



Electric Scooter Sharing Program Community Meeting Feedback

The Oakland Department of Transportation (OakDOT) is in the final stages of developing a permit system to regulate how E-scooter companies can operate in Oakland. From July to December 2018, OakDOT led a series of public meetings to hear directly from Oaklanders about how this permit system should operate. This report summarizes the feedback from those meetings.

Background

Shared electric scooters, or “e-scooters”, are the newest transportation option for getting around Oakland. They are useful for short trips, and have the potential to help achieve the goals of OakDOT’s [Strategic Plan](#), which calls for expanding access to shared mobility services, improving transportation choices, and minimizing parking demand, congestion and pollution. However, when used improperly e-scooters can obstruct sidewalks, curb ramps, and other portions of the public right-of-way.



Photos: Helmet giveaway at West Oakland Branch Library

Summary of Outreach, Community Participation and Council Action

The public engagement process began with briefings to the Public Works Commission, the Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Commission and the full City Council. City council took several actions to support the scooter sharing program. In September, the Council passed an ordinance that enables OakDOT staff to develop a permit process. The ordinance includes requirements for insurance and indemnification, user education for correct and safe use of the scooters, robust community outreach, equitable distribution of scooters throughout Oakland neighborhoods, and more. In October, the City Council amended the Master Fee Schedule to include fees for these new permits. The fees were designed to recover the cost of administering the program, as well as funding new infrastructure, such as designated scooter parking areas. The following meetings were held in Oakland's City Hall:

- Public Works Commission: 7/17
- Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Commission: 8/16, 10/18
- City Council: 9/17, 10/30

A "Town Hall" style community forum at City Hall in October provided an opportunity for E-scooter scooter companies to present to the public their vision for E-scooters in Oakland, and what they are doing to address concerns. The 65 attendees were further able to submit questions to a panel of company representatives and OakDOT Director, Ryan Russo.



Photo: Panel of speakers at Scooter Town Hall

Four community listening sessions, held in neighborhoods around Oakland, followed in November and December. During these listening sessions, over 60 attendees answered a series of questions about how they would like to see E-scooters deployed in their community, and what the City, the scooter companies and the public can do to make this program successful.

These meetings included:

- Scooter Town Hall: City Hall, 10/22 (65 participants)
- West Oakland: West Oakland Branch Library, 11/10 (16 participants)
- East Oakland: 81st Ave. Branch Library, 12/11 (13 participants)
- North Oakland: Golden Gate Recreation Center, 12/12 (15 participants)
- Fruitvale/ San Antonio: Cesar Chavez Branch Library, 12/18 (16 participants)



Photo: Community meeting participants in Fruitvale

Summary of feedback

The questions posed at the community meetings, and the feedback received, is reproduced below. In instances where the same information was provided multiple times, the number of times that feedback was offered is listed in parentheses next to the comment, e.g., "Education on proper use" was an answer provided 6 times so it is shown as "Education on proper use (x6)"

1. What are the advantages of scooters?

- Fun!
- Environmental emissions
- Alternative for disabled people
- Users can receive messages via phone or app

- Can re-balance according to need
- The cost is economical (x2)
- Don't require a large footprint, economical and fast compared to walking (x2)
- Travel time reliability (most of the time)
- Convenience
- Easier to get around
- Cuts back on parking time
- New form of transportation (x3)

2. What are the disadvantages of scooters?

- Competes with other modes for precious lane space
- Nobody wears a helmet
- Do BART and AC Transit have scooter policies?
- Lack of signage & directions for non-users
- Education, signage, enforced at clusters of use
- Not as active as walking/biking
- Competing w/ existing transit
- Cheaply sources lithium batteries, often contain cobalt from conflict sources
- Safety for drivers and peds (x2)
- Lack of experience with their use
- Laws on use not very clear (x2)
- When people don't park properly (x2)
- Pedestrian and scooter rider safety (x2)
- Traffic problems – Blocking the wrong areas (x7)
- Don't know what the rules are
- Can't tell if scooter is faulty until paying for a ride
- Cost for faulty scooters
- Riding the wrong direction
- Underage riders (x2)
- Enforcement (x2)
- Don't work properly
- Used for theft
- Too fast

3. Where do you want to see MORE scooters?

- On college campuses
- East Oakland
- West Oakland- transit is inadequate and needed here
- Near bus stops, intersections
- More after 9pm or at night
- East Oakland, because transit is not great (x2)
- In the neighborhoods
- Parks and libraries and at corners (x2)
- By BART/Bus stops (x3)
- Near business concentrations

- Near educational institutions
- Near population concentrations, dense neighborhoods
- Above 40th St, West of Telegraph
- Only where tourists are
- In Docks (x2)
- Nowhere
- Everywhere (x2)
- Near shopping areas

4. Where do you NOT want to see scooters?

- On sidewalks (while operating) (x3)
- Blocking ADA ramps (x2)
- Blocking other transit (x2)
- In front of crosswalks
- Blocking driveways
- Indoors- people hogging/hoarding scooters
- Lake Merritt (x2)
- In front of senior facilities
- On the ground blocking ped or bike paths
- On steep hills
- The entire City
- Not on every corner
- Nowhere (x2)
- Everywhere

5. What should be in our E-scooter regulations?

- Open API access for info about scooter usage
- An accountable way to report damaged scooters
- Reporting requirements for failure rates and types of failures
- Broken/ faulty machines - accountability or reinforcement
- Actions in place to hold City, companies, users accountable when rules aren't followed
- Revenue accounting for infrastructure and enforcement costs
- Obligate citywide coverage
- Reporting requirements for crash incidents
- Spot checks to verify safety of scooter fleets
- Prevent redlining of service areas
- Should follow bike guidelines
- Rider regulations- enforcement of helmet requirement, clear guidelines on where scooters can be ridden (x5)
- Scooter and bicycle curriculum in schools
- Taxes and revenue
- Users could be issued citations like drivers of cars do (x2)
- Addressing hit and runs
- Too many broken brakes, stuck accelerators, accountability for equipment failures
- No Parking near Lake Merritt

- Not require Driver's License

6. What can the OPERATORS do to address needs/concerns?

- Do better at not charging for faulty rides (not working or locked scooters)
- Recall faulty units
- Identify users who violated guidelines and not allow them to rent for period of time (x5)
- Host demonstrations in public plazas (x3)
- Shared payment method w/ public transit
- Patrol near schools
- Educate on proper use (x6)
- Shut down after collision
- Not have too many in one location
- Not to require a license (x3)
- Make them for younger children
- Flexible (Equitable) pricing (x2)
- More kickstands
- Have a parking area
- Improve design
- Allow younger riders
- Electric corralling
- Share data with city
- Offer enforcement (x2)

7. What can the CITY do to address needs/concerns?

- Keep the market/permit fees accessible for new providers
- Fines for operating without a permit
- Avoid regulatory capture: provide a program for local and small businesses to compete with large VC backed scooter companies
- Make sure scooters are accessible to low-income residential neighborhoods and elderly
- Require a means to keep scooters upright
- Let citizens know that bad companies are punished
- Require lights for visibility
- More money for education than regulation
- Don't take automobile parking
- Don't block new Operators
- Provide proper parking for scooters and bikes could be a hook/alongside pole (x2)
- Require helmets for all (x3)
- A central hotline for concerns/complaints (x2)
- Require biometrics to operate
- Coordinate with Alameda County
- Require ID plates
- Enforcement (x5)
- Share data collected on scooters
- Stop the entire scooter program (x2)
- Better education on rules

- Require recording like a dash cam
- Require users to have insurance
- Require no headphones or earbuds
- Fix potholes (x2)
- Incentives
- Require a safety course – education (x3)
- Make streets better for safer riding (x2)

8. What can the COMMUNITY do to make the e-scooter program successful?

- Help with reporting
- Support early stages of program initiation
- Not over-police infractions
- Pressuring on social norms around appropriate parking
- Scooter education events (x3)
- Ensure how-to's are clear
- Make people aware of penalties
- Send feedback to the operators
- A hotline
- Stop driving

9. Any other comments you'd like to add!

- Some people enjoy charging, they can be ambassadors
- How to prevent fights over charging scooters?

More information

For Frequently Asked Questions and other information, visit our website

<https://www.oaklandca.gov/topics/e-scooters>

To provide general feedback

Please email scootershare@oaklandca.gov.

To report an issue with improperly parked scooters

Please contact the responsible company, or report to [OAK 311](tel:311)