



Final Administrative Decision

Date: July 27, 2020

By: David Martin, Director of Community and Economic Development
Re: Shared Mobility Pilot Program Cap Fleet Size Adjustment

Memorandum

Re: Shared Mobility Pilot Program Cap Fleet Size Adjustment

On June 26, 2018 City Council adopted Ordinance 2578 (“Ordinance”) and directed staff to proceed with the implementation of the Shared Mobility Device Pilot Program (“Pilot Program”) for regulating dockless shared mobility companies and technologies in a way that protects public safety and promotes community wellbeing, sustainability and equity. On May 12, 2020, Council extended the Pilot Program until June 30, 2020.

The Ordinance allows for the total number and ratio (e-bikes to e-scooters) of shared mobility devices permitted to operate in Santa Monica to be adjusted over time. By February 2020 the Pilot Program had expanded to a city-wide fleet size of up to 3,250 total devices, including up to 750 e-bikes operated by Jump, and up to 2,500 e-scooters operated by four shared mobility operators, Bird, Jump, Lime, and Lyft.

In March 2020, as the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic began to take effect, and stay-at-home orders were put into place, shared mobility ridership sharply declined and the City issued fleet reductions as a result of lower ridership demand. The City reduced fleet sizes for Bird, Jump e-bikes, and Lyft from 750 devices per operator to 350 devices per operator, and Jump’s e-scooter from 250 to 100 devices. Around that same time, Lime permanently discontinued services in Santa Monica. In May 2020 Jump also permanently ceased operations in the City.

Currently, the two companies permitted to operate in the Pilot Program have the following maximum device allocations:

Bird: 350 e-scooters (reduced from 750)
Lyft: 350 e-scooters (reduced from 750)
TOTAL: 700 devices (reduced from 3,250)

As detailed in Section 3.3 in the Pilot Program’s Administrative Regulations (“Administrative Regulations”), an operator may add devices to its fleet, upon request to and approval by the City, when the operator demonstrates with device and utilization data that average ridership exceeds a Minimum Utilization Rate (“MUR”) of three (3) rides per day for e-bikes and four (4) rides per day for e-scooters. When utilization falls below the

prescribed MUR, the City may require operators to remove the number of devices necessary to meet or exceed the MUR. When utilization is above the prescribed MUR, operators may request to add devices.

The Administrative Regulations outline criteria in addition to the MUR thresholds for the City to consider in the evaluation of requests for device increases or device decrease determinations. The criteria include market needs, the number of devices deployed in the City, device utilization, operator performance, public safety, seasonal and environmental conditions, and special events.

The City of Santa Monica recognizes the need to continue to provide reliable and safe transportation options through this uncertain time for essential trips outside the home. Not all community members have access to a private vehicle or feel comfortable riding mass transit while adhering to social distancing guidelines. Bird and Lyft have remained committed to providing services in Santa Monica as essential transportation during response and recovery efforts, despite reduced trips and associated revenues. Additionally, both companies have increased the daily frequency with which they clean and sanitize their fleets and maintenance vehicles in the field, provide appropriate equipment and supplies to staff, and encourage distancing for all staff and remote working for non-essential maintenance staff through out the COVID-19 pandemic.

In April 2020, citywide ridership utilization had reduced to 0.8 trips per device per day. However, as the community has begun to adjust to a new way of living, more people are again looking to shared mobility devices for short trips around town. In recent months, citywide ridership utilization has increased to 2.3 trips per device per day. Both Bird and Lyft have requested to increase their fleets sizes to 750 e-scooters each to enable them to gradually increase fleet sizes as needed to meet growing ridership demand through the busier summer months.

Based on growing ridership, the reduction of operators and number of city-wide permitted devices, and to increase accessibility and encourage ridership, the City will fulfill Bird and Lyft's requests and permit each company to operate an additional 400 (750 total each) e-scooters in Santa Monica.

Additionally, because Jump discontinued the only e-bike service in Santa Monica, and because Lyft was originally selected to be permitted to operate 500 e-bikes (which were never launched), the City will permit Lyft to operate 500 e-bikes as part of the pilot program.

As adjusted, citywide permitted device caps will be the following:

Adjusted Permitted Caps

Bird: 750 e-scooters (increased from 350)

Lyft: 750 e-scooters and 500 e-bikes (increased from 350 and 0, respectively)

TOTAL: 2,000 devices

Prepared By: David Martin, Director of Community and Economic Development