

**CRD TRAFFIC SAFETY COMMISSION
MINUTES OF MEETING
Tuesday, January 9, 2024**

Members: Neil Arason, Island Health
Doug Baer, Capital Bike
Dr. Murray Fyfe, Island Health
Dr. Frederick Grouzet, Centre for Youth and Society, UVic
Sgt. Andy Harward, CRD Integrated Road Safety Unit
Natalia Heilke, RoadSafetyBC
Sgt. Jereme Leslie, CRD Integrated Road Safety Unit
Steve Martin, Community Member (Chair)
Dean Murdock, CRD Board (Vice-Chair)
Dr. Paweena Sukhawathanakul, Institute on Aging and Lifelong Health, UVic
Keith Vass, Media
Colleen Woodger, ICBC Road Safety and Community Involvement

Associates: Sgt. Doug Cripps, Saanich Police
John Hicks, CRD

Regrets: Hailey Bergstrom-Parker, Child Passenger Safety Program, BCAA Community Impact
Ron Cronk, Vancouver Island Safety Council
Myke Labelle, Commercial Vehicle Safety and Enforcement
Todd Litman, Walk On, Victoria
Owen Page, Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure

Recording Secretary: Arlene Bowker

The meeting was called to order at 1:04 pm.

1. Election of Chair and Vice-Chair

Nominations were called for the position of Chair for a one-year period. Dean Murdock nominated Steve Martin. Other nominations or expressions of interest were called for three times and as none were received, Steve Martin was acclaimed as Chair for 2024.

Nominations were called for the position of Vice-Chair for a one-year period. Neil Arason nominated Dean Murdock. Other nominations or expressions of interest were called for three times and as none were received, Dean Murdock was acclaimed as Vice-Chair for 2024.

2. Territorial Acknowledgement

Chair Martin provided a territorial acknowledgement.

3. Approval of Agenda

MOVED by Andy Harward, **SECONDED** by Colleen Woodger, that the agenda be approved as distributed. **CARRIED**

4. Approval of Minutes – December 12, 2023

MOVED by Neil Arason, **SECONDED** by Colleen Woodger, that the minutes of the meeting held on December 12, 2023 be approved. **CARRIED**

5. Chair's Remarks

Chair Martin said he is looking forward to this year as we have a lot of exciting things on our plate. At next month's meeting, he would like to do a review of the Commission's strategic priorities.

6. Business Arising from Previous Minutes

➤ **Update on Transportation Working Group**

This group is comprised largely of engineers from each of the municipalities, the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure, and representation from BC Transit. Meetings are held every

couple of months to go through key priority areas. A lot of time is being focused currently on some of the new housing policy in terms of changes in zoning across the region. Another issue of interest is the e-mobility pilot program which has been extended for four years. There is no commitment from any of the municipalities to move forward with that at this stage.

On another topic of interest to the Commission, it was noted that the CRD Board passed the following motion at their December meeting: *That the CRD advocate to the provincial government to expand the Intersection Safety Camera Program, installing new red light and speeding cameras in the Capital Region in locations with high levels of casualty crashes.* That letter will be going forward to the Honorable Mike Farnworth.

Discussion took place on whether the Commission would like to lend its support to that letter, which would require a motion. A question was raised on whether we have local BC data on the effectiveness of the cameras. There is data available, but data analysis is still being done for the first several years of the project. It would be important to look at more serious crashes, rather than minor collisions.

MOVED by Murray Fyfe, **SECONDED** by Neil Arason, that the Traffic Safety Commission support increasing the number of intersection cameras both for red light infractions and speed throughout the region and we would also request that additional data be produced for our region on the impact that the existing cameras have had since they were implemented in the CRD. **CARRIED**

Abstained: Natalia Heilke

➤ **Report on e-mobility Research**

Paweena Sukhawathanakul provided a summary of the review of the current research on micro-mobility as it relates to personal use and safety. This review was requested by the CRD Board.

As a background, e-mobility involves e-bikes and e-scooters. The pilot program underway is related specifically to e-scooters. Studies show that micro-mobility devices can reduce vehicle trips and traffic congestion. Under the Motor Vehicle Act, scooters are not allowed on public roads or sidewalks. The e-mobility pilot project allows participating communities to determine how and where these e-scooters can be used. City bylaws vary regarding where these devices can operate, as well as their speed. Some communities are using their participation to test e-mobility shared service programs. The pilot project was implemented in 2021 for a three-year period but has now been extended for another four years. An ongoing safety evaluation is taking place led by the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure, ICBC and the BC Injury Research and Prevention Unit.

A sample of findings from participating communities based on the shared e-scooter program found that in Kelowna and Vernon more than 600,000 trips were recorded in approximately two years, 48% of which replaced vehicle trips. Challenges with the e-scooter sharing program are issues around parking, enforcement and regulation. Analysis of injuries and fatalities in those communities is still ongoing. It was also reported that greater public education and awareness is needed to support compliance.

In terms of how this relates to us, the CRD travel survey showed that micro-mobility devices are on the rise, with e-bike use accounting for 30% of all bike trips in the CRD in 2022. Active walking and biking modes of travel increased by 7% in the region from 2017 to 2022. Based on the literature review, there are some things that need to be taken into account. If the CRD is considering rolling out sharing programs like this, there needs to be some kind of equity focused lens, as well as having diverse active transportation infrastructure, e.g., sunshades and covered parking to ensure year-round use. Also, while these devices reduce congestion and carbon emissions, there is an indirect consequence of their production and there needs to be a plan in place for battery recycling, regulating disposal, recycling and maintenance, etc., to ensure we're not causing more harm to the environment. Another consideration is safety and education. It is hard to enforce safety in terms of using these devices, so it depends on how the municipalities are going to roll out safety campaigns. Lastly, more effort is needed to target data collection related to injury and prevention.

The following points were raised during discussion on this issue.

- Municipal governments can opt into the pilot program so would our role be to provide advice and guidance? There are a lot of different questions around this issue including the matter of enforcement when the devices aren't legal to begin with.
- We are doing this work based on Board direction to look at e-mobility safety in the CRD. It is more about reporting back on the research findings based on the direction given by the Board, including some considerations which would need to be taken into account, rather than providing a recommendation. The CRD does not have the authority to create a bylaw to cover the whole region and it would have to be done on an individual basis, which would require every municipality to come to an agreement of some sort. Prior to the extension of the pilot program, a recommendation could have been made to use the information from the program, regulate the use and amend the Motor Vehicle Act, but the Province has essentially said they're not going to do that by extending the pilot program.
- In the past, where it doesn't have jurisdiction, the CRD has created a model bylaw, and this is something that could be considered.
- From a police perspective, treating these devices like a bike would be the easiest. Get them off the sidewalks, into a bike lane, along the Galloping Goose, and make helmets mandatory. We're not going to stop it, but at least it would be safer.
- Another issue is around impairment. It is a motorized device so is a risk for the individual as well as others they may encounter.
- There is the issue of people dumping rented scooters anywhere, as has happened in the past with bikes. It was noted that because the scooters are valuable, it is likely that the rental companies would be more concerned about tracking them down.
- Could this be used as a topic for one of our advertising videos or included in the CRD etiquette campaign?
- Propose a model bylaw which allows them and bring in the right requirements for safety and regulate them properly. Could also consider whether there is a place for e-scooter sharing programs. There could be merit in a proposed law as we can't keep ignoring them.
- The work that Paweena is doing is much broader than the provincial pilot. Really like the idea of proposing a model bylaw. The CRD can move much faster on this than the province. The comments raised today could be taken into consideration in the report.
- Questions about injuries and death came up in conversations with other municipalities. One suggestion is to put more accountability on sharing companies to have an educational plan in place. Prior to using one of these devices, users would have to do some training and awareness and have a commitment to safety in some way.
- Like to see some dedicated enforcement from the CRD around e-mobility which would put teeth into regulations around safety. It would be interesting to see the results of an enforcement campaign. Education, not enforcement, would be better.
- Will continue to communicate with other municipalities and follow up with the BC Injury and Prevention Unit to see what their progress is with looking at data. Also, will go back and review some of the municipal bylaws, compile them and hand them over to John to see what might be useful for a model bylaw.

John Hicks noted that a report of the findings will be going back to the Transportation Committee in February and commentary from this meeting can be added. The summary will be appended to the staff report. The report won't be coming back to us again, so today is our opportunity to comment. The report will present items to consider but won't be providing a formal recommendation.

Vice-Chair Murdock said he will be interested in the Committee's perspective as to whether there is value in proceeding collaboratively with some sort of pilot effort which would require a harmonious bylaw.

Chair Martin asked if we could do anything to follow up on the report that the Committee will receive in February to lend our perspective on speed, helmets, and advocate for a region wide model bylaw.

It was noted that the staff report integrates the findings from the research, states it is prepared in collaboration with the Commission and will include the considerations that we are bringing up as a

group. That includes perhaps developing a model bylaw that will involve looking at an amendment to the Motor Vehicle Act with the pilot program in consideration.

Chair Martin asked if there would be support for a motion to the effect that we strongly endorse these findings and that we recommend consideration be given to treating e-scooters as bicycles, making helmets mandatory, and developing a model regional bylaw. Murray Fyfe noted that there is still the option of having a bylaw that prohibits them and John Hicks commented that they are not permitted as it is which is why the exemptions are provided to opt into the pilot program. In order to opt into the pilot program there needs to be a bylaw in place and have a willing jurisdiction.

The current Government pilot program is very narrow and it's not really covering what's out there. This is something that is going to proliferate and is something that we should be concerned about given that this is a safety issue. The Motor Vehicle Act trumps everything so there couldn't actually be a CRD wide bylaw but there is nothing stopping us from saying we support the thoughts in the report. The Ministry outlines a series of requirements and regulations and then the bylaw can cover additional requirements and regulations so it's not very clear cut. An amendment to the Motor Vehicle Act that was passed in December does list things like helmet use so moving forward there could be a standard way for municipalities to develop a bylaw.

Chair Martin asked if the Commission would like to draft a letter of support or pass a resolution saying that we support the work that has been done. John Hicks commented that the staff report notes that this has already gone through the Commission and that members made additional comments as noted. It will be clear that the Commission identified the potential for a region wide model bylaw. It was agreed that a letter or resolution was not required.

7. Priority Business

➤ Budget Update

The new budget for this year will be approximately \$73,000, plus whatever carryover remains. The final carryover figure isn't available yet.

➤ Communications Plan

John Hicks noted that he and his team are working on a full communications plan for the Commission in relation to our key priorities.

➤ BCACP Calendar

- March – Distracted Drivers Campaign/Occupant Restraint Campaign
- May – High Risk Driving Campaign
- July – Summer Impaired Driving Campaign (Alcohol/Drug)
- September – Distracted Drivers Campaign/Occupant Restraint Campaign
- October – Drive Relative to Conditions Campaign
- December – Winter Impaired Driving Campaign

8. Other Business

➤ Proposal for a representative from MADD Canada to sit on the Commission

Deferred to the February meeting.

➤ Potential role for the Commission in the upcoming BCACP calendar road safety monthly awareness campaigns

Neil Arason and Colleen Woodger brought forward a proposal that the Commission investigate ways to strengthen our outreach, e.g., the BCACP calendar and our ads on Chek. Are there ways we can magnify those efforts? Colleen noted that several years ago, the Commission would put out media releases supporting the campaigns in the BCACP calendar, and have a member speak to the media on behalf of the Commission, however, that lapsed. The spokesperson for the Commission would need to be independent and not affiliated with an organization, however, there is no reason we couldn't put something out to the media.

Doug Baer mentioned that the CRD typically runs a booth at one of the celebration stations during Go by Bike Week twice a year and suggested that the Commission could distribute material at that booth. John Hicks said that as part of the communications plan, we can do media releases through the CRD as well and have an internal spokesperson to speak directly to the campaign. That could be done off the annual calendar. Colleen noted we could pull in resources to support that. It would be an opportunity for a higher profile.

Action: Add to the February meeting agenda for further discussion

9. Member Updates

Deferred to the February meeting.

10. Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held on February 13, 2024 at 1:00 pm. On motion, the meeting adjourned at 2:27 pm.