

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE - JUNE 18, 2007

REQUEST FOR FEDERAL BAN IMPORT, SALE AND DISTRIBUTION OF MOTORIZED MINI POCKET BIKES

Recommendation

Mayor Linda D. Jackson recommends the following:

1. THAT Council endorse the direction to approach Federal and Provincial Government officials to express the City of Vaughan's interest in banning the sale and use of Motorized Mini Pocket Bikes on both public and private property.
2. THAT staff prepare a report and corresponding bylaw outlining the strategies to be used and penalties available for the improper use of these vehicles on a non-certified competition site.
3. THAT York Region Police be requested to assist in the enforcement of municipal by-laws in this regard.
4. THAT staff ensure York Regional Police is provided with sufficient authority to act should individuals be found operating Motorized Mini Pocket Bikes on or at municipally controlled properties.
5. THAT a copy of this recommendation be circulated to Mayors and Councils within the Province of Ontario.

Economic Impact

At this time, there is no significant economic impact.

Communications Plan

There has been significant interest expressed by residents through the Ontario Safety League with respect to the risks associated with operating Motorized Mini Pocket Bikes. We request, therefore, that Corporate Communications prepares a media advisory with respect to Council's recommendation.

Purpose

There has been a significant influx of non-regulated motorized pocket bikes into our communities. They pose significant risk to riders as well as a significant noise nuisance. These vehicles are not allowed on roads, highways or sidewalks and are specifically prohibited under the Highway Traffic Act (HTA) from being operated outside of a close circuit competition track. The reality is they are being sold to young adults and are being operated contrary to the HTA on properties controlled by the municipality and both the York Region District School Board and the York Catholic District School Board. They have been reported operating in vacant parking lots and with a total disregard for existing rules and regulations.

In discussion with the Ontario Safety League we believe that a proactive approach is required to close this loophole within the existing federal regulation. The misuse of these vehicles has resulted in injuries and deaths. They have the capacity to travel up to a speed of 70 km/h and provide no protection in the event of a crash. They have no practical purpose as a legitimate means of transportation and, therefore, we should not accommodate their use within the City of Vaughan.

Background - Analysis and Options

Motorized Mini Pocket Bikes are currently imported, generally from China, for close circuit competition use only. There are no approved courses in the City of Vaughan or within the Greater Toronto Area. A general review indicates that there are no approved courses within the Province of Ontario. As a result, they should be banned from sales or distribution within Ontario.

Relationship to Vaughan Vision 2007

This report is consistent with the Vaughan's Vision 2007 with respect to providing safe communities in which residents can enjoy appropriate recreation.

Regional Implications

None.

Conclusion

The City of Vaughan has been a leader in developing a Safe City Policy and we should encourage our federal and provincial partners to enact or amend the appropriate regulations.

Attachments

None.

Report prepared by:

Linda D. Jackson

Respectfully submitted,

Linda D. Jackson
Mayor