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NEWS

CITY CONSIDERING HOW TO ENCOURAGE BIKE, E-BIKE AND E-SCOOTER SHARE SYSTEMS

PROVINCE STARTS 5-YEAR E-SCOOTER PILOT IN 2020

STEVE CORNWELL
scornwell@metroland.com

Next summer, Mississauga residents and visitors might have a few more options to get around.

City council directed its staff to look at how Mississauga can encourage "micromobility" sharing systems, including e-scooters,

e-bikes and bicycles.

The city hopes that the devices could help residents and visitors travel short distances in the downtown core, along the future Hurontario LRT and in Mississauga neighbourhoods like Meadowvale and Lisgar.

According to Matthew Sweet, the city's active transportation manager, all vehicles, docking systems and operational models are under consideration.

We're not prescribing

the type of vehicle or device at this point," he said. "Not least because the industry is so fast moving and changing."

Sweet said the most important aspect for the city is not the device, how it's parked or whether it's publicly or privately owned.

Really the first thing you should think about is how do these systems meet the city's goals," he said.

According to a staff report, micromobility systems align with City of Mississauga goals including

promoting environmental sustainability and equity by "increasing access to viable transportation options for all."

The move comes as the province is set to start a five-year pilot allowing e-scooters on Ontario roadways. Municipalities can opt-in to allowing e-scooters after Jan. 1, 2020. Bikes and e-bikes are already allowed on roadways in Ontario.

E-scooters abandoned on sidewalks, roadways and other undesignated

parking spots have been an issue in several cities where they've launched in North America, including Calgary and Edmonton.

Accessibility advocate and lawyer David Lepofsky said that e-scooters are a "blight" wherever they are deployed and have been a consistent tripping hazard for people with disabilities.

"(E-scooter shares) are a brilliant business model for a company that wants free parking at the taxpayer's expense," he said.

Lepofsky is also the vol-

unteer chair of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act Alliance and the group has asked the province to forbid rental e-scooters.

The city staff report from August 2019 recommends that the city accept micromobility sharing systems be introduced in phases and that bikes and e-bikes be favoured over e-scooters for now.

City staff is anticipating the next phase of the micromobility study will be finalized in June 2020.