

Memorandum



CITY OF DALLAS

DATE September 16, 2021

TO Honorable Members of the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee

SUBJECT **Dockless Vehicle Program Update: Path for Relaunching the Program**

As stated in the Strategic Mobility Plan, *Connect Dallas*, innovative transportation technologies, such as shared electric scooters, provide an opportunity to enhance quality of life and access to opportunities while advancing the Driving Principles of environmental sustainability and innovation. However, the devices can also bring challenges such as unsafe user behavior, sidewalk obstructions, and equity concerns.

This memorandum describes the work that has been done since the fall of 2020, the Department of Transportation's proposed strategy for addressing unresolved issues, and a strategy for the potential resumption of the dockless vehicle program in the City of Dallas in a way that best supports City goals and enhances, rather than detracts from, quality of life.

Background

The Dockless Vehicle Program was halted in September 2020 to address public safety concerns. A Public Hearing was held on October 15, 2020, where staff presented proposed changes to the Director Rules to address concerns previously raised by stakeholders, including stopping scooter operations at 9:00 PM each day and limiting the number of vehicles deployed per block face to a maximum of eight per vendor. However, through internal staff discussions, and discussions with stakeholders and vendors, additional issues were identified, and it was determined that more changes would be needed to resume the program.

Progress Since the Fall of 2020

With the goal of taking a more holistic approach to dockless vehicles in Dallas, the work that has been completed and the key outstanding issues have been identified and noted as shown below.

Work Completed:

- Preparing case studies of dockless vehicle programs in other major cities to identify opportunities and best practices.
- Creating an inventory of all the issues that have been identified throughout the life of the program and options for addressing them going forward—whether that be through changes to the permit application, Director Rules, Ordinance, or procuring a vendor.

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Key Outstanding Issues:

Key outstanding issues that are not currently addressed in the ordinance or Director Rules are summarized below.

1. There were too many permitted vendors and a clutter of dock less vehicles for our limited support staff to effectively manage, with the technology and the industry continuing to evolve at a rapid pace.
2. Vehicles being parked in a way that is not in accordance with current parking regulations or ADA requirements, leading to sidewalk obstructions and visibility issues.
3. Wrongfully parked vehicles not being reported and corrected in a timely manner.
4. Sidewalk riding and wrong-way riding, a lack of clarity around where sidewalk riding is restricted, limited user education, and vendor compliance issues with geofencing.
5. The need for enforcement mechanisms to penalize vendors that do not comply with the City Code, Director Rules, and permit requirements in a way that deters non-compliance.
6. The need for a more efficient system for compiling and tracking vendor data to ensure compliance with the City Code, Director Rules, and permit requirements.
7. The need for a means of rapidly removing vehicles from an area where they may be used to damage or destroy property, particularly during human-induced events such as protests.
8. Ensuring dockless vehicles are available in low-income areas, particularly around transit stations.
9. The current ordinance is very detailed but allows for little flexibility on the part of staff to make adjustments to the program as lessons are learned and conditions or technology change.

Next Steps

At a high level, staff proposes moving to a phased approach, with a limited number of vendors and limited number of devices/vehicles initially, that could increase as issues are resolved over time. However, to do so requires a change to the ordinance to allow the Department of Transportation the authority to determine how many vendors and devices/vehicles should be permitted to operate on city streets. Furthermore, to allow the Department of Transportation the flexibility to more easily make changes to the program as lessons are learned and circumstances or technology change, it is proposed that some of the content in the ordinance be moved to Director Rules that would be revised through a public hearing process, rather than amending the City Code every year. A similar structure is used by other cities with successful and smooth dockless scooter programs, including Chicago, Seattle, and San Francisco.

Micromobility Working Group

Recent discussions have taken place about the establishment of a micromobility working group to be convened by the Transportation & Infrastructure Committee (TRNI) with the proposed purpose of reviewing strategies, recommendations, and initiatives related to the dockless vehicle program. If the TRNI Committee elects to convene a micromobility working group as suggested in the attached memorandum, staff requests that Committee

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Members provide the Department of Transportation with the name and contact information of their representatives to serve on the working group no later than October 15, 2021. Staff will expeditiously coordinate with the working group, while engaging with other key internal and external stakeholders. Staff will seek to bring a proposed framework for relaunching dockless vehicles, that is supported by key stakeholders, to the TRNI Committee in Spring 2022.

In summary, these proposed changes will allow for the program's successful phased resumption and create an avenue to more efficiently address issues and continually improve the program in the future. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Ghassan 'Gus' Khankarli, Director of the Department of Transportation, at Ghassan.khankarli@dallascityhall.com.



Majed A. Al-Ghafry, P.E.
Assistant City Manager

c: T.C. Broadnax, City Manager
Chris Caso, City Attorney
Mark Swann, City Auditor
Biliera Johnson, City Secretary
Preston Robinson, Administrative Judge
Kimberly Bizzor Tolbert, Chief of Staff to the City Manager

Jon Fortune, Assistant City Manager
Joey Zapata, Assistant City Manager
Dr. Eric A. Johnson, Chief of Economic Development and Neighborhood Services
M. Elizabeth Reich, Chief Financial Officer
M. Elizabeth (Liz) Cedillo-Pereira, Chief of Equity and Inclusion
Directors and Assistant Directors

Memorandum



CITY OF DALLAS

DATE September 3, 2021

TO Honorable Members of the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee

SUBJECT **Micro-mobility Working Group**

As discussed over the last several months, there is a growing need for public input on the future of the dockless vehicle program and other micro-mobility initiatives. To facilitate a forum for ongoing feedback, a micro-mobility working group has been proposed to provide guidance and feedback to the Transportation and Infrastructure (TRNI) Committee and Department of Transportation (DOT) staff.

DOT staff recommends that the proposed working group initially be responsible for reviewing strategies, recommendations, and initiatives related to the dockless vehicle program. Councilmember Moreno and Mayor Pro Tempore (MPT) West are recommended to co-chair the working group. The thought is to provide one co-chair from the TRNI Committee and one co-chair who is not part of the Committee, but who is interested in transportation and mobility solutions. The working group will include 11 representatives:

- TRNI Committee Members will each appoint one (1) member
- MPT West, acting as co-chair, will appoint one (1) member
- TRNI Committee Chair will appoint one (1) additional member
- Department of Transportation staff will appoint two (2) members

The micro-mobility working group should have a balanced membership reflecting an interest in, or knowledge of, micro-mobility initiatives. DOT staff will collaborate with Chair Narvaez, Council Member Moreno and MPT West to develop a work plan through early 2022. Once the future of the dockless vehicle program has been determined, staff will consult with the TRNI Committee Chair and the co-chairs of the working group to determine whether the continuation of the working group would be suitable for future initiatives.

DOT staff will provide a briefing memo and overview of the strategy for the working group during the September 20, 2021 TRNI Committee meeting. Following that meeting, appointee names and contact information will be requested. Please contact me if you have any questions or concerns prior to our meeting.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Omar Narvaez'.

Omar Narvaez

Transportation and Infrastructure Committee Chair

c: Majed A. Al-Ghafry, Assistant City Manager
Ghassan 'Gus' Khankarli, Director, Department of Transportation
Kathryn Rush, Chief Planner, Department of Transportation
Jessica Scott, Bicycle and Micromobility Manager, Department of Transportation
Kate Bower, Business Operations Manager, Department of Transportation
Mayor & City Council Staff