

November 28, 2019

## **Ontario Announces E-Scooter Pilot on Municipal Roads**

On November 27, 2019, the Government of Ontario [announced](#) that it would begin a pilot program to allow electric scooters on municipal roads in Ontario. The pilot will go live in January 1, 2020. Under the pilot, municipal governments are able to opt in through by-law to allow electric scooters on their roads, paths, and (in some cases) sidewalks; license electric scooter rental companies; regulate parking and the number of devices available in an area; impose data sharing and insurance requirements amongst other licensing criteria. Municipal governments, and their staff, are encouraged to think through all of these issues before opting to allow the devices in their communities.

E-scooters, as they are called, have been emerging in cities across North America and beyond, and have the potential to add “micro-mobility” solutions to help augment transportation such as connections between transit and individual destinations. As they are electric, they do not add exhaust emissions that decrease air quality (depending on how electricity is generated) or noise pollution.

However, E-scooters also have the potential to increase safety concerns for riders, pedestrians, vulnerable road users, and cyclists. The pilot imposes some conditions on the devices, which riders must wear helmets, and limits maximum speed to 24 km/h. Advocates for people with disabilities in particular have [pointed](#) to the challenges E-scooters may pose for that community. Some cities have experienced a profusion of E-scooters left on sidewalks that increase nuisance and hazards for pedestrians. However, municipal parking rules and company policies which continue to charge users for rentals, if not parked in authorized areas, may help to reduce this practice.

Municipal governments interested in allowing their use need to work to balance these

concerns with the desire for flexible, micro-mobility devices and ensure that they meet municipal transportation needs and other local policy goals. AMO members are especially encouraged to consult with their communities before joining the pilot and ensure plans are in place to discourage nuisance, reduce any residual municipal liability through adequate insurance requirements, address the needs of disabled and vulnerable road users, and reduce nuisance and conflicts between E-scooter riders, cyclists, pedestrians and motorists. Interested municipal governments should also consider how they would enforce their by-laws in this area and costs to do so as they develop rules and/or permitting for rental companies. Municipalities should also consider how they will collect incident data with local hospitals and health authorities as well as police reporting during the pilot.

The following resources may assist municipal officials in interested municipalities in considering issues they may encounter in by-laws and policies development that best meet their local needs:

Ontario Ministry of Transportation:

- [Regulation 389/19](#)
- [MTO E-Scooter Pilot Information](#)
- [MTO E-Scooter Best Practices](#)

Share The Road:

- [Preparing for E-Scooters](#)