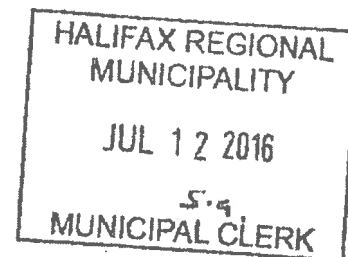


Re: Item No. 10.3.2



July 11, 2016

To: Chairman Tim Outhit and members of Halifax Regional Municipality Council Transportation Committee

From: Nova Scotia CARP (Canadian Association of Retired Persons) Chapter

I am writing on behalf of Nova Scotia CARP (Canadian Association of Retired Persons). Our membership includes eight thousand people throughout Nova Scotia.

We at CARP have a major concern with the pilot project that was conducted by the Department of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal on the use of personal transporters and the resulting amendment to the provincial Motor Vehicle Act. We were not consulted or even informed about this project that will have such an impact on the quality of life for our members.

We are requesting that the Halifax Regional Municipality Council review NS Bill 136 (amendment to the Motor Vehicle Act regarding the use of Segways) and consider the implications. As currently written, it allows for the use of Segways or personal transporters on municipal sidewalks and roads. This raises major safety concerns for a large segment of the population.

This Bill had first reading on Nov. 26, 2015 and received Royal Assent on Dec. 18, 2016. There is however a provision in the Bill (No. 10 of Chapter 293, 172 (2) that allows municipalities to prohibit or limit their use.

“where a sidewalk or roadway within a municipality is not part of a highway to which the Public Highway Act applies, the municipality may make a by-law prohibiting the operation of a personal transporter on that sidewalk or roadway”

The pilot project that was a basis for this amendment has serious flaws.

Participants.....In its surveys and gathering of data, it did NOT contact or reach out to any seniors groups, disability groups or any that are representative

of residents who would be adversely affected by having to share our sidewalks with motorized recreational vehicles.

Process.....The “two year” pilot project was conducted only over the course of two summer tourist seasons under very controlled circumstances. The first year included only three vendors who were granted permits to operate tours in Truro, parts of the south shore and various routes around Halifax and Dartmouth.

“During the second year of the pilot however, only the vendor in Halifax was operating, with several different routes approved around Halifax and over to Dartmouth via the ferry.”

Evaluation..... The evaluation was done on the basis of surveys sent by email or given to riders in the various tour groups (467 responses) and “other road users” (pedestrians, cyclists, drivers) (867 responses). In addition there was an email address for members of the general public to send comments. By Dec. 2, 2015 only 8 emails had been received. After the changes to the MVA were announced, another 18 emails were received. One received at that time

“raised concerns for the Disabled community especially hazards Segways create for blind or deaf individuals. In general it was believed that Segways were not appropriate in congested areas due to safety concerns”

The survey does not in any way adequately represent the views of Nova Scotians overall. It is a very small sampling of a targeted audience. It was instituted at the request of a private company and would seem to be aimed at paving the way for a market for the sale of Segways for individual use.

The biggest concern is the first recommendation of the report. This recommends that

“Segways may be used by individuals (not only those involved with tour groups) on provincial roadways in conjunction with the majority of the conditions used during the two year pilot project...”

Bill 136 seems to allow the use of Segways for personal use with no restrictions other than those imposed by municipal by-laws or by traffic rules relating to the Motor Vehicle Act. There are currently no by-laws in HRM that

address this issue. The only restriction on operators in the bill would seem to be subsection (4) of Section 69

“no person who is under the age of sixteen shall operate a personal transporter on a highway “

This amendment would make Nova Scotia the first and only province to allow the general use of segways on public sidewalks.

“Alberta currently prohibits them from roadways with the exception of Emergency Medical Services, various police agencies, and parking authorities. Ontario’s pilot project began in October 2006 and is due to expire in October 2018. It is limited to persons 14 years of age and older with mobility impairment, Canada Post employees who deliver door to door, and police officers for law enforcement purposes. They are only to be used on sidewalks, trails paths and walkways provided municipal by-laws do not prohibit them. The pilot in New Brunswick only permits law enforcement officers in Saint John to use them off private property” (Introduction page of the NS Segway Pilot Project Report.)

We would urge HRM Council to carefully review the MVA amendment with an eye to the ramifications on public safety especially if these motorized vehicles were to be used recreationally on municipal sidewalks. We have a large senior population, many with balance and mobility issues, a large disabled community and many others who would be vulnerable and face safety issues if segways were allowed to operate on our sidewalks.

We would recommend the restricted use of Segways to controlled, properly guided and licensed tour groups with the riders provided with basic instruction at the outset and used on existing bike paths rather than pedestrian sidewalks.

A copy of the Nova Scotia Segway Pilot Project Evaluation Report and also a copy of Bill 136, an amendment to the Motor Vehicle Act is included.

Thank you for your attention.



Chair N.S. Transportation N.S. CAPP