



January 31, 2020

Chair and Members
Toronto Accessibility Advisory Committee (TAAC)
c/o Jennifer Lin
10th Floor, West Tower
Toronto City Hall
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Dear Committee Chair and Members:

On behalf of Bird Canada, I wanted to thank you for your consideration of e-scooter oversight and management at your February 3rd meeting.

Last October, I was pleased to meet with Councillor Kristyn Wong-Tam in her capacity as Chair of TAAC, and to hear from her about accessibility considerations for dockless e-scooter sharing in Toronto. In December, I was grateful for the opportunity to engage in a productive conversation with representatives of the CNIB Foundation.

Dockless e-scooter sharing has considerable potential to take cars/SUVs off the road, and to replace them with safe, affordable, and sustainable alternatives. As studies have consistently shown in multiple cities across North America, **every 3 Bird rides replace one car trip**. This outcome will have benefits for all Torontonians, but especially for vulnerable road users and pedestrians.

Safety is our top priority, both for riders on the road and our neighbors on the curb. It's at the heart of everything we do – from vehicle design and app development to our extensive community-outreach programs.

To that end, Bird Canada is committed to working with the City of Toronto to ensure that appropriate steps are taken to prohibit sidewalk riding, and to make certain that the pedestrian through zones of sidewalks are safe and adequate for pedestrians.

To be clear, we do not support sidewalk riding in Toronto, and will advocate against it.

Moreover, we have backed up our safety commitment with a variety of actions, including the following:

- Our newest version of scooter, that has just been released and which we would use in Toronto has a new dual anti-tipping kickstand to keep it upright and out of the public right of way.
- Should an e-scooter be pushed over, our e-scooters have sensors alerting us if they have been tipped over. When we get an alert from an e-scooter, we deploy Bird Watchers to correct it.

- We design our e-scooters for maximum visibility, and our e-scooters emit audible sounds to alert their presence when necessary. Our rider training clearly instructs riders about the appropriate use of such devices; bells should never take the place of yielding and respectful riding.
- We automatically govern speed limits to help municipal governments slow down riders in high-traffic areas.
- In addition to in-app, online and in-person rider and community education, we use tools like beacons, geofenced no-parking zones, corrals, preferred parking, stencils and more to ensure riders park only in designated locations, if required. Members of the community can help our street team of Bird Watchers police parking through the in-app Community Mode feature.
- In addition to our riders, our local staff, Bird Watchers and Chargers must all take photos to indicate where they place a Bird. These photos are reviewed by individuals, not computers, to ensure that they are not blocking the pedestrian through zone of the sidewalk.
- Bird has held S.H.A.R.E. safety events in more than 100 cities worldwide to teach local residents the rules of the road and give our free helmets potential users.

Finally, given sensationalist and unrepresentative portrayals of sidewalk clutter in the news media, I think it's important to note what the data actually reveals: The Mineta Transportation Institute at San José State University released an independent report in November 2018 examining how riders park shared e-scooters in San José, California. Their conclusion began: "Are scooters well-parked? The answer appears to be a clear 'yes'. Fewer than 2% of scooters were parked incorrectly, and even fewer failed to meet the city's standards for bicycle parking (parked bicycles may not block doors or more than half the sidewalk)." And that was before Bird began implementing most of the above actions.

Our recent experience in the Cities of Calgary, Edmonton and Montreal is instructive: last year, we had zero toppled e-scooter reports.

Thank you for this opportunity to submit a letter to the Committee. Bird Canada looks forward to continuing its work with the City to make e-scooter sharing work for the benefit of all Torontonians.

Sincerely yours,



Stewart Lyons
Chief Executive Officer
Bird Canada