Council Report

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Date: January 20, 2026
To: Anthony Haddad, City Manager
From: David Kassian, Sustainability Supervisor

Subject: **Shared Micro-Mobility Services**

Staff Recommendation

THAT Council receive into the record the report dated January 20, 2026 titled "Shared Micro-Mobility Services" and support the implementation.

Strategic priority objective

Mission: Penticton will serve its residents, businesses and visitors through organizational excellence, partnership and the provision of effective and community focused services.

Safe & Resilient: The City of Penticton will enhance and protect the safety of all residents and visitors to Penticton.

Livable & Accessible: The City of Penticton will proactively plan for deliberate growth, focusing on creating an inclusive, healthy, and vibrant community.

Background

On February 20, 2024, City staff presented the report "Electric Kick Scooter Legislation and Public Pilot Project" to Council, recommending that Penticton opt into the Province's Electric Kick Scooter Pilot Project (renewed for four years beginning April 5, 2024 under B.C. Reg. 247/2023). The staff report described that joining the pilot would legalize e-scooters on city streets within provincial regulations (e.g., minimum age 16, helmets, and a max speed of ~25 km/h) and proposed issuing a competitive RFP for a third-party shared micromobility program (e-scooters and e-bikes) with clear requirements for designated parking/operating zones, maintenance standards, data sharing, and an exit strategy to avoid clutter and ensure compliance.

Council approved the recommendation and directed staff to proceed with preparing a competitive RFP.

Staff Recommendation

THAT the City of Penticton consents to the Electric Kick Scooter Pilot Project taking place within the City of Penticton, starting on April 5, 2024;
AND THAT the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure be advised accordingly;
AND THAT the City issue a competitive call for proposals for a public bike and/or scooter share program.

CARRIED
Councillors Konanz and Miller, Opposed

A competitive RFP was issued in fall 2025, requesting a service provider to supply e-scooters and e-bikes available to rent via an app and located within Penticton. The City received 4 submissions, and the top ranked proponent has been identified as Bird Canada (Bird). Staff have begun negotiations and are finalizing the terms and conditions of a service agreement. The proposed term of the agreement is from April 1, 2026 to April 2028, timed with the conclusion of the provincial pilot. There is an option for the City to extend the contract for two additional one-year terms, subject to the direction of British Columbia's Ministry of Transportation at the end of the provincial pilot.

The purpose of a shared micromobility program is largely to replace car trips and not solely for recreation or tourism. Recent data (2024) from Kelowna's shared micromobility program demonstrates that these services are used primarily for commuting and everyday transportation. Rider surveys show that approximately 51% of e-scooter and e-bike trips replaced car journeys, a significant increase from 33% at the start of the pilot in 2021. During peak summer months, shared micromobility usage in Kelowna reached levels equivalent to 25% of transit ridership, highlighting its growing role as a practical and reliable commuting option for residents. This evidence supports the expectation that a similar program in Penticton will provide meaningful alternatives to car travel and help reduce congestion and emissions.

Financial implication

There is no cost to the City for entering into an agreement with Bird. It is expected that through the negotiations the City will receive a small amount of revenue over the lifetime of the agreement. This revenue will be invested back into the program, to either further enhance the equity program offerings (more information below in the Analysis section), or to support the program in other ways (such as infrastructure changes or other promotion/awareness campaigns). Once negotiated these revenues and investments will be amended into the Financial Plan as needed and incorporated in future budget years.

Rider Costs

Riders will pay a $1.15 unlock fee to start each ride, plus a per-minute fee of $0.35 per minute for e-scooters and $0.29 per minute for e-bikes. There are no app fees, onboarding charges, or credit card processing fees for users, and all expected charges are clearly communicated in advance. Riders can also choose a distance-based pricing option at $2.25 per kilometre, plus the unlock fee, designed to encourage safe riding without penalizing slower trips.

There are also ride passes to encourage frequent users of the program: Daily ($5.99), weekly ($17.99), commuter ($17.99), and monthly ($54.99) passes offer unlimited rides up to a set number of minutes, reducing the per-minute rate to as low as $0.10.

Climate Impact

According to the 2022 community emissions inventory, transportation accounts for 55% of Penticton's total greenhouse gas emissions.

Shifting short trips from internal-combustion vehicles to electrified micromobility (e-scooters/e-bikes) delivers immediate GHG reductions in British Columbia because devices draw from a low-carbon grid and displace the most emission-intensive trips (cold starts, short urban hops). In the provincial pilot's Year-One Interim Report, shared services across B.C. logged 722,000 trips and 1.43 million km; Kelowna alone estimates 127,000 vehicle trips avoided and 354 tCO_2e saved, illustrating the scale of reductions achievable when even a small share of local journeys shift modes. The program also strengthens first/last-mile connections to transit, further reducing car dependence and aggregate emissions.

For Penticton, transportation is the largest source of community emissions and a priority in the City's climate strategy. The 2021 Community Climate Action Plan (CCAP) targets 40% GHG reduction below 2007 by 2030 and identifies "The Way We Move" as a key pathway emphasizing mode shift beyond the car and electrified passenger transportation. A well-managed shared micromobility program paired with protected bike infrastructure and transit integration advances these CCAP objectives by replacing short Internal Combustion Engine trips with clean, electric mobility, cutting tailpipe emissions and improving local air quality.

Analysis

Initial Deployment and Ongoing Fleet Size

A phased rollout is planned for April 2026. During the initial deployment phase in Penticton, Bird will launch with a fleet of 100 devices, consisting of 75 e-scooters and 25 e-bikes (25% of the fleet). This approach is designed to match local demand and ensure a balanced, sustainable rollout, with the potential to adjust the mix based on city feedback and usage patterns. Example images of the e-scooter and e-bike, including safety and device features, can be found in Attachment A.

After the initial deployment phase is complete, City staff will collaborate with Bird to assess program performance, focusing on utilization rates and making any necessary adjustments to the permitted fleet size. During peak utilization times, full fleet deployment will consist of up to 350 devices, with e-bikes comprising at least 25% of the fleet. Full fleet deployment would consist of approximately 260 e-scooters and 90 e-bikes.

Figure 1: Front Box Cargo E-bike

A feature of the fleet will be a cargo e-bike pilot, which is a six-month, no-cost "bike library" with free access to cargo bikes and trailers for both businesses and households, starting with an initial fleet of about 5 devices and scaling based on demand. The program's goals are to support local delivery-based businesses, give families an easy way to test e-cargo bikes as a practical alternative to car ownership, and gather data to guide long-term planning. The pilot will field a mix of longtail and front-box cargo e-bikes plus cargo and child trailers, alongside monthly outreach events to raise awareness and build ridership. The cargo e-bikes will be delivered via a free door-to-door service, including all necessary safety gear.

Device Parking and Speed Control

Bird manages parking with a network of geofenced "nests" chosen for accessibility and minimal sidewalk clutter, each with set device capacities near transit hubs and popular areas. Devices must be parked upright within these nests, and an AI fleet management system monitors occupancy in real-time, flagging nests for redistribution as needed. Picture examples of parking nests can be found in Attachment B of this report. Combined with physical infrastructure, strict rules, and community feedback, this approach keeps walkways clear. Bird staff quickly respond to reports of misparked devices, aiming for a 15-minute turnaround, with regular patrols and increasing penalties for repeat offenders to ensure public spaces remain accessible. Parking in nests is required for both residential and commercial areas.

The nests will be installed on both City-owned and privately owned properties. Nests situated on City property will be placed within road rights-of-way and at City-operated facilities. Bird will coordinate directly with private property owners to install nests that remain orderly and accessible.

The devices use advanced speed control technology to ensure rider and public safety. E-scooters are capped at a maximum speed of 25 km/h, in accordance with the BC Motor Vehicle Act and e-bikes are also capped at 25km/h to align with Safety best practices in pedestrian environments. Additionally, onboard geofencing automatically reduces device speed in designated slow zones, such as busy pedestrian areas, to further minimize risk and enhance safety for all road users. The City also retains the ability, at its discretion, to establish slow zones, no-ride zones where devices cannot be operated, and no-parking zones by submitting requests to Bird, demonstrating a high level of operational control as specified in the service agreement.

Motor Vehicle Act Compliance and Safety

Bird's e-scooters and e-bikes are fully compliant with the BC Motor Vehicle Act. E-scooters meet all regulatory requirements, including speed and power limits, mandatory lighting, bells, and braking performance, and are designed for single riders with no seats or pedals. E-bikes also comply with power and speed restrictions, braking standards, and age limits, with additional app-based age verification and rider education to ensure only eligible users operate the devices.

For rider safety, Bird integrates advanced features such as triple braking systems, geofencing for slow/no-ride zones, tip-over detection, and in-motion acoustic alerts. Devices are equipped with on-board helmets, clear safety decals, and require end-of-ride photo verification to ensure proper parking.

Equity Programs

Bird Canada's equity programs aim to make micromobility accessible to all residents, particularly in underserved areas. The Bird Free Access program offers up to four free 30-minute rides daily for eligible low-income residents, veterans, and seniors, and several other community groups, while trips starting in designated equity zones get an automatic 50% discount. Other measures include reduced fares for non-profits and youth, partnerships with Indigenous communities, multilingual and non-smartphone access, and community outreach. At least 15% of the fleet is set to be deployed in equity zones, with ongoing collaboration to ensure accessibility and relevance.

Education and Promotion

Bird's launch messaging focuses on responsible riding and parking, including examples such as 'Park Like a Pro' with clearly defined nest parking spaces and photo verification, and 'Share the Space' by slowing in geofenced zones, avoiding sidewalks/crosswalks, and using bells around pedestrians. It reinforces safety and accessibility with helmets and single-rider rules, while highlighting convenience

and equity through transit integration, localized guidance, community pricing, multilingual support, and non-smartphone access.

Before launch, Bird will align messaging with the City, which will review press releases and promotional materials. Geofences and parking maps will be finalized, and customer support scripts and local rules content prepared. On launch day and during the first week, Bird will deploy extra field staff, including four Safe Streets patrollers, to greet riders, offer parking guidance, and quickly resolve issues. A coordinated press release and launch event will mark the kickoff of the micromobility service.

For the first month, Bird will use ongoing email and app campaigns, social media, Safety School sessions, and partner events at local venues. Weekly performance updates will be shared with the City, reflecting feedback. Long-term, Bird will send monthly KPI summaries to the City and release bi-annual public reports to ensure transparency and accountability.

Device Regulation

Bird is responsible for locating, correcting, and removing any misparked, tipped, out-of-area, or damaged devices. Their Safe Streets Team aims for a15-minute field response from notification to re-park, remove or retrieve the device, citywide. Damaged or unsafe devices are deactivated immediately and typically collected within 15 minutes, with priority clearance for anything blocking accessibility features (curb ramps, accessible stalls, building entrances, etc.) and the same 15-minute retrieval standard for vehicles left outside the service area.

The RCMP have the authority to enforce provincial statutes such as the Motor Vehicle Act and its Electric Kick Scooter Pilot Project Regulation in participating communities and to address prohibited use in non-participating areas. This applies to both this program, as well as private use of these devices which are already in use throughout the community. Staff will be working closely with the RCMP as part of the education/awareness campaigns.

Conclusion

In summary, the partnership with Bird Canada is designed to deliver a safe, accessible, and well-regulated shared micromobility program for the City, emphasizing both operational efficiency and equitable access. By leveraging advanced technology for device management and safety, strict compliance with the BC Motor Vehicle Act, and robust equity initiatives, the program aims to provide reliable, sustainable transportation options for all residents while maintaining public space accessibility and community trust. Ongoing collaboration and adaptive management will ensure the program continues to meet the needs of the City and its diverse population.

Attachments

Attachment A – Bird e-scooter and e-bike specifications

Attachment B – Parking nest examples

Attachment C – Proposed nest locations

Respectfully submitted,

David Kassian
Sustainability Supervisor

Concurrence

General Manager of Infrastructure	General Manager of Corporate Services	City Manager
RD	AMC	AH

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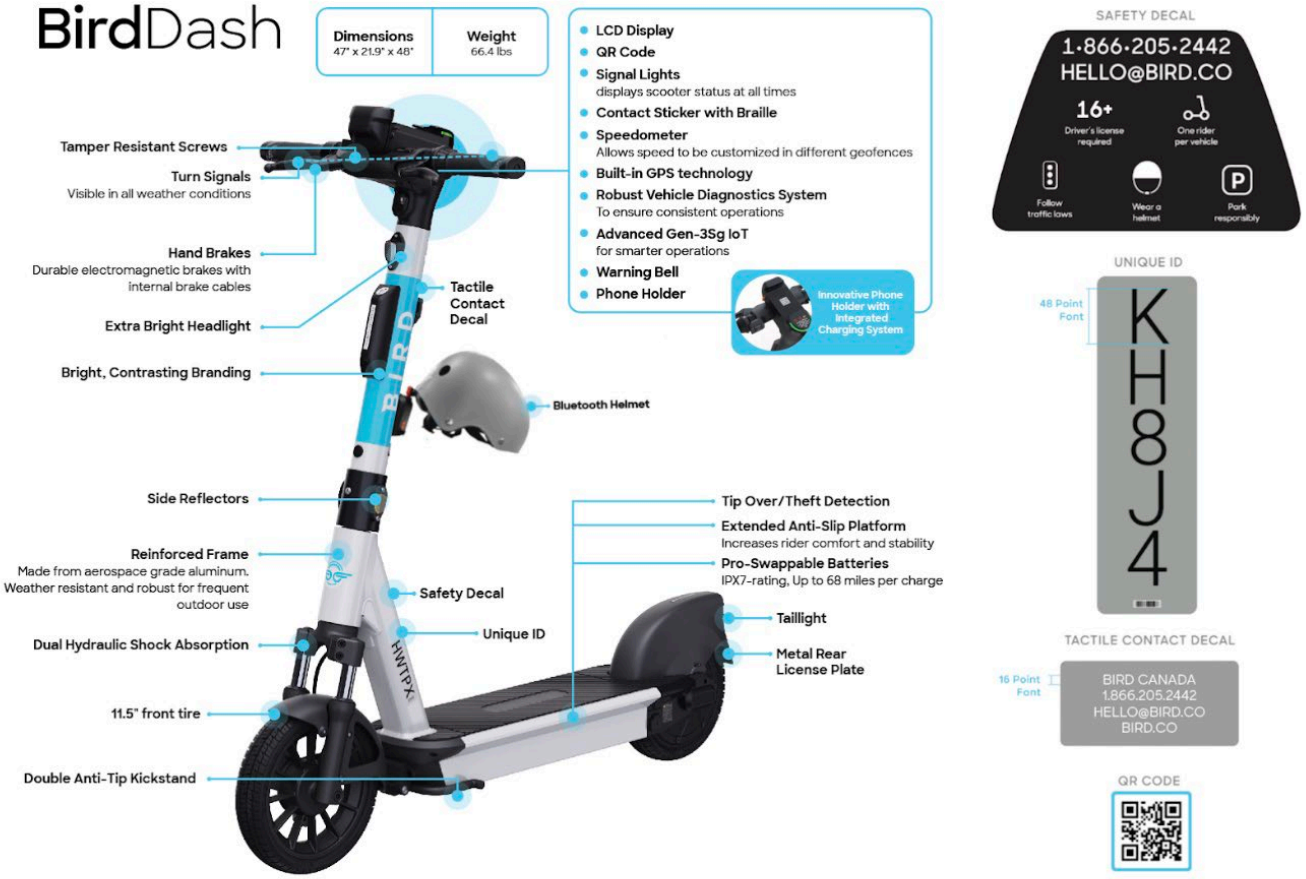
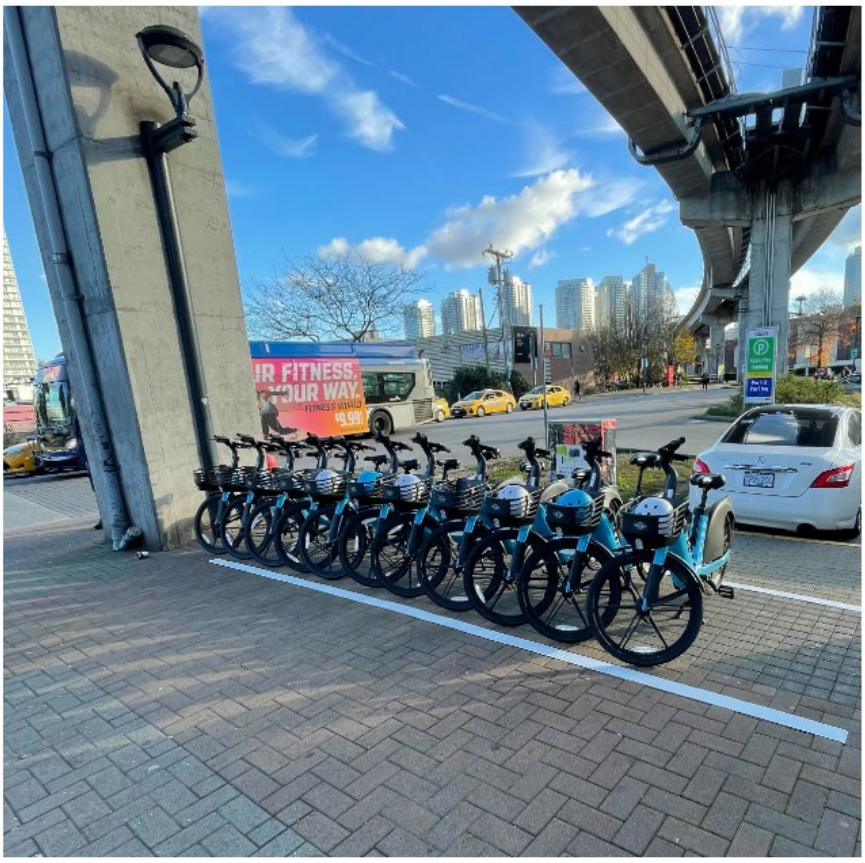
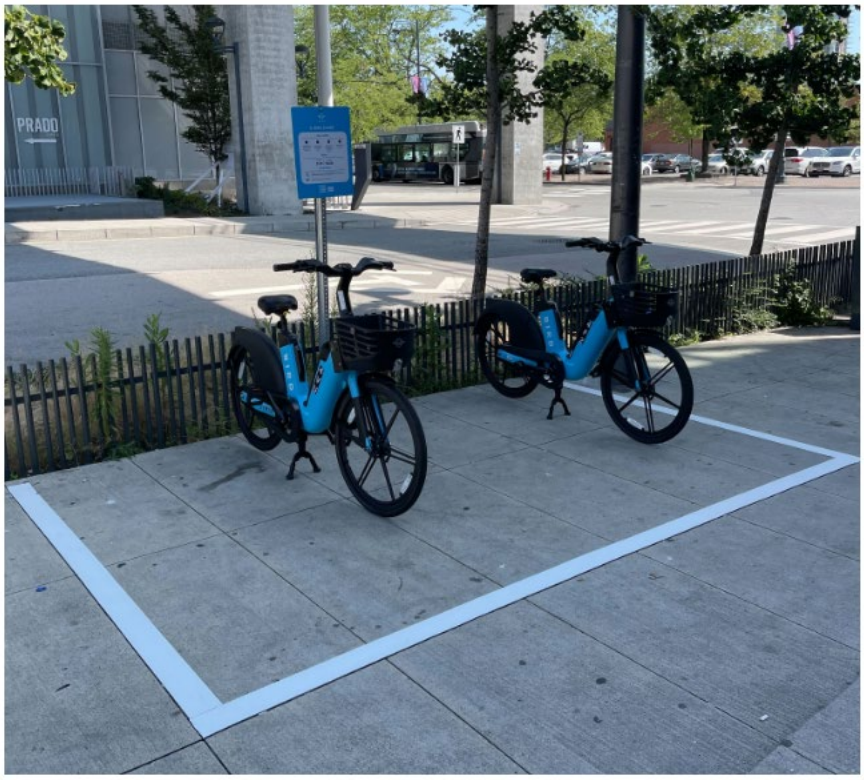

BirdDash
Dimensions
47" x 21.9" x 48"
Weight
66.4 lbs
LCD Display
QR Code
Signal Lights
displays scooter status at all times
Contact Sticker with Braille
Speedometer
Allows speed to be customized in different geofences
Built-in GPS technology
Robust Vehicle Diagnostics System
To ensure consistent operations
Advanced Gen-3Sg IoT
for smarter operations
Warning Bell
Phone Holder
Innovative Phone Holder with Integrated Charging System
Tamper Resistant Screws
Turn Signals
Visible in all weather conditions
Hand Brakes
Durable electromagnetic brakes with internal brake cables
Extra Bright Headlight
Bright, Contrasting Branding
Tactile Contact Decal
Bluetooth Helmet
Side Reflectors
Reinforced Frame
Made from aerospace grade aluminum. Weather resistant and robust for frequent outdoor use
Safety Decal
Unique ID
Dual Hydraulic Shock Absorption
11.5" front tire
Double Anti-Tip Kickstand
Tip Over/Theft Detection
Extended Anti-Slip Platform
Increases rider comfort and stability
Pro-Swappable Batteries
IPX7-rating, Up to 68 miles per charge
Taillight
Metal Rear License Plate
SAFETY DECAL
1·866·205·2442
HELLO@BIRD.CO
16+
Driver's license required
One rider per vehicle
Follow traffic laws
Wear a helmet
Park responsibly
UNIQUE ID
48 Point Font
KH8J4
TACTILE CONTACT DECAL
16 Point Font
BIRD CANADA
1.866.205.2442
HELLO@BIRD.CO
BIRD.CO
QR CODE

Attachment B – Parking nest examples





Attachment C – Proposed Nest Locations