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March 8, 2022

Mayor Bonnie Crombie
City of Mississauga
Mississauga Civic Centre
300 City Centre Drive
Mississauga, ON L5B 3C1

CC: Mississauga City Council

Dear Mayor Crombie,

I am writing on behalf of March of Dimes Canada, a leading national charity committed to championing equity, empowering ability, and creating real change that will help people living with disabilities across the country unlock the richness of their lives. Founded over 70 years ago, we have a long history of providing service to Mississauga residents with disabilities, and today operate out of six sites in the city, providing community support services and community-based programming.

Based on our many decades of service, we have seen firsthand the barriers experienced by people with disabilities in navigating city streets. E-scooters represent yet another barrier to safety and accessibility: from the dangers posed by sidewalk riding, to the trip hazards created by improperly parked scooters.

These issues have been well-documented by accessibility advocates in cities across Ontario where pilot projects have already been completed. A pilot project is not necessary to demonstrate that e-scooters will be dangerous for people with disabilities, as we already have the evidence from other jurisdictions. For this reason, we are calling on yourself and Brampton City Council not to commence an e-scooters pilot, and instead bans e-scooters in public spaces in the city.

E-scooters represent a safety risk for all pedestrians in the city. They are silent, unlicensed, uninsured, and move at speeds of up to 24 kilometres per hour. When a ride-sharing program is in place, they are often being operated by first-time riders. Unsurprisingly, these users often ride on sidewalks to avoid riding on busy city roads, despite prohibitions on sidewalk riding. Most jurisdictions that have authorized e-scooter use experience illegal sidewalk riding.¹

The safety and accessibility risks are compounded for pedestrians with disabilities. People with limited mobility often do not have the time or space to move out of the way of these fast-moving vehicles. Those with vision or hearing loss may not even realize that a scooter is approaching. This can

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result in collisions where both pedestrian and rider are injured. This is not a hypothetical scenario; in Calgary, there were 700 scooter-related emergency-room and urgent-care visits in the first season of their e-scooter pilot.² By the city staff's estimation, riding a shared e-scooter is "potentially about 350 times more likely to result in a serious injury than riding a shared bike on a per km basis."³

While a pilot project has not yet begun in Mississauga, e-scooters are already being used privately, on both roads and sidewalks. While the greatest risk of injuries is to e-scooter riders, concerns about pedestrian injuries are well-founded: an American study found nearly one in ten scooter-related injuries is experienced by a pedestrian,⁴ while a Danish study found 16% of those injured were non-riders, with a median age of 75 years.⁵

In addition to dangerous riding, improper parking is a serious issue, with e-scooters littering public spaces. Illegally parked scooters are not only a trip hazard, but also create an accessibility challenge for pedestrians navigating the city's sidewalks. An otherwise accessible pathway may become impassible when improperly parked scooters block the sidewalk. Again, this is not merely theoretical; in Montreal, the city opted not to renew their e-scooter pilot, given that 80% of e-scooter users parked illegally, causing serious accessibility issues in the downtown core.⁶

In the City of Toronto in 2021, city staff and council were unanimous in upholding the ban on e-scooters.⁷ Having listened to the voices of the disability community, they found that the safety, liability and accessibility risks were unresolved for both privately-owned and rental e-scooters.⁸ The reality is that cities across Ontario do not have the resources for enforcement, our infrastructure is not yet designed for this new form of transportation, and that riders are still learning how to use the technology. None of the proposed workarounds will be a silver bullet – and we have seen this play out in other municipalities with pilot projects.

As we hope you will agree, now is not the time for an e-scooter pilot project in Mississauga. Prohibiting e-scooters is aligned with the city's stated priorities in the Strategic Plan, including prioritizing walkable, pedestrian-first spaces and maintaining the city's status as the safest large city in Canada.

Thank you for the opportunity to represent the perspectives of the March of Dimes Canada community. We will be following this issue closely.

Sincerely,



Amanda MacKenzie
National Director, Public Affairs
March of Dimes Canada

¹ B. Gray, *E-Scooters – A Vision Zero Road Safety Approach*, City of Toronto Transportation Services Report to the Infrastructure and Environment Committee, June 24, 2020. Retrieved from <https://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2020/ie/bgrrd/backgroundfile-148266.pdf>

² E. Carpenter, “Injuries rise with popularity of e-scooters on Calgary streets,” *CBC News*, July 21, 2020. Retrieved from <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/calgary/injuries-rise-with-popularity-escooters-calgary-streets-1.5657159>

³ Gray, 2020.

⁴ Gray, 2020.

⁵ S.N.F. Blomberg, et al., “Injury from electric scooters in Copenhagen: a retrospective cohort study,” *British Medical Journal*, 2019, <https://bmjopen.bmj.com/content/9/12/e033988>.

⁶ R. Lau, “No more shared e-scooters in Montreal because they weren’t being parked legally: city officials,” *CTV News*, February 19, 2020. Retrieved from <https://montreal.ctvnews.ca/no-more-shared-e-scooters-in-montreal-because-they-weren-t-being-parked-legally-city-officials-1.4818347>

⁷ P. Tsekouras, “Toronto votes unanimously to opt out of e-scooter pilot,” *CTV News*, May 5, 2021, Retrieved from <https://toronto.ctvnews.ca/toronto-votes-unanimously-to-opt-out-of-e-scooter-pilot-1.5415871>

⁸ B. Gray, *E-Scooters – Accessibility and Insurance Issues*, City of Toronto Transportation Services Report to the Infrastructure and Environment Committee, April 12, 2021. Retrieved from <https://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2021/ie/bgrd/backgroundfile-165818.pdf>