



City of Tualatin

CITY OF TUALATIN Staff Report

TO: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council
THROUGH: Sherilyn Lombos, City Manager
FROM: Nic Westendorf, Deputy Public Works Director
DATE: January 10, 2022

SUBJECT:
Consideration of Electric Scooter Operations

RECOMMENDATION:

Establish a Pilot Program to allow electric scooters via Ordinance. Adopt an ordinance giving the City Manager the authority to establish a pilot program, creating provisions for the use of e-scooters. That would give the City Manager/designee the flexibility to establish and modify the regulations as the pilot is implemented, allowing the City to be nimble and quickly address issues as they arise. It would also apply broadly to all providers (not just Bird) in the event any other operators may be interested in deploying in Tualatin.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

The City was contacted by [Bird Scooters](#) about deploying electric scooters in Tualatin. City staff met with Bird to discuss logistics of deployment. Staff also met with the Cities of Hermiston and Pendleton, who have deployed Bird scooters, to learn about their experience. This memo summarizes Bird's proposed deployment, along with the information gathered from other cities. Representatives from Bird will be at the meeting to make a short presentation about their proposal for Tualatin and to address questions from the Council.

Bird's Proposal

Bird would deploy scooters in areas that lack connections (near the WES station / Tri-Met 76 bus stop) to help people make short trips and complete the "last mile" of their trip from transit stops to their final destination in town. E-scooters provide another transit option aside from vehicle trips, which could reduce car trips, carbon emissions, and increase mobility for the community as a whole.

Bird proposes to roll out a small fleet of about 50-75 scooters in Tualatin to start. This would keep the number of scooters manageable and allow both the City and Bird to ease into this relationship while monitoring for ridership and issues, making adjustments as we go. Bird would work with the City to scale up the program as demand builds, and as results of the pilot are known.

Bird would hire a local contractor to manage the Tualatin fleet. That person would be responsible for collecting the scooters, charging them, and redeploying them based on an algorithm used by the app that predicts rider patterns. They would also be responsible for responding to complaints and moving rogue scooters if they end up where they do not belong. According to Bird about 0.43% of Scooters end up somewhere they do not belong.

Users can report issues via the Bird app. Non-riders can also download the app solely to report issues without needing to add credit card information or use the scooters. This can be used for issues such as scooters being left in undesirable places or other issues with scooter accessibility and functionality.

Bird offers [geo-fencing](#) (electronically limiting where the scooters function) to limit pedestrian/ scooter conflicts by prohibiting the use of scooters on private property such as schools and limiting the use of scooters in areas where large events occur (like Concerts on the Commons or Viva Tualatin). This will give the City and Bird more control over where to allow the scooters to operate and respond to issues during the pilot program.

Bird also offers [discounted rides for low-income riders](#) to make access to their scooters more equitable.

Other Cities

Staff met with the Cities of Pendleton and Hermiston to discuss their experience working with Bird to deploy e-scooters. Both Cities deployed in early 2021. Hermiston and Pendleton both reported positive experiences with Bird and their deployments of e-scooters. People are using the scooters and there have been few complaints or citations. The scooters are helping provide another transit option for shorter trips, as well as, some fun. Neither City had issues with scooters looking trashy or winding up in undesirable locations. They attributed responsible ridership and use to the fact that riders are mostly local. The riders live, work, and play in the community and have an interest in keeping things nice. Both Cities also mentioned the successful use of geo-fencing (electronically limiting where the scooters function) to limit pedestrian/ scooter conflicts by prohibiting the use of scooters in specific areas.

OUTCOMES OF DECISION:

If supportive, staff will begin drafting an Ordinance that would grant the City Manager the authority to establish a Pilot Program. Staff will return to Council for adoption and then work with Bird on a deployment plan.

ALTERNATIVES TO RECOMMENDATION:

Alternative 1: Execute a Permit Agreement. City Council could negotiate a permit agreement with Bird. This agreement would be specific to Bird. This will allow basic oversight, regulation, and revenue sharing for right of way use. A Permit Agreement provides less flexibility during implementation as any changes need to go through Council and any other providers would need to negotiate their own agreement individually.

Alternative 2: Hands off approach. We could do nothing and let Bird launch in town with a verbal "ok". This is the easiest, fastest, and lowest level of effort but provides no opportunity to regulate the scooters or collect revenue for right of way use. For those reasons, staff does not recommend this option.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

The City may be able to negotiate a revenue sharing and/or a licensing fee with Bird as part of our agreement. The impact of this would be based on ridership and the negotiated terms of the agreement.

ATTACHMENTS:

- PowerPoint Presentation from Bird