

LICENCES FOR E-SCOOTERS AND E-BIKES (E. Rutherford)

Recommendation

That the May 2, 2024, City Operations report CO02138, be received for information.

Requested Action	Information only		
ConnectEdmonton's Guiding Principle	ConnectEdmonton Strategic Goals		
CONNECTED This unifies our work to achieve our strategic goals.	Urban Places		
City Plan Values	ACCESS		
City Plan Big City Move(s)	A community of communities	Relationship to Council's Strategic Priorities	Mobility Network Climate Action & Energy Transition
Corporate Business Plan	Serving Edmontonians		
Council Policy, Program or Project Relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City Bike Plan • Bylaw 5590 - Traffic Bylaw • Bylaw 2202 - Parkland Bylaw 		
Related Council Discussions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • January 15, 2019, City Operations report CR_5970, Bike Sharing Program Viability 		

Previous Council/Committee Action

At the October 11, 2023, Urban Planning Committee meeting, Councillor E. Rutherford made the following inquiry:

That Administration provide a report to Committee summarizing the current licence(s) that are issued to vendors that provide services for e-scooters and e-bikes, as well as a summary of the experience so far reported to the City, any areas for improvement for the launch of the program in the spring, and how program changes were reflected in contracts with vendors.

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Executive Summary

- The City of Edmonton launched the Shared Micromobility Program in 2019 to enable and regulate the seasonal operation of privately owned, shared e-scooters on public property. This aligns with The City Plan goal that 50 per cent of all trips are made by transit and active transportation. In 2022, the program was amended to also include e-bikes and allow for year-round operation.
- Shared e-scooters and e-bikes are operated by private suppliers, who are granted a Licence of Occupation to operate on city right-of-way. Riders are permitted to travel on bike lanes, shared pathways and city streets of 50 km/h or less.
- Administration is updating the program for 2024 based on the results of a program review, jurisdictional scan and public engagement. The new program will provide more consistent service across the city and improve supplier compliance.
- Shared micromobility suppliers for 2024-2027 will be announced by the end of May 2024.

REPORT

The Shared Micromobility Program governs the use of privately owned, shared e-scooters and e-bikes in Edmonton, in support of The City Plan and Bike Plan goal that 50 per cent of all trips are made by transit and active transportation. Shared e-scooters, e-bikes and other modes of active transportation can bridge gaps in transit and provide alternatives to vehicle transport. This reduces traffic congestion and the city's environmental impact while improving community health and vibrancy. Riders are permitted to travel on bike lanes, shared pathways and city streets that have a speed limit of 50 km/h or less.

The Shared Micromobility Program for the 2024 to 2027 term aims to:

- Leverage public feedback, program learnings and past program data to meet the evolving demand for short-term use, shared e-scooters and e-bikes in Edmonton.
- Encourage safe, accessible and connected active transportation through increased access to shared micromobility devices.
- Enable mode-shift to transit and active transportation by supporting the first and last kilometer of a trip.

Shared Micromobility Program Licence of Occupation

Edmonton launched the Shared Micromobility Program in 2019 with a shared e-scooter system to provide on-street access to convenient, sustainable active transportation options. Per City Council's direction at the January 22, 2019, City Council meeting, the program was designed to use multiple service providers through a permit process.

Initially, suppliers were able to apply annually through an open process to receive seasonal Licences of Occupation for the road right-of-way. Selection criteria included a minimum fleet size of 250 vehicles and the ability to meet equipment and technology specifications, such as vehicle size, tire type, GPS tracking, in-app communication, data management and maximum speed. Two suppliers (Bird and Lime) operated shared e-scooter services in 2019 and 2020. In 2021, a third supplier (Spin) was also granted a Licence of Occupation. The number of suppliers and the lack of

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a maximum fleet size resulted in approximately 4,000 shared e-scooters on-street in early 2021. In response to public feedback, Administration reduced the number of e-scooters allowed on-street to a maximum of 1,500 total (up to 500 units per supplier) for the remainder of 2021 and initiated a program review.

In 2022, Administration updated the program with a two-year Licence of Occupation and limited approvals to a maximum of two suppliers. These changes helped ensure suppliers were experienced, could provide safe, accessible micromobility vehicles and manage safety and parking concerns effectively. In response to public feedback and micromobility trends in other jurisdictions, the new agreement also required that suppliers provide both e-scooters and e-bikes.

The new Licence of Occupation also allowed for year-round operation. While operators could still operate programs seasonally, this allowed them to adjust operations as needed (e.g. extending the season due to late snowfall). Lime and Bird were both awarded a Licence of Occupation for the use of public road right-of-way from May 27, 2022 to December 31, 2023.

Shared micromobility services for 2024 will again be year round and limited to two suppliers; however, the Licence of Occupation term has been extended to three years. The request for proposals closed on April 5, 2024, and the suppliers will be announced by the end of May 2024.

Jurisdictional Scan

Administration conducted a jurisdictional scan of other Canadian cities that operate shared micromobility programs of similar scope and size (Attachment 1). Key findings included:

- Permitted riding areas vary by jurisdiction. All but one respondent allow shared micromobility on bike lanes and roads with slower speed limits. Riding on sidewalks is prohibited in the majority of surveyed jurisdictions.
- All surveyed jurisdictions set a maximum riding speed ranging from 20 to 24 km/hr, and several have established slow zones where riding speeds are further restricted.
- Other program rules and regulations vary between jurisdictions. Some require riders to wear helmets or restrict hours of shared micromobility operation.

Shared Micromobility Program Improvements

The demand for shared micromobility in Edmonton continues to increase and the program has seen great success over the last two years (Attachment 2). In 2023, users took approximately 1.06 million rides on shared e-scooters and e-bikes, which is over double the amount taken in 2022. Administration sees this as a positive advancement towards The City Plan and Bike Plan goal that 50 per cent of all trips are made by transit and active transportation.

Administration is updating the Shared Micromobility Program in 2024 to improve alignment with The City Plan and Bike Plan, and to better balance the needs of users and non-users. Changes are based on the program review, past usage data, jurisdictional scan and public engagement.

New Program Features

- **Parking compliance.** Visibly identifiable parking locations, no-parking zones, supplier-supported rider penalties for improper parking and incentives for suppliers to

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improve fleet management will address challenges with sidewalk clutter and parking compliance that may impact accessibility on sidewalks. This will also help ensure that units are available for riders in designated, predictable locations.

- **Safety.** Exclusion and slow zones will reduce conflicts between shared micromobility users, pedestrians and other active transportation users on shared pathways, bike lanes and sidewalks. Adjustments can be made based on feedback from the public and riders.
- **Transit integration.** Strategic placement of parking corrals and fleet will increase connectivity and multimodal transportation options at LRT stations, transit centres and bus stops to support the first and last kilometre of trips. ETS is also in the initial stages of exploring mobility hubs to improve integration of active transport with transit, with more details to be identified in the 2027-30 budget cycle.
- **Education.** An educational campaign at the beginning of the season will promote multimodal and active transport opportunities, Shared Micromobility Program rules and safe rider habits.

Licence of Occupation Updates

- **Real-time data.** Suppliers will enter real-time data into a new, third-party program so Administration can see program activity and support ongoing program adjustments.
- **Supplier fee structure.** Fleet fees are changing from quarterly to daily, which means that suppliers will pay the City per vehicle, per day on-street. This will encourage suppliers to improve utilization rates per vehicle, actively relocate unused vehicles and match availability to demand, particularly during periods of underutilization. Additionally, the City can adjust the per-vehicle fee for specific vehicle types to encourage changes in on-street fleet composition.
- **Compliance fees.** Suppliers are expected to be adaptable in their provision of day-to-day service. Introducing new compliance fees will help address concerns with fleet management, improper parking and street clutter without the need for fleet maximums.
- **Wider service coverage.** Suppliers are encouraged to provide higher levels of service outside of the city core, while retaining the ability to adjust fleet size and availability based on population density and connection to popular destinations. Suppliers are also encouraged to incentivize customers picking up or dropping off shared micromobility in identified equity zones. These are areas that are currently underserved, such as low-income neighbourhoods.

Budget/Financial Implications

The Shared Micromobility Program is fully funded by Traffic Safety Automated Enforcement Reserve (TSAER). No significant increase in program cost as a result of program changes is expected and no additional funding is required.

Revenue from supplier permit fees offsets tax levy-funded budget in the Regulated Road Use program. Revenue may increase from the new permit fees structure, but is dependent on factors including fleet size, number of trips and number of kilometers traveled per supplier.

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Community Insight

Administration conducted an online survey (5,013 responses) from August 16 to 30, 2023, to gather feedback on the Shared Micromobility Program. The survey was distributed through the Edmonton Insight Community and is available on edmonton.ca/surveys. Bird and Lime, the active suppliers at the time, shared the survey with their registered app users from August 18 to 30, 2023. A summary of the survey results is available in Attachment 3. Key findings include:

- 22 per cent of respondents have ridden a shared e-scooter or e-bike.
- 75 per cent of respondents agree that shared e-scooters and e-bikes are beneficial in providing another way to travel.
- 64 per cent of respondents agree that shared e-scooters and e-bikes increase access to sustainable active transportation options.
- 71 per cent of respondents reported often encountering sidewalk riders. 40 per cent reported that they did not receive proper warning by voice or bell when being passed.

Administration collected and reviewed feedback from 311 and other public inquiries on an ongoing basis to make program adaptations. Key themes from the public included sidewalk clutter, shared pathway usage and general inquiries about the program. During the 2022 to 2023 program period, Administration met with suppliers monthly and annually to review public and operational feedback, and collaborate on improvements.

GBA+

The Shared Micromobility Program aims to provide accessible, safe and equitable shared micromobility options for use on public streets and Edmonton's shared active transportation network. By allowing the operation of short-term use, shared micromobility vehicles at a minimal cost, the program provides alternative transportation options for those who may not be able to purchase or own a bike, e-bike or automobile to commute due to cost, space constraints or other prohibitive factors. Additionally, as the use of private e-scooters on public property is not permitted by provincial legislation, the Shared Micromobility Program provides a legal opportunity to use these vehicles on Edmonton's public road right-of-way.

Administration evaluated suppliers on equitable access (e.g. alternative payment methods for those unable to pay by phone app) and social sustainability (e.g. equity employment opportunities) as part of the application process. The new permit fee structure also aims to encourage suppliers to offer discounts and incentive programs in locations that are identified as equity zones, such as low-income neighborhoods.

Attachments

1. Jurisdictional Scan
2. Program Trip Data (2022 to 2023)
3. Public Engagement Summary and Results