

Skateboarding Regulations

Governance and Priorities Committee Report
For the Meeting of December 3, 2015



Purpose

- To provide Council additional information related to proposed bylaw amendments to permit the use of skateboards on City roadways.
- At the October 8, 2015 Governance and Priorities Committee meeting, Council considered a report proposing recommendations to amend the Streets and Traffic Bylaw to permit the use of skateboards on City roadways. Following discussion, Council made the following motion:

That Council refer the matter back to staff for further work, with particular attention to the following:

1. *Fines applying only to downtown.*
2. *Amount of fines when not in the downtown.*
3. *Requirement for lights and reflectors.*
4. *The age of skateboarders to whom the regulations would apply.*



Fines

- To ensure skateboard-related fines remain consistent with existing and similar regulations, staff reviewed:
 - City criteria for setting fines
 - Skateboarding regulation fines in other cities
- \$125 fine amount could be considered reasonable, and would be consistent with cyclist-related offences
- Differing fine amounts could be administered for specific areas of the City, such as downtown; however, a single penalty system would likely be simpler and easier to understand and implement
- Staff recommend applying consistent fine amounts



Lights and Reflectors

- Anticipated low adoption levels for lighting requirements
- As a minimum alternative, staff proposed advocating for lighting 'safe practices'
- Council could implement regulations, consistent with Motor Vehicle Act lighting requirements for cyclists:
 - Must wear a white light on the front that is visible for at least 150m
 - Red reflector and a lighted red lamp, visible to the rear
 - Lights required to operate between ½ hour after sunset, and ½ hour before sunrise



Age/Geographic Considerations

- Should younger skateboarders have to follow the same 'rules of the road' as other skateboarders?
 - Age-based rules for safety infractions not used by other municipalities
 - Age-based penalties relative to skateboarding appear limited to helmet use (Portland, Georgia, Florida, New York, and California)
 - Staff recommends regulations not initially include age-based exemptions
- Should the bylaw apply only to the downtown core?
 - Enforcement would be prioritized based on safety/collision prevention
 - Focus on busier areas; enforcement outside these areas could be required
 - VicPD advocate separating skateboarders from pedestrians and vehicle traffic as much as reasonably possible
 - As a minimum alternative, staff recommends regulations apply in all locations across all age-groups; VicPD focus on risk-mitigation



Communications

- Education program:
 - Provide clear and accessible information to all impacted stakeholders, help foster safe and courteous use of downtown streets
 - Brochures outlining the changes will be shared with skateboarders, other road users, and downtown businesses
 - Develop video with skateboarders, highlighting regulations, and encourage best practices (lights, helmet use)
- Outreach to all neighbourhoods, work with the Downtown Residents' Association and Downtown Victoria Business Association
- Signage and road markings to indicate skateboards permitted in bike lanes



Recommendation

That Council direct staff to:

1. Proceed with proposed amendments to the Streets and Traffic Bylaw, Ticket Bylaw, and Parks Regulation Bylaw that would permit the use of skateboards, roller skates, in-line skates, and non-motorized scooters on all City streets, and require skateboarders and users of other similar modes of transportation to follow the same rules of the road as cyclists, and eliminate associated impound provisions, effective February 1, 2016.
2. Proceed with a communications strategy to increase public understanding on how skateboarders can integrate in City streets.
3. Write a letter to the Province of BC advocating for a provincial standard within the Motor Vehicle Act for skateboarding helmets, similar to cyclist regulations.
4. Report back in June 2016 with any observations/considerations related to skateboarding safety in the City.

