



February 26, 2020

Warden McNamara and Members of Essex County Council
360 Fairview Ave. W., Suite 314
Essex ON
N8M 1Y6

Dear Warden and Members of County Council,

Re: E-scooters and Barriers to Accessibility


I am writing to inform you of the Essex County Accessibility Advisory Committee's position on the provincial e-scooter pilot program.

Last November, the Provincial Government [passed a regulation](#) which lets municipalities permit dangerously fast e-scooters on roads, sidewalks and other public places. It ignored serious safety and accessibility concerns documented by Ontarians with disabilities. Rental e-scooters, strewn in public places, will be new mobility barriers to accessibility for people with disabilities. Silent e-scooters, racing at 24 kph, driven by uninsured, unlicensed untrained riders as young as 16, will endanger the physical safety of people with disabilities and others on sidewalks and in other public places.

Unlicensed, untrained, uninsured people racing on silent e-scooters in public places, including sidewalks, endanger the public, and especially people with disabilities. Ontarians with disabilities and others will be exposed to the danger of serious personal injuries or worse. Pedestrians cannot hear silent e-scooters racing towards them. This is especially dangerous for people who are blind or have low vision or balance issues, or whose disability makes them slower to move out of the way. This regulation does not require a rider to have a driver's license, or to have training in the e-scooter's safe use or in the rules of the road. It does not require the e-scooter's driver or owner to have insurance.

The e-scooter model does not have to be certified as safe by the Canada Safety Association or other recognized certifying body. The e-scooter need not have a vehicle license, or display a license number, that could help identify the vehicle in the case of an injury.

The regulation lifts the provincial ban on e-scooters, but none may be used unless a municipality passes a bylaw permitting it. The Provincial Government did not set strong,

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mandatory provincial rules to prevent the dangers that e-scooters pose nor did it provide any direction or guidance for municipalities to do so.

The ECAAC asks that County Council, comprised of the mayors and deputy mayors of each local municipality, strongly consider not allowing e-scooters in their communities.

We, along with the following organizations, have taken this position as it relates to e-scooters:

- Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act Alliance
- March of Dimes Canada
- Canadian National Institute for the Blind
- ARCH Disability Law Centre
- Spinal Cord Injury Ontario
- Ontario Autism Coalition
- Older Women's Network
- Alliance for Equality of Blind Canadians
- Guide Dog Users of Canada
- Views for the Visually Impaired
- Citizens with Disabilities - Ontario

We as residents living with disabilities continue to advocate for an accessible community, County of Essex, Ontario and Canada. Although we have made great strides over the past decade, we still have a long way to go before persons with disabilities enjoy the same freedoms of movement, information and communications as others. We welcome your support in ensuring we continue to remove barriers to accessibility in our communities rather than creating them.

Sincerely,

Christine Easterbrook
Chair, Essex County Accessibility Advisory Committee