



Select a Department or Division

TO: Community Services Committee

SUBJECT: Skateboarding and Long Boarding on City Roadways

Report Number: TS-14-11

File Number(s): 750-03

Report Date: February 4, 2011

Ward(s) Affected: 1 2 3 4 5 6 All

Date to Committee: April 20, 2011

Date to Council: May 2, 2011

Recommendation: For information only

Purpose:

- Address goal, action or initiative in strategic plan
- Establish new or revised policy or service standard
- Respond to legislation
- Respond to staff direction
- Address other area of responsibility

If necessary state purpose, otherwise click blue box to delete row.

Reference to Strategic Plan:

N/A

Background:

Over the last few years the Kerns Road area has become a popular location used by individuals, including groups of adults, for skateboarding, long boarding and street luge activity due to the vertical grade of the roads in this area and the rural to urban transition which facilitates preparation for longboarding.

Discussion:

It has been brought to the attention of staff by Ward 1 Councillor Rick Craven and members of the Halton Regional Police Service that a significant public safety issue exists in the Kerns Road area.

Groups of adults and teenagers have been using long boards and in some cases street luge boards on Kerns Road. These individuals get on their boards at the top of Kerns Road adjacent to Kerncliffe Park, and then travel south using the road grade to gain momentum. Due to the grade and the fact the board user is crouching down or lying down on the board, they can attain high rates of speed. After they have completed their

ride, in some cases the long boarder then hangs on to a friend's vehicle and is towed back up to the top of the grade to begin again. The significant road safety concern arises due to the speed these devices are travelling at, the fact regular road users are not expecting these individuals on the road and the low profile making them very difficult to see and react to. In an attempt to discourage this type of activity City staff erected "No Skateboarding" signage on some streets in the Kerns Road area in 2006.

A brief definition of these types of devices can be summarized as follows:

- **Skateboard** – typical flat board with wheels available in majority of stores
- **Long Board** – Approximately one and a half times longer than a skateboard typically between 90 and 150 cm with a place for the back foot, similar to a snow board
- **Street Luge** – Larger platform where the rider reclines feet first on his/her back similar to a "stretcher" made from materials such as steel, aluminum, wood or carbon fibre

Strategy/Process

Coasting by the use of skateboards, in-line skates, and similar devices on City roads is prohibited in Traffic By-Law 86-2007. At the present time however there is not a corresponding penalty contained in the by-law to effectively permit police enforcement of this type of activity.

Transportation Services staff, in consultation with our Halton Regional Police Service road safety partners, are proposing a fine of \$75 for this by-law infraction. When the Victim Fine Surcharge is added to this fine, the total infraction amount will be \$100.

Transportation Services staff are consulting with the Ministry of Transportation and the Ontario Traffic Council (formerly the Ontario Traffic Conference) to discuss possible amendments to legislation such as the Highway Traffic Act in an attempt to ensure this type of activity is properly addressed.

Currently the City has one major skateboard park at Maple Park and is planning to construct a second skateboard facility as part of the Norton Community Park project. In addition to the main facilities, the city has developed smaller skate features in Orchard, Brant Hills, Kiwanis and Desjardines Parks and plans to develop small skate features in Nelson, Optimist and Palladium Parks.

The City recognizes that skateboard parks do not satisfy the needs of long board or street luge users that require significant grade changes and length of paved surfaces. At the present time there are no facilities available for the use of this type of device; however, it is unsafe to permit this activity on open public roads.

Public Consultation

As this is a new fine that will impact various members of the community Communications staff have prepared a communications plan, consisting of informing key audiences by posting on blogs, Twitter, Facebook and also by releasing a news release.

The messaging will include:

- importance of public safety for all road users, inform the public the fine will be phased in to provide an adjustment period for skateboarders and long boarders
- willingness of Parks & Recreation staff to meet with long board stakeholders, at their request to discuss the following:
 - criteria for an off road facility
 - to identify any current parks that would satisfy the criteria
 - to identify potential sites that could satisfy the criteria for an off road facility. (e.g. the decommissioned land fill site on North Service Rd.)

Financial Matters:

No budget is required at this time.

Communication Matters:

It is important that the city reach skateboarders, long boarders and street luge riders using communication channels familiar to these groups. The city will investigate what is available and will ensure that we provide information in plain language and in ways that will reach these target groups.

Conclusion:

The safety of all road users is a high priority for City staff and the Halton Regional Police Service who are one of our major road safety partners.

The use of City roads for skateboarding, long boarding and street luges is not the appropriate location for this type of activity. By implementing an appropriate fine structure, enforced in a phased-in approach, ensuring appropriate and effective communication takes place with the affected community members, working with other appropriate agencies to put in place public education and regulation providing adequate safety equipment is fully utilized, overall public safety will be achieved and not compromised.

Respectfully submitted,

John Crass
 Manager of Traffic Services
 905 335 7600 Ext. 7779

Appendices:

--

Notifications:
 (after Council decision)

Name	Mailing or E-mail Address

Approvals:

*required

_____ *Department _____ City Treasurer _____ General Manager _____ City Manager

To be completed by the Clerks Department	
Committee Disposition & Comments	
	01-Approved 02-Not Approved 03-Amended 04-Referred 06-Received & Filed 07-Withdrawn
Council Disposition & Comments	
	01-Approved 02-Not Approved 03-Amended 04-Referred 06-Received & Filed 07-Withdrawn