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**To:** [Toronto Accessibility Advisory Committee](#)  
**Subject:** [External Sender] Written submission to Toronto Accessibility Advisory Committee from AODA Alliance on E-scooters  
**Date:** February 5, 2024 8:43:13 AM

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**ACCESSIBILITY FOR ONTARIANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT ALLIANCE  
NEWS RELEASE - FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

[Read this Update on the web.](#)

## **AODA Alliance to Present Today at Virtual Meeting of the City of Toronto's Accessibility Advisory Committee to Oppose Allowing the Silent Menace of Electric Scooters that Endanger Vulnerable People with Disabilities, Seniors, and Others**

February 5, 2024 Toronto: Today starting at 9:30 am the City of Toronto's Accessibility Advisory Committee will consider disability community objections to the possibility, now under City study, of Toronto allowing electric scooters (e-scooters). The AODA Alliance is scheduled to make a deputation to the Committee. The meeting may be live-streamed at: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCfe2rzOnQzgEDvNzRRPUJsA>

Last fall, 22 respected disability and community organizations, including the AODA Alliance, wrote City Council urging it not to eliminate the ban on riding e-scooters in public places in Toronto. The AODA Alliance, today, will re-submit that letter (set out below) to the Toronto Accessibility Advisory Committee.

It explains that e-scooters would endanger public safety, lead to injuries - even deaths - and create barriers to accessibility for people with disabilities. The supposed "social benefits" of e-scooters (reducing road traffic and pollution) are illusory and unproven.

"If e-scooters in Toronto get approved, Torontonians will suffer the personal injuries and get stuck paying the expenses while e-scooter rental companies laugh all the way to the bank," said David Lepofsky, Chair of the non-partisan AODA Alliance that has spearheaded advocacy to protect people with disabilities from the dangers that e-scooters pose. "With Toronto facing huge property tax hikes, they should not waste public money on conducting a pilot project with e-scooters, experimenting on Torontonians as unwilling guinea pigs."

This danger to people with disabilities is made worse by Toronto's continuing to build new bike paths on top of sidewalks. These endanger pedestrians with disabilities, such as blind people, as the AODA Alliance's [widely-viewed online video](#) shows. If Toronto legalizes e-scooters on bike paths, that means e-scooters will be allowed on at least some sidewalks, where pedestrians deserve to have their safety guaranteed.

In 2020 and 2021, the Toronto Accessibility Advisory Committee passed strong motions that called for Toronto to ban e-scooters. On May 5, 2021, Toronto City Council voted unanimously not to allow

e-scooters to be ridden in public places, as a result of advocacy from Toronto's disability and seniors' community. Today the AODA Alliance will urge the Toronto Accessibility Advisory Committee to maintain its opposition to e-scooters. Despite claims by some e-scooter corporate lobbyists, there is no proven new technology that will protect vulnerable pedestrians with disabilities and seniors from the dangers posed by the silent menace of e-scooters.

"We call on Toronto City Councillor Jamaal Myers, Chair of the Toronto Accessibility Advisory Committee, to be a strong and unwavering advocate against e-scooters, said Lepofsky. "We need Councillor Myers and all members of City Council to stand up for vulnerable people with disabilities and stand up to the feeding frenzy of e-scooter corporate lobbyists."

Contact: AODA Alliance Chair David Lepofsky, [aodafeedback@gmail.com](mailto:aodafeedback@gmail.com)

Twitter: @aodaalliance

For more background, check out:

- The AODA Alliance's June 1, 2023 brief to the Toronto Infrastructure and Environment Committee and the AODA Alliance's June 22, 2023 supplemental brief.
- The AODA Alliance website's [e-scooter page](#).

## **October 25, 2023 Open Letter to Toronto Mayor Chow and City Council**

October 25, 2023

Open Letter

Via Email

To: Mayor Olivia Chow and Members of Toronto City Council  
City Hall  
100 Queen St. W.  
Toronto, ON M5H 2N2

Dear Mayor and Members of Toronto City Council,

Re: Protecting Vulnerable People with Disabilities and Seniors in Toronto from the Dangers Posed by Electric Scooters

On May 5, 2021, implementing a strong recommendation from Toronto City staff, Toronto City Council unanimously voted not to allow electric scooters (e-scooters) to be ridden in public places in Toronto, whether the e-scooters are rented or privately owned. The undersigned organizations and groups call on Toronto City Council to leave that ban in place. Toronto should not conduct any sort of "pilot" with e-scooters. It should instead take all steps needed to effectively ensure that e-scooters are not ridden in public places, a ban that to date has not been effectively enforced.

An e-scooter is a motor vehicle that a person rides while standing up. It can be very quickly throttled

up to fast speeds of 24 KPH or faster. It is silent even when ridden at fast speeds.

Experience in city after city shows that e-scooters, a silent menace, endanger public safety. Riders and innocent pedestrians get seriously injured or killed. E-scooters especially endanger seniors and people with disabilities, who are vulnerable to high speed of an e-scooter and unable to get themselves out of harms way. People who are blind, have low vision, or Deafblind, can't know when silent e-scooters rocket at them at over 20 KPH, driven by unlicensed, untrained, uninsured, fun-seeking joyriders, who often are not wearing a helmet. When left strewn on sidewalks, e-scooters are dangerous tripping hazards for people who are blind or partially sighted, and accessibility barriers to a clear path for wheelchair users.

It does not protect the public to ban e-scooters only from sidewalks. E-scooters are frequently ridden on sidewalks in cities where they are banned from sidewalks. With its unsolved deficit, Toronto has more pressing priorities.

Claims that new technology will prevent e-scooters from ever being ridden or parked on sidewalks are unproven. Toronto should not subject people with disabilities, seniors and others to being guinea pigs in an involuntary public experiment on them, to test out those claims. Even if that technology had existed, it would NOT protect anyone from the same dangers posed by privately owned and illegally ridden e-scooters that have no such technology.

Toronto has more pressing budget priorities. City staff have not recommended to Toronto City Council that the ban on e-scooters be reopened or that Toronto conduct an e-scooter pilot. They did not suggest from their ongoing monitoring of this issue that new technology prevents the proven dangers that e-scooters present. In 2021, City staff submitted an excellent, detailed, thoroughly researched report to City Council that recommended against Toronto conducting an e-scooter pilot. At the June 28, 2023 Infrastructure and Environment Committee meeting, Toronto City staff did not rescind that earlier position. City staff told the Infrastructure and Environment Committee that the Toronto Medical Officer of Health has not altered their opposition to Toronto conducting an e-scooter pilot.

The driving reason why City Council unanimously voted against allowing e-scooters two years ago was the strong objection from the disability/seniors' community. At meeting after meeting of committees of the Toronto City Council over the past several years where this issue has come up, all debutants from the disability and seniors' communities have told Toronto not to lift the ban on e-scooters. Toronto's Accessibility Advisory Committee has twice unanimously recommended against Toronto allowing e-scooters.

Under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, and the Ontario Human Rights Code, Toronto is required to remove barriers impeding people with disabilities, and to prevent the creation of new disability barriers. It would knowingly create new disability barriers for Toronto to allow e-scooters, whether privately owned or rented, to be ridden in public places, whether permanently or in a pilot project.

We agree that it is important to reduce traffic in Toronto, and to fight against climate change. Endangering people with disabilities, seniors and others with the silent menace of e-scooters does not effectively contribute to either of these important goals. There are many other more effective ways to advance those goals, without endangering Toronto's most vulnerable residents and visitors.

Signed,

1. Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act Alliance
2. Alliance for Equality of Blind Canadians
3. CNIB
4. Accessibility Hamilton Alliance
5. Ontario parents of Visually Impaired Children
6. Accessible Housing Network
7. Spinal Cord Injury Ontario
8. Walk Toronto
9. Centre for Independent Living in Toronto CILT
10. Autism Ontario
11. March of Dimes Canada
12. Guide Dog Users of Canada
13. Citizens with Disabilities Ontario CWDO
14. Canadian Council of the Blind Toronto VisionariesChapter15
15. Ontario Autism Coalition
16. ARCH Disability Law Centre
17. Community Living Toronto
18. Ontario Disability Coalition
19. Balance for Blind Adults
20. Easter Seals Ontario
21. DeafBlind Ontario Services
22. The Reena Foundation