



Hamilton

CITIZEN COMMITTEE REPORT

To:	Chair and Members Public Works Committee
From:	Andrea Kita Hamilton Cycling Committee  (to be signed by the Chair)
Date:	September 23, 2013
Re:	A review of bike lanes relating to mobility devices

Recommendation:

The HCyC feels it is not appropriate for a mobility scooter to use bike lanes. The exception being that a mobility device/scooter could possibly be permitted on a bike lane to scale the escarpment to bypass stairs.

Background:

On June 3, 2013 PWC asked for a comment from the HCyC regarding bike lanes. Specifically, the request of PWC was to get comment from the HCyC regarding "the use of bicycle lanes by mobility devices". The HCyC discussed this item at their July and August 2013 meetings.

Analysis/Rationale:

Mobility devices are permitted on HSR busses and in malls and are intended to operate at slower speeds, comparable to walking. The HCyC discussion focused on the mobility device termed a "mobility scooter". This device is best described as a chair/seat on a platform that has either 3 or 4 small wheels and is steered with a "T stick" in front of the seat. The HCyC feels it is not appropriate for a mobility scooter to use most bike lanes because a bike lane can end and a bike must then merge with auto traffic. Merging with auto traffic is not an appropriate action for a mobility device, and there is not always a curb cut in the immediate area whereby a mobility device can take refuge on the adjacent sidewalk. This position is consistent with the City Traffic Bylaw which states bicycle lanes are "set aside for the exclusive use of cyclists".

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The HCyC felt that the one exception whereby a mobility device/scooter could possibly be permitted on a bike lane is to scale the escarpment (eg. the upbound Jolley Cut bike lane) because bike lanes and multi-use trails are the only means by which a wheeled mobility device can scale the escarpment (other than riding on an HSR bus, taxi, or private vehicle). Before such an exception could be formalized, it would be necessary to confirm that there are appropriate entry and exit points for mobility devices to access such bike lanes. It was also recognized that upbound cyclists are typically travelling at a very low speed, perhaps slower than most mobility devices; so mobility devices would not impede most cyclists. Ideally this exception could also be excluded if the pedestrian realm (i.e. sidewalks) were a contiguous network, that did not require stairs, across the city to serve pedestrians in mobility devices.

Appendices:

none