

# Report to Council



**Date:** November 4, 2019  
**To:** Council  
**From:** City Manager  
**Subject:** Bikeshare Permit Program Fall Update  
**Department:** Integrated Transportation Department

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## Recommendation:

THAT Council receives for information, the report from the Integrated Transportation Department, dated November 4, 2019 regarding a progress report on the Bikeshare Permit Program and contractual obligations.

## Purpose:

To provide an update on the City's bikeshare permit program and transport options being provided under the program.

## Background:

The City's bikeshare permit program has been in effect since May 2019, with the first permitted companies beginning to operate in July 2019. The permit program is structured so that multiple operators can provide a variety of vehicles for use by residents and visitors. So far in Kelowna, permits have been issued to five different operators to deliver shared e-bikes and e-scooters.

### Alignment with the Transportation Master Plan Vision

*"Kelowna will be a city with vibrant urban centres where people and places are conveniently connected by diverse transportation options that help us transition from our car-centric culture."*

To align with the City of Kelowna's Transportation Master Plan vision, shared micro-mobility (see definition) should aim to achieve high-quality service, delivering that service to the largest number of people and managing negative

**Shared micro-mobility** refers to services that provide personal vehicles that can carry one or two passengers to customers on a short-term rental capacity. Bicycles are the most common example, but other micro-mobility vehicles include electric bicycles, scooters as well as mopeds or small quads – generally micro-mobility vehicles are powered by electricity or human propulsion.

externalities like disorder within the public realm and unauthorized or unsafe use. By building a permit program to regulate bikeshare, we are able to maximize investment and competition from firms delivering small shared vehicles in Kelowna.

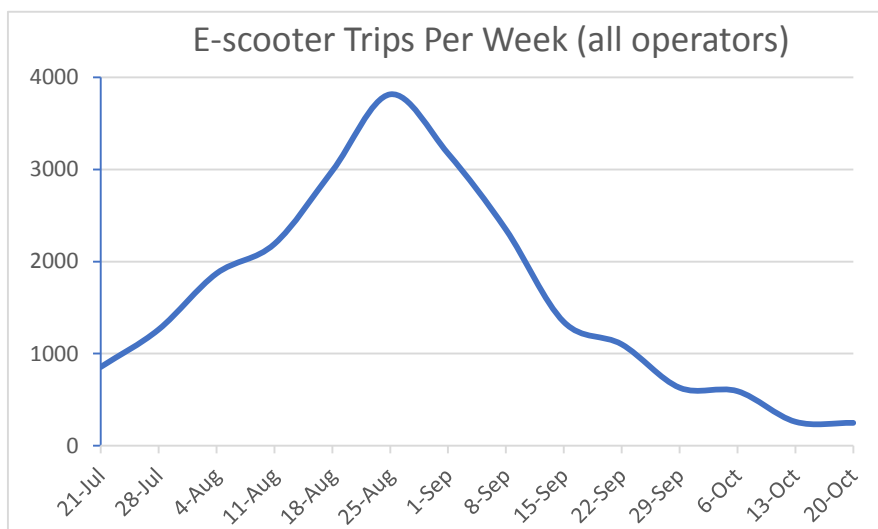
Since the permit program's launch, staff have accepted, vetted and granted permits to successful applicants to explore new ways of providing flexible, affordable and accessible transportation options. Kelowna has been joined by Montreal, Calgary and Edmonton, who have also allowed e-scooter sharing services in their cities this year. Hundreds of other cities globally permit and regulate these services. Many provinces have delivered legislation or highlighted a move to formalize new modes such as e-scooters, including British Columbia, Alberta, Quebec, Nova Scotia and Ontario.

This memo provides an update on how the bikeshare permit program has performed, the challenges with a limited geographic scope and its potential for the future.

### Results to Date

The companies currently permitted and operating in Kelowna are OGO, Bunny, and ZIP. SPIN and Roll have been issued permits but are not yet operating. While most operators have been issued permits to deliver e-scooters, Roll intends to provide both e-scooters and e-bikes.

From mid-July to mid-October 2019, there were more than 20,000 rides on a fleet that varies by the day but did not surpass 100 vehicles on any given day. For a mid-size community this is a strong indication of success and future potential. The average distance and duration for trips across the first three months for all operators are 2.8km and 22 minutes. The length and duration of trips proves there is potential to connect using the road network for short trips through and between our urban centres and allow for e-scooters and emerging micromobility options to be delivered as a convenient transportation solution.



*Figure 1 - Graph illustrates total trips for all bikeshare permit holders in Kelowna per week over the first 3 months. These trips were all made on e-scooters.*

### Enabling new shared micro-mobility options in Kelowna and British Columbia

The permit, which accommodates pedal bikes, e-bikes and e-scooters, gives the City the ability to add new vehicle types under 500kg to remain flexible as new vehicle types become available in the future. Staff have updated the permit program to add e-mopeds in September 2019. Shared e-mopeds are different from other permitted vehicles and as a result need to be parked in parking stalls and pay for the parking they consume while also paying for an On-Street Parking Permit. They will be insured, plated, titled and require a valid class 5 license in compliance with ICBC regulations.

In May, Kelowna council sent a letter to the Provincial Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure and the Premier of British Columbia requesting an exemption to the Motor Vehicle Act to test the use of e-scooters on-street in our community. The Province has recently passed legislation allowing for this type of exemption through pilot programs<sup>1</sup>. The City is in discussions with the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure about developing a pilot program under this new framework for e-scooters.

### Opportunities for Improvement

One of the benefits of the limited area where e-scooters were able to operate is that successes and failures can serve as learning opportunities to formulate the best model before expanding city-wide. The following challenges regarding e-scooters have been identified.

### **Balancing recreational use and commuter use**

While recreational use of e-scooters is encouraged, the use of these vehicles as a viable transportation option is desired. Advocacy with the Province has been successful as legislation will soon pass that enables a pilot program to open up the available areas where e-scooters and other innovative mobility options can be used. This can open the door to shared e-scooters and other emerging modes to be used as a transportation option. In other cities such as Calgary and Edmonton, where users of e-scooters are not confined to a single corridor, use grows significantly and is more balanced between transportation and recreational uses.

### **Conflicts along the Waterfront Walkway**

While some complaints about activity on the Waterfront Walkway mentioned e-scooters, several also highlighted conflicts between bicycles and pedestrians. Upon further analysis of the section of the corridor where e-scooters are permitted, we found the mix of activity to be substantial.

There is design guidance for the volume of users and trail characteristics where separation is desired between bikes and pedestrians on a multi-use path. Current peak hour volumes on summer weekends are 150% higher than the threshold where separation of users is desired. Without e-scooters an issue would still exist as to the compatibility and volumes of uses on the Waterfront Walkway. We see this friction acknowledged with the City's recent application to the Province's Community, Culture and Recreation Program to build a second path to separate users moving at different speeds on this same corridor to avoid conflicts.

As a response to those comments that did mention conflicts with e-scooters, the City requested permit holders limit speeds on scooters between the Kelowna Tourism Centre and the intersection of Abbott and Bernard to address location-specific concerns within Kerry Park. We have noticed fewer complaints since delivering this voluntary request to operators.

### **Riding e-scooters outside the allowed network**

To eliminate the potential for users to leave the permitted corridor, thereby breaking the law, staff require each operator to establish a geo-fence. A geo-fence means that a sensor on the scooter can detect when it is being taken away from a set area and can power down gradually. This significantly

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<sup>1</sup> "Progress Of Bills". *Leg.Bc.Ca*, 2019, <https://www.leg.bc.ca/parliamentary-business/legislation-debates-proceedings/41st-parliament/4th-session/bills/progress-of-bills>.

reduced the ability for e-scooters to be used to connect to different destinations but was successful in ensuring most trips did not leave the permitted corridor.

### Next Steps:

- The City will continue to invite applicants who have experience delivering shared micro-mobility services to apply for a permit. After review, successful applicants will be issued permits and are free to operate within the confines of the permit program.
- A continued effort will be put into educational and infrastructure-related measures to improve safety between people on our road network. For shared micro-mobility services, the City will continue to work with operators to refine in-app education for users which has proven most effective<sup>2</sup>.
- The City will continue to communicate with the Province with regards to an exemption to the Motor Vehicle Act for electric scooters and potentially other micro-mobility options to be used on roadways.
- Updates on the performance of the Bikeshare Permit Program will be prepared every year.

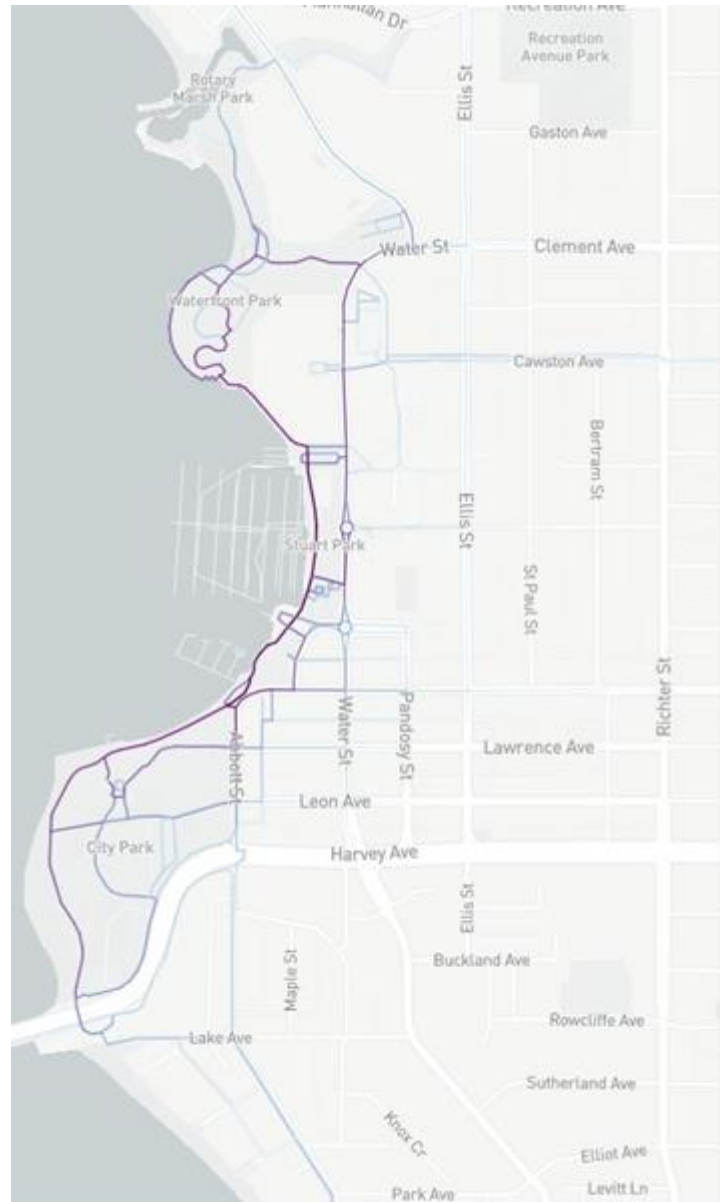


Figure 1 Heatmap of E-scooter trips for the first 3 months of operation

### City's Obligations to Bikeshare Permit Holders

The term for a Bikeshare Permit is one year. The City has retained the ability to discontinue the Permit program for any reason whatsoever. In addition, the City, at its sole discretion, may do any of the following at any time:

<sup>2</sup> "2018 E-Scooter Findings Report". *Portlandoregon.Gov*, 2019, <https://www.portlandoregon.gov/transportation/article/709719>.

- a. Change the dates or the term of any or all Permits;
- b. Cancel any and all Permits;
- c. Adjust the Maximum Fleet Size of any Permit Holder;
- d. Issue changes to the Permit's requirements including changes to any parking requirements;
- e. Issue changes to the Permit's conditions;
- f. Change any fees imposed under the application process, or compliance with the Permit requirements or the Permit conditions; or
- g. Modify any terms of the Permit.

**Existing Policy:**

*The Kelowna On The Move: Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan recommends staff "research and develop a strategy to demonstrate which programs would be most effective in achieving behavioural change to grow the share of residents selecting active modes of transportation."*

*The Community Climate Action Plan recommends staff "expand the pilot community bikeshare program."*

**Internal Circulation:**

Director, Business and Entrepreneurial Development  
 Communications Advisor  
 Planner Specialist  
 Risk Manager

**Considerations not applicable to this report:**

Financial/Budgetary Considerations  
 Personnel Implications  
 Legal/Statutory Authority  
 Legal/Statutory Procedural Requirements  
 Existing Policy  
 Communications Comments  
 Alternate Recommendation  
 External Agency/Public Comments

Submitted by:

R. Villarreal, Manager, Integrated Transportation

**Approved for inclusion:**



A. Newcombe, Divisional Director, Infrastructure

**Attachment 1 - Bikeshare Permit Program Fall Update Presentation**

cc: A. Newcombe, Divisional Director, Infrastructure  
 C. Weaden, Divisional Director, Corporate Strategic Services  
 R. Fine, Director, Business and Entrepreneurial Development  
 R. Smith, Divisional Director, Planning & Development Services  
 S. Leatherdale, Divisional Director, Human Resources & Community Safety