



Dockless Bikes and Scooters – Is the Sidewalk Wide Enough for All of Us?

OVERVIEW: Washington DC has undertaken a trial period of promoting mobile dockless bikes and electric scooters which provide a low cost (\$1 per ride) healthy, environmentally friendly, fun way to travel across the city. Bikes and scooters can be left anywhere within Washington DC.

The city has extended the pilot project on use of dockless bikes until the end of August, and in the meantime is collecting input from residents about how they are working. Capitol Hill Village members are writing to express their concern around the public safety risks of poorly managed personal mobility devices causing individuals to trip over them on the sidewalk as well as risk collision with them.

TIMELINE / Current state

The DC Department of Transportation is reviewing the dockless bike and scooter pilot program to determine its feasibility. Increasing mobility options, decreasing vehicle miles driven, and reducing congestion are all goals and positive outcomes of the pilot. DOT is expected to make a decision around the number of commercial dockless bikes and scooters allowed in DC. DOT may also provide guidance around use of the bikes and scooters.

In June, CHV members and volunteers joined in a spirited discussion about dockless bikes and scooters and their impact on pedestrians, especially older adults, persons with disabilities, and others who use a mobility device such as a cane, walker, or wheelchair.

CHALLENGES:

- Bikes and scooters are sometimes left in the middle of sidewalks, creating risks for pedestrians, especially those with mobility challenges and low vision. **This is a public safety issue.**
- Scooters, ridden on sidewalks, move very quickly and some riders really zig and zag around pedestrians catching them off guard and potentially colliding with them. **This is a public safety issue.**
- Dockless bikes and scooters are sometimes parked at public bike racks, leaving no parking available for privately owned bikes. Remember that the dockless bikes are a private business and in this case they are using public resources.

Let City Leaders Know About Public Safety Issues on Capitol Hill

The CHV Advocacy Corps is working to share our insights about the risks and ways to mitigate them. **We encourage you to write to your ANC, City Council, Mayor, and DOT officials to let them know about your concerns and to share your ideas about how to increase safety around these personal mobility devices.** Department of Transportation has asked for feedback on the devices as well as ideas about how to integrate them into our community as mobility options. So please take a moment to write the Mayor, your city council member, and others identified below.

Options for Dockless Bikes and Scooters – Ideas that came from a discussion among CHV members included the following.

IDEAS	CHALLENGES	OPTIONS
Require bikes and scooters to be parked in a specific location or past riders would be ticketed	Limited number of bike racks	Require dockless bike companies to install as many bike racks as they have bikes and pay the annual public space permit fee
Create an uber-like app where an individual can document an abandoned bike, or reckless rider and give a score. If a rider is reported a certain number of times, they are kicked off.	Ensuring that bikes are adequately identifiable	Create a license plate and/or GPS locator so that someone can submit a time and location and the ID can be determined
Require an online orientation and video as well as occasional (monthly) update reminder videos / training to refresh awareness.		Videos are required viewing before starting a ride (un locking the bike).
Write in enforcement costs into the cost of doing dockless bikes / scooters in DC, so that the city can hire appropriate persons to monitor / enforce	Increases costs of doing business	Apply a tax to each ride (20 cents) to cover the maintenance, insurance, enforcement fees.
Create a sound for the bikes and scooters so people know when they are near.		
Copy data, management, and reporting practices from Capital Bike Share	This is asking competitors to cooperate	

CITIZEN RESPONSE: What Can You Do?

Send a letter or email to:

- Your **ANC single member district representative**, as well as to your **ANC transportation committee chair**. To learn which ANC you live in go to: www.ancfinder.org.
- Your **DC Council member**, as well as to Ward 3 and Transportation Committee chair, **Mary Cheh** at: mcheh@dccouncil.us; 1350 Pennsylvania Ave., Suite 108, NW, Washington, DC 20004
- To **Jeff Marootian**, Director of DC Department of Transportation at: jeffrey.marootian@dc.gov; DC Dept. of Transportation, 55 M Street, SE, Suite 400, Washington, DC 20003.
- Finally, please send your letter or email to **Mayor Muriel Bowser**. Be sure to mention that you are a part of CHV’s advocacy Corps. Mayor’s contact info: eom@dc.gov; John A Wilson Building, 1350 Pennsylvania Ave NW, Washington DC 20004.

For a complete list of ANC and DC Council representatives see the CHV Website, www.capitolhillvillage.org.