. The permits provided to Bird and Neuron for the pilot project were in accordance with the approved regulatory framework.

Current Status

Pilot Project Statistics

The information below provides a few statistical outcomes of the pilot project.

Item	Outcomes	
	2023	2024
Total trips	114,317	104,625
Total kilometres	311,036 km	279,440 km
Average distance	2.72 km	2.67 km
Average ride duration (minutes)	16.86 min	15.18 min
Metric tonnes of CO ₂ emissions removed *	13.34 t	10.75 t
Unique riders	32,091	26,021
Percentage of rides starting in a Business Improvement District (BID)	43%	44%
Percentage of rides ending in a Business Improvement District (BID)	40%	42%
Total number of residents participating in a reduced pass price option (i.e., low income, students, etc.)	106	226
Number of community events (ScootSafe educational events**)	8	11

*Estimated calculation using the number of e-scooter trips that replaced a car

**These events included the vendors setting up an area where they completed some or all of the following: distributed free helmets, showed residents how to use the app, how to safely ride the e-scooter and also answered any questions residents had.

Information on the pilot project outcomes from Bird is included in Appendix 4.
Information on the pilot project outcomes from Neuron is included in Appendix 5.

Pilot Project Surveys

Four different surveys were completed. Bird and Neuron conducted surveys with their registered users. The City of Saskatoon completed an open survey on the Engage page

and also contracted Inshightrix to complete a survey. Information from each survey is summarized in Appendix 6.

Survey information provided by Neuron is provided in Appendix 5 (Neuron combined their pilot project outcomes and survey results in one document). Survey information provided by Bird is provided in Appendix 7. Survey information conducted by the City of Saskatoon is provided in Appendix 8. Survey information conducted by Inshightrix is provided in Appendix 9.

Concerns and Complaints

The City of Saskatoon, Bird, and Neuron received approximately 100 complaints during year two of the pilot, with several of the complaints related to privately owned e-scooters. The number of complaints is similar to what was seen in year one of the pilot project. The most common complaints were e-scooters parked incorrectly, sidewalk riding, and unsafe riding. The Administration worked with Bird and Neuron to address these issues and less concerns and complaints were received as the season progressed. Early in the season, Administration worked with the vendors to undertake sidewalk riding tests in some of the busier sidewalk locations to confirm the e-scooters would stop operating when on a sidewalk. The Administration will continue to work with the e-scooter providers to address issues in a timely manner.

The e-scooter vendors banned 11 riders from their apps, with the most common offense being repeated incorrect parking of an e-scooter.

Information on common complaints received and approaches to mitigate are provided below.

Item	Mitigations
Sidewalk riding	- Administration will continue to work with vendors as they adjust their technology to mitigate this. - Vendors will continue to educate riders.
Unsafe riding (no helmet, operating contrary to the rules of the road, etc.)	- Vendors will continue to educate riders. - Vendors will continue to host public events to demonstrate safe riding and answer questions. - Bylaw enforcement for offenders.
Parking e-scooters incorrectly	- Vendors will continue to educate riders. - Vendors will continue to improve on response time to reports of incorrectly parked scooters. - Vendor rider banning for repeat offenders.

Injury Information

The Saskatchewan Health Authority (SHA) shared data for Emergency Department visits from April 1, 2024 to July 31, 2024 for individuals suffering an injury riding an e-scooter. During this period, there were 53 visits. The information does not differentiate between private e-scooters and shared e-scooters in the pilot program. A summary report from SHA is provided in Appendix 10. The Administration received approval from the SHA to publicly share the summary report.

The vendors reported a total of 14 injuries during the 2024 season.

Saskatoon Police Service noted two accidents that were classified with minor injuries to the e-scooter operator. Both accidents involved an e-scooter and a motor vehicle. There was also a collision between a motor vehicle and a shared e-scooter that led to the death of the operator of the e-scooter. The driver of the motor vehicle was arrested and is facing charges of fleeing the scene of an accident, operating a motor vehicle while impaired and operating a motor vehicle while having a blood alcohol concentration exceeding 80 mg of alcohol causing death.

Stakeholder Feedback

The following table summarizes the organizations that were contacted to hear their comments about the e-scooter pilot project.

Organization	Date	Comments
Saskatoon Police Services	December 11, 2024	Written comments
Sutherland BID	November 29, 2024	Written comments
Broadway BID	December 10, 2024	Written comments
Downtown BID	N/A	No response
Riversdale BID	N/A	No response
33 rd Street BID	N/A	No response

Saskatoon Police Services (SPS) – During the 2024 season, SPS were involved in four motor vehicle accidents involving e-scooters. SPS issued two tickets and one warning to e-scooter operators. One ticket was for not wearing a helmet and the other was for not obeying a stop sign. The warning was for sidewalk riding.

Sutherland BID – They feel there are safety concerns involving e-scooters with the increasing traffic along Central Avenue. E-scooter users riding along sidewalks/pathways and not complying with rules is a concern.

Broadway BID – They have heard comments that the e-scooters are abandoned and incorrectly parked, unsafe and that riders are not using helmets. They also shared that the e-scooters bring in tourists, offer a good way to see the neighbourhood and move around, are environmentally friendly and provide a service to Saskatoon. The BID shared that e-scooters should continue being available.

Approaches in Other Jurisdictions

Other cities (Calgary, Ottawa) followed a similar approach of a pilot project or trial period for shared e-scooters in their respective cities before determining if they should be allowed permanently. A summary of the status of shared e-scooter in western Canada is included in Appendix 11.

OPTIONS

The Administration explored two options as follows.

Option 1 – Permit shared e-scooters on the public right-of-way.

This option would end the pilot project and allow shared e-scooters on the public right-of-way seasonally every year via a permit process.

Pros:

- Provides another transportation option.
- Less expensive mode of travel compared to driving a vehicle.
- Provides recreation and tourism opportunities.
- More environmentally friendly transportation option than driving a vehicle.
- Reduces parking demand for vehicles.
- Potential timesaving for travel versus other modes of transportation.

Cons:

- Can be mis-parked or abandoned.
- Potential for unlawful riding on sidewalks.
- Risks with unsafe driving.
- Weather dependent.
- Risk of rider or pedestrian injuries.

Mitigations for the potential cons have been outlined in the Concerns and Complaints section of the report.

Option 2 – Do not permit shared e-scooters on the public right-of-way.

This option would end the pilot project and no further work would be undertaken to enable legal operation of shared e-scooters on the public right-of-way.

Pros:

- Eliminates potential for mis-parked and/or abandoned shared e-scooters, shared e-scooter sidewalk riding, or unsafe shared e-scooter driving as they would no longer be available for rent.

Cons:

- Loss of opportunities for a cost-effective transportation option, potential travel time saving versus other modes of transportation, a more environmentally friendly transportation option than driving a vehicle, reduced parking demand for vehicles, and recreation and tourism activities.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Standing Policy Committee on Transportation recommend to City Council:

1. That Option 1 – Permit shared e-scooters on the public right-of-way be approved;
2. That shared e-scooters be permitted under Bylaw 7200, The Traffic Bylaw, 1991, and that vendors be acquired through a competitive procurement process to a maximum of two qualified vendors; and
3. That the City Solicitor's Office be requested to amend Bylaw 7200, The Traffic Bylaw, 1991, as outlined in this report.

RATIONALE

The recommended option is Option 1 – Permit shared e-scooters on the public right-of-way with the following rationale:

- Provides another transportation option.
- Less expensive mode of travel compared to driving a vehicle.
- Provides recreation and tourism opportunities.
- More environmentally friendly transportation option than driving a vehicle.
- Reduces parking demand for vehicles.
- Potential timesaving for travel versus other modes of transportation.
- Overall stakeholder and public survey results show general support for the continued use of shared e-scooters.
- The number of complaints in the second year of the pilot project (100) are manageable through various mitigation methods by the vendors and Administration.
- The Administration will continue to work with shared e-scooter vendors to resolve issues and concerns as they arise.
- Shared e-scooters operate in many other Canadian cities such as Victoria, Vancouver, Edmonton, Calgary, and Regina.

ADDITIONAL IMPLICATIONS/CONSIDERATIONS

The use of private e-scooters on the public right-of-way, currently illegal, will be the subject of a report to the Standing Policy Committee on Transportation planned for late spring/early summer 2025.

If Option 1 is approved, the Administration will publish a Request for Applications to potentially award permit(s) to a maximum of two vendors operating a total of up to 500 shared e-scooters in Saskatoon. Permits will be five years in length with a fee of \$22,000 + GST each season and \$100 for each designated parking area. If parking areas are required on the street, parking fees outlined in Bylaw No. 7200 – The Traffic Bylaw, 1991 will apply. If two vendors are selected, the fees will be shared by both vendors proportionate to the number of e-scooters they operate in the City. The fees are unchanged from what was in place during the two-year pilot. The program is revenue neutral to the City.

A five-year contract, with appropriate language for contract termination for non-compliance, will provide security and stability to the program for both the City and the vendor(s).

COMMUNICATION ACTIVITIES

If Option 1 is approved, a public service announcement will be provided informing the public the pilot project has been completed, and shared e-scooters will be permitted seasonally through a permit process with vendors moving forward.

NEXT STEPS

If Option 1 is approved, Administration will work with Solicitor's Office to make any necessary changes to Bylaw No. 7200 – The Traffic Bylaw, 1991 and then proceed with the Request for Applications.

APPENDICES

1. Project Background
2. 2023 Shared Electric Kick Scooter Program Pilot: Regulatory Framework
3. Highlights of the Regulatory Framework
4. Pilot Project Outcomes - Bird
5. Pilot Project Outcomes and Survey – Neuron
6. Summary of Survey Results
7. Pilot Project Survey - Bird
8. City of Saskatoon Survey Results
9. Insightrix Survey Results
10. SHA Emergency Department Visits for Fall Involving Electric (Motorized) Scooter
11. Summary of shared e-scooters in western Canada

Report Approval

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