



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:** August 28, 2023

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**SUBJECT:**  
E-Scooter Pilot Review.

### **RECOMMENDATION:**

Staff recommends extending the agreement to allow Lime Scooters to continue operation while staff works to create a process for Council consideration to allow long term e-scooter operations.

### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:**

In August 2022 the City entered into a 12-month pilot program with Lime Scooters, allowing the operation of electric scooter (e-scooter) rentals. The intent of the pilot agreement was to gauge demand for the service, determine the feasibility of operations, and allow flexibility to respond to issues and make adjustments as needed. The 12-month pilot program is set to end at the end of August and staff are seeking direction from Council regarding ongoing e-scooter operations.

During the pilot program staff worked with Lime to ensure responsiveness to resident complaints and feedback and to determine feasibility of the service. The City and Lime coordinated on community outreach, held events to kick off the new program and educate riders about safety and rules, and monitored the e-scooter use to gauge the level of community interest. Both staff and Lime believe the pilot has been successful and that ongoing e-scooter operations would be beneficial for the City.

**Ridership.** Since the pilot began in September 2022 there have been over 14,000 rides covering more than 16,000 miles. If those same trips were taken by car, it would have resulted in over 14,000 lbs. of Co2 pollution – the equivalent of burning over 7,100 pounds of coal. Those rides were taken by 2,900 different riders, which indicates that a lot of riders are repeat users. This is further supported by the ride routes tracked on Lime’s interactive dashboard, which show consistent use between the downtown area and various neighborhoods and employment centers on the outer edges of town.

Ridership peaked during the summer and drops during the winter months. While Tualatin has seen over 1,500 riders per month during this 2023 summer (May-present), the winter average is closer to 675 rides per month. In March there were only 441 rides. This seasonal swing is typical in colder climates and has led to Lime adjusting the size of the fleet to account for ridership, with the fleet ranging between 40-70 e-scooters depending on demand. Lime has indicated that they will likely continue scaling the fleet if future operations are allowed and may consider pausing operations

during winter when ridership is at its lowest. This ensures e-scooters are not sitting for long periods unused and that supply is adjusted to meet demand.

**Complaints.** Over the course of the pilot agreement staff received about a dozen formal complaints. Formal complaints are considered to be those that came in via email, social media, or by phone, and included some engagement beyond a single negative comment. They typically involved concerns over rider safety and e-scooter parking. Concerns such as children riding scooters, riders without helmets, and unsafe riding behavior were frequently cited. In addition, folks were also concerned about scooters being parked near their homes or blocking sidewalks or ADA ramps. In most instances, City staff or Lime were able to resolve the issue either through education or action by Lime's local team. Lime has been prompt to respond to ADA issues and misplaced scooters. The behavior issues are harder to police and similar issues exist with privately owned e-scooters and bikes.

**City use.** Free rides are offered to staff as an alternative to using City vehicles to get between City buildings. The City's seasonal Park Rangers have also began using scooters for some of their patrols this summer through a partnership with Lime. This has been a benefit to the City, reducing some vehicle trips made for operational purposes and is a nice benefit to offer staff. While not a deciding factor in continuing to offer e-scooters, it is worth highlighting the benefit of the partnership for City staff and the City's efforts to reduce transportation emissions.

**Potential Changes to Lime's Operations.** Lime has indicated that they would likely make the following changes if long-term operations are permitted in Tualatin:

- Continue to lower fleet size in winter, potentially suspend operations during least popular months.
- Increase price per ride (total price, not per minute) 5-10 cents to account for actual operating costs.

Both changes are intended to ensure Lime is able to continue to provide service in Tualatin while covering costs and maintaining a profit. These changes are still under consideration at Lime and would likely take effect during the extended agreement while staff work on long term e-scooter regulations.

Overall, Lime has been excellent to work with and the overall feedback regarding e-scooters has been positive. The use of e-scooters has been strong and there is a demand for alternative modes of transportation. Continuing to allow e-scooter providers to operate in Tualatin helps service our last mile transportation gaps and helps support our climate action and transportation goals.

Staff would like direction from Council regarding whether continued e-scooter operations are supported, which, if any, changes to operations should be considered, and gather any additional feedback or requests from Council.

#### **OUTCOMES OF DECISION:**

If desired, staff can create a process for long-term e-scooter operations in the City and bring it back for future Council consideration. Staff can extend the current agreement with Lime to allow continued operations while that process is developed to ensure e-scooters remain available.

#### **ALTERNATIVES TO RECOMMENDATION:**

Council could decide to no longer allow e-scooter rental operations or request further modifications to the operating requirements.

**FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:**

If allowed, continued e-scooter operations would generate a small revenue stream from the 10-cent fee collected per ride. To date, the total revenue share from the pilot is just over \$1,100. This is a nominal and likely not a deciding factor for allowing e-scooters.

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**ATTACHMENTS:**

- PowerPoint Presentation