

DATE: March 9, 2021

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WORK SESSION ITEM

City Council

SUBJECT FOR DISCUSSION

E-Scooter Share Program Review & Future E-Scooter/Bike Share Program Proposal.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this work session item is to inform City Council on the electric scooter (e-scooter) share pilot program and upcoming changes to both e-scooter share and bike share programs moving forward. Due to impacts from COVID-19 related shutdowns, the City and CSU extended the e-scooter share pilot program through March 31, 2021 for the purpose of gathering additional data and to allow the system to mature. The City in partnership with CSU selected Spin as its vendor in February 2021 to manage a combined e-bike share/e-scooter share program. In addition to presenting on key takeaways from the previous e-scooter share program and focus areas of the upcoming e-scooter share/bike share program, City staff will be seeking Council input on select focus areas of the upcoming program.

GENERAL DIRECTION SOUGHT AND SPECIFIC QUESTIONS TO BE ANSWERED

City staff will seek input from Council on the following focus areas of the upcoming e-scooter/bike share program set to launch in May 2021:

1. Does City Council have any feedback on the pilot e-scooter program to date, with any suggestions for refinement of the program as we move forward with a new vendor?
2. Does City Council support staff and CSU in exploring the expansion of operating hours to a 24/7 model with the new vendor?
3. Does City Council support the possibility of bringing back the bike library as part of the program, likely focused on tourists, low-income users, and adaptive device users?

BACKGROUND / DISCUSSION

E-Scooter Share Pilot Program Review

The following are findings and observations from the e-scooter pilot:

- In 2019, prior to program launch, Council adopted updates to the Traffic and City Code to regulate where e-scooters could be ridden and parked and established an encroachment permit requirement to protect against vendors operating without permission.
- The City started the pilot e-scooter share program in October 2019, with Bird as the sole vendor. The system launched with roughly 400 stations and over 250 e-scooters, mostly on CSU campus and in downtown Fort Collins, and ultimately expanded to 500 e-scooters at its high point in November 2019.
- Since launch, there have been 79,500 total rides and 16,200 unique riders, peaking at just under 22,000 rides during the month of November 2019.

- The system shutdown from March 2020 to July 2020 due to COVID-19. Restarting in July, ridership has been between 1,500 and 6,000 rides per month, with continued impacts from COVID-19, in particular fewer people in Old Town and on the CSU campus.
- Most rides during the pilot period were estimated by Bird to be in or near CSU (between 60% and 80%), with downtown ridership numbers estimated to account for approximately 20% of rides.
- Ridership downtown has been impacted by issues related to the accuracy of no-ride zones, limiting areas for e-scooters to ride in the Old Town area. Staff has identified this as a combination of issues with the geo-fence technology (virtual maps that create zones where the e-scooters can and cannot operate) and the e-scooters themselves. Newer generations of e-scooters, which are now being deployed, appear to have fewer accuracy problems.
- E-scooter parking was generally not an issue; City staff fielded roughly 25 complaints since October 2019. Common complaints beyond e-scooters being ridden into no-ride zones included e-scooters being parked incorrectly in the pedestrian zone of a sidewalk or on private property. Bird's response time to complaints was typically 2 hours, which was in line with their contractual obligation.
- As of November 2020 (the latest available data) 5 crashes were reported related to e-scooters, none of which were related to the e-scooter program, and none of which resulted in hospital treatments.
- The Transportation Board and the Bicycle Advisory Committee requested that Bird data be made available to the public, which has since been posted on the City's e-scooter web page (<https://www.fcgov.com/escooters>).
- The Senior Advisory Board expressed concerns including poor app experience (for less tech savvy people), arbitration rules, pre-loaded balance requirements to start a ride, and how user information is handled. Staff will be working through these issues with the new vendor and contract.

E-Scooter Share Next Steps and Bike Share Relaunch

In October 2020 the City, in partnership with CSU, released a request for proposals for a bike share vendor (Pace, our previous bike share vendor, went out of business in May 2020 due to compounding COVID impacts). This request included the ***option for vendors to propose a bike share program combined with e-scooter share***. City and CSU staff worked through the proposal process and selected Spin as its vendor in February 2021.

The Spin e-bike/e-scooter share program will include the following changes, based on lessons learned during the pilot and changes in the shared e-device market:

- The vendor will offer e-bikes and e-scooters under one program, accessed through the same app. E-bikes are a newly emerging (and popular) shared device that almost every bike-share vendor is now offering.
- The City will be working with the vendor to improve the riding experience in the Old Town area. This will include refined dismount zones that will allow improved riding where allowed (on-street), and improved slow-down zones and notification to users when entering no-ride zones (like Old Town Square). Next generation e-scooters will be more responsive to stopping when entering dismount zones.
- The City and CSU will explore expanding the hours of operation for e-scooters. Currently e-scooter share hours are 5AM - 9PM (summer) and 5AM - 9PM (winter). The Pace bike share program, during its lifetime, operated 24/7. Vendors that were interviewed suggested allowing operation of all devices (bikes, e-bikes and e-scooters) 24/7. In markets where they are currently operating 24/7, there has been minimal to no negative safety impacts, according to the vendors and the cities we contacted as references. Additionally, it was noted that not allowing 24/7 access significantly cuts down on ridership potential and

reduces the ability to accommodate workers with non-traditional work schedules, which has equity implications.

- Enhancing the e-scooter and e-bike adaptive program to cater to the needs of and encourage ridership among those in our community who are differently abled.
- Incorporating into the larger program a Bike Library station downtown. In 2008, Bike Fort Collins opened the Fort Collins Bike Library (FCBL). FCBL included a fleet of bikes that could be rented at one of two locations in Old Town. Bikes could be rented by the hour, or even up to several days. It became very popular not only among residents to use for weekend rides, but tourists visiting the area, particularly to tour Fort Collins' great local breweries. The City contracted with Bike Fort Collins to operate and deliver the FCBL service, and it is considered by many to have helped pioneer bike sharing regionally and nationally, evolving and ultimately leading to the formulation of the more popular bike share model that is known today. Several stakeholders including Bike Fort Collins and the Downtown Development Authority (DDA) recommended including this program into any e-scooter/bike share contract moving forward. The intended audience for the Library could be tourists, low-income users, and adaptive device users.
- Incorporating an intersection treatment into the upcoming e-scooter/e-bike share program. The selected vendor has committed to collaborating on a project in Fort Collins which could include intersection transformations, communal space build-outs, and protected lane pop-ups.
- Lowering rider fees where possible to advance equity and increase ridership and incentivizing longer trips to encourage replacement of vehicle as opposed to walking or biking trips.
- Coordinating with Transfort to increase the number of trips that connect to or from public transportation to replace vehicle trips, and coordinating the program's app with the Transfort app.
- The combined shared e-device program will be a multi-year-contract, with options to renew. The contract will include options for the City and CSU to adjust the system and program as needed, including operating hours, number of deployed devices, station locations, responses to complaints regarding operation or parking issues, refining no-ride zones, monitoring and responding to safety issues, and considering whether to permit e-scooters on Parks and Natural Area trails.
- City staff will provide an annual report to leadership and Council throughout the duration of the program contract. Evaluation metrics to be established by City and CSU staff will be incorporated into the report and will reflect the key focus areas discussed above. Metrics will be used to report on safety, ridership, rider compliance with regulations, revenue, number of car trips replaced, app functionality, number of first mile/last mile trips taken in combination with Transfort trips, number of low-income users, and the success of the adaptive program, the Bike Library, 24/7 operating hours and the intersection treatment program and more.

Next Steps

City and CSU staff selected Spin to be our new e-scooter/e-bike share vendor at the end of February and expect to launch the program in May. City staff are in discussions with Bird to extend their contract beyond March 31 to prevent a gap in service prior to the launch of the new program. City staff will provide Council with the first Annual Report in December 2021.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Powerpoint Presentation (PDF)



March 9, 2021



E-Scooter/Bike Share Program Report
City Council Work Session



Questions for Council

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2. Does City Council support staff and CSU in **exploring the expansion of operating hours** to a 24/7 model with the new vendor?
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Strategic Alignment

Micromobility (incl. e-scooter/bike share) programs are prioritized in the 2019 [Fort Collins City Plan](#)

1. Principle T 3: Lead transportation innovation by exploring and utilizing emerging and transformative systems and technologies.
2. Principle T 5: Ensure that transit is a safe, affordable, efficient and convenient travel option for people of all ages and abilities.
3. Principle T 6: Support bicycling as a safe, easy and convenient travel option for all ages and abilities by building a connected network of facilities.
4. Principle T 10: Support and enhance safety for all modes.



E-Scooter Share Background

City strategies put in place pre-launch to regulate e-scooters

- Operation regulations
- Parking regulations
- Downtown Dismount Zone regulation
- Dismount at crosswalk Code amendment
- Natural area and park trails prohibition (except Mason)
- Use of existing encroachment permits



Image Source: Bird Rides, Inc



E-Scooter Share Background (Cont'd)

- 1-year pilot launched October 2019
- 400 e-scooter stations/250 e-scooters; 500 e-scooters at height (11/19)
- Total rides: 79,500; peaked at 22,000 (11/19)
- Unique riders: 16,200
- Average ride distance: 0.66 miles
- Average ride minutes: 9.3
- Amt. of CO2 emissions avoided: 46,618 lbs.





E-Scooter Share Background (Cont'd)

2020 Operational Changes

- Re-launch: July 8, 2020
- Number of e-scooters: 100
- Hours of Operation: Summer: 5AM – 9PM, Winter: 5AM – 7:30PM/9PM
- Contract extension (12/31/2020; 3/31/2021)
- Fleet Manager model
- Per ride payment model



Bike Share 2020 Developments



Image Source: City of Fort Collins stock photo

- In March Zagster scaled back bike share system to ensure sustainability
- On March 27 Zagster suspended bike share services due to Covid-19
- On May 27 Zagster terminated program



E-Scooter/Bike Share RFP Timeline

- June 1 City released bike share RFI
- October 19 City released RFP
- 4 companies submitted by November 20, 2020
- Interviews/Demos with 2 companies: January 8-15, 2021
- Vendor selected: February 2021
- Planned program launch: May/June 2021





E-Scooter Share Successes & Challenges



- Geofencing/GPS functionality of Bird 2s
- Safety and perception of safety
- Ridership and vehicle and station density
- Sustainability
- Equitable access
- Compliance with riding/parking rules
- Hours
- Input from community



2021 E-Scooter/Bike Share Focus Areas

Refining dismount zone polygons

Hours of operation

Bike Library

Intersection treatment

Sufficient stock/density

Increasing low-income user ridership by decreasing cost

Encouraging longer trips to encourage vehicle trip replacement

App integration with Transfort app/Mobility as a Service

Improved adaptive program

Mobility hubs/downtown designated parking areas





City and CSU will launch new Spin e-scooter/e-bike share program in May/June 2021

- *Council/Mayor ribbon-cutting*

City staff to present first Annual Report to Council end of 2022



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