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April 22nd, 2021

CNIB commends the City of Toronto for carrying out further investigations into the impact of e-scooters before moving forward with a pilot, especially looking into the collision and injury data and possible public health and accessibility implications. Introducing e-scooters onto our city streets is not a decision that is to be made lightly, especially in a city such as Toronto where sidewalk and roadway space is at a premium in many busy areas. There are also more than 20,000 people who are blind or partially sighted living in the Greater Toronto Area and many more vulnerable pedestrian users who are living with other disabilities.

CNIB endorses the Toronto Accessibility Advisory Council's decision on February 25th, 2021 to not support the use of any e-scooters or pilot project and to continue the ban which prohibits their use in all public spaces. While many municipalities discourage or ban the riding of e-scooters on sidewalks, many do so without consequence, making these public spaces less safe for pedestrians who are blind or partially sighted. We foresee that in Toronto there will not be adequate enforcement to deal with e-scooter rider and parking violations, along with unresolved concerns around compensation and insurance implications for injured pedestrians. Furthermore, there is the very real concern that e-scooter collisions may cause catastrophic injury and permanent disability, which otherwise could have been avoided and will exacerbate capacity issues within our already strained healthcare system.

In other jurisdictions such as Ottawa and Calgary that have e-scooter pilots, CNIB has documented many instances of e-scooters being abandoned in intersections and sidewalks, creating barriers for people with sight loss and other disabilities. The ability to report e-scooter incidents remain another barrier for people who are blind or partially sighted who may find it difficult to identify the company, colour, or other identifying features of the e-scooter.

City Council has committed to building an accessible city and taking a Vision Zero approach to road safety – we urge you to join us in saying no to e-scooters in Toronto.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Suzanne', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Suzanne Decary-van den Broek  
Executive Director, ON (GTA & East Regions)  
CNIB Foundation