



Information Item

May 9, 2022

To: Mayor and City Council

From: Edward F. King, Director, Department of Transportation

Subject: Shared Mobility Program Update for July 2021–March 2022

Introduction

Since the 2015 launch of the City-owned Breeze Bike Share and subsequent rollout of electric shared mobility devices in 2017, shared mobility services have been a valued component of Santa Monica’s local transportation network. By promoting alternatives to car trips, the shared mobility industry has shifted from an era of disruption to one of integration within Santa Monica’s transportation network. Shared mobility services are ideal for Santa Monica because they provide flexibility, are usable year-round, provide first/last mile connections to the public transit network and feel safe and reliable for many people to use on the 100+ mile bike network, much of which was installed in the last decade since the City Council adopted the Bike Action Plan.

The City’s second 21-month Shared Mobility Pilot Program (“Pilot Program”) commenced July 1, 2021. The participating companies—Lyft, Spin, Veo and Wheels—have provided 602,304 trips in Santa Monica during the first nine months of the Pilot Program, with an initial authorized fleet of 2,200 total devices citywide, and the

potential to increase to the fleet cap of 3,250 devices based on demand. The Pilot Program has facilitated several innovations including technology to limit sidewalk riding and improved safety and stability of shared mobility devices.

This report provides an update on the observed trends and progress of the first nine months of the 21-month Pilot Program. The report was informed by operators' system data feeds that adhere to the Mobility Data Specification (MDS) convention, operator monthly reports, and bi-annual user survey responses.

Background

The City of Santa Monica launched its first Shared Mobility Pilot Program in September 2018 to test novel areas of policy, regulation, operation, and enforcement for privately-operated shared mobility businesses. Following the pilot evaluation report in January 2020, Council directed staff to create a second Shared Mobility Pilot Program that was initially set to launch on July 1, 2020. Due to the impacts of COVID-19 on shared mobility services, including two of the operators (Jump and Lime) leaving the City and ridership falling 77%, the City postponed the launch of the second Pilot Program.

On March 9, 2021, City Council directed staff to move forward with the second Pilot Program as initially conceived with a focus on diversity/quality of device types to service different needs, safety, affordability, reliability, sustainability, and enforcement. The City released a Request for Applications (RFA) on March 17, 2021, to select permittees for the second Shared Mobility Pilot Program. Eight companies submitted proposals and ultimately four companies (Lyft, Spin, Veo, and Wheels) were selected to operate five distinct device types (Class 1 and 2 e-bikes, two-wheeled scooters, three-wheeled scooters, and sit-down scooters). The new

companies launched their services as a part of the second Pilot Program on or within 30 days of the July 1, 2021 launch date. The primary goals of the second Pilot Program are to:

- Offer a variety of shared mobility options to residents, workers, and visitors within Santa Monica;
- Reduce emissions from short trips and connections to transit;
- Improve safety through reduced sidewalk, pathway, curb ramps blockages in compliance with the Americans with the Disabilities Act (ADA);
- Continue to increase user awareness of safe and legal behaviors for operating devices;
- Ensure operators are responsive to community complaints;
- Catalyze industry improvement in devices, technologies, and customer service that deliver better outcomes;
- Maintain flexibility and consistency as the industry continues to rapidly evolve;
- Focus oversight onto priority areas of reliability, affordability, safety, and sustainability; and
- Create an enforceable framework for managing shared mobility services.

Second Shared Mobility Pilot Program Structure

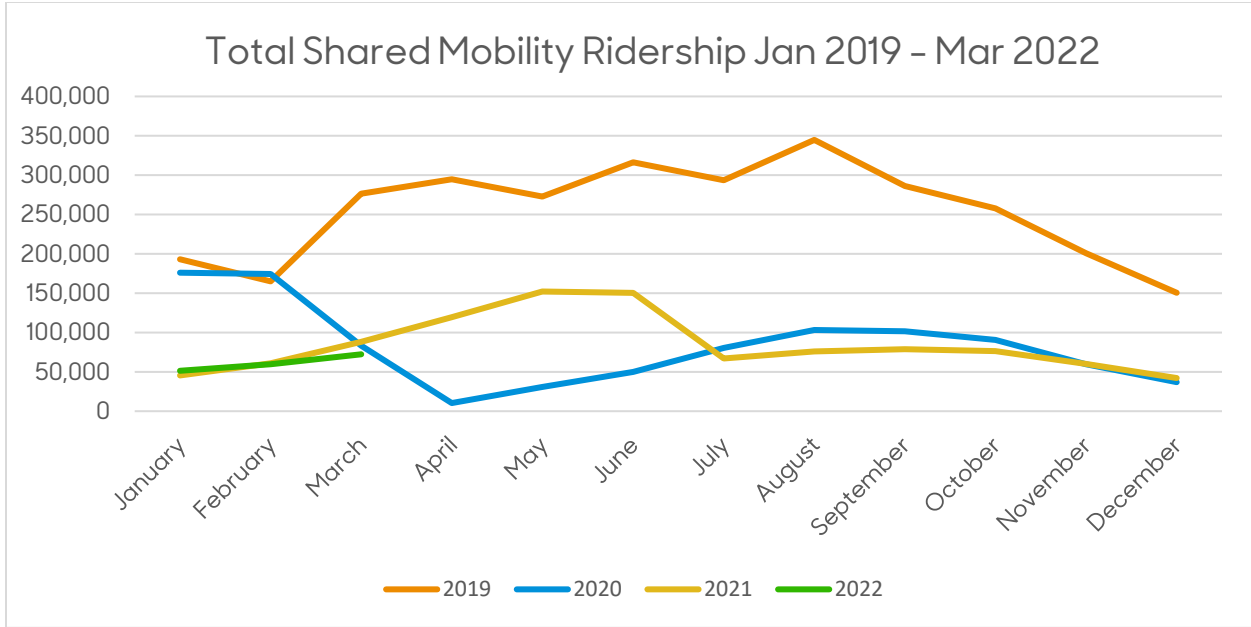
The second Pilot Program focuses regulatory efforts in areas with clearly defined performance expectations and seeks to align them with reporting and enforcement processes. This approach amends regulations to better match oversight resources with a continued focus on development of technology-based tools for management and enforcement. A pillar of the Pilot Program's success is an open and productive partnership between the City and permitted operators that facilitates operators being highly responsive to community concerns about safety and adverse impacts on members of the public who walk, bike, or drive in Santa Monica.

- Pilot Term: 21 months beginning July 1, 2021
- Device Types and System Elements: As part of the second Pilot Program, staff intended to seek an array of shared micromobility device types to serve a diversity of different mobility needs in the community and improve safety and durability.

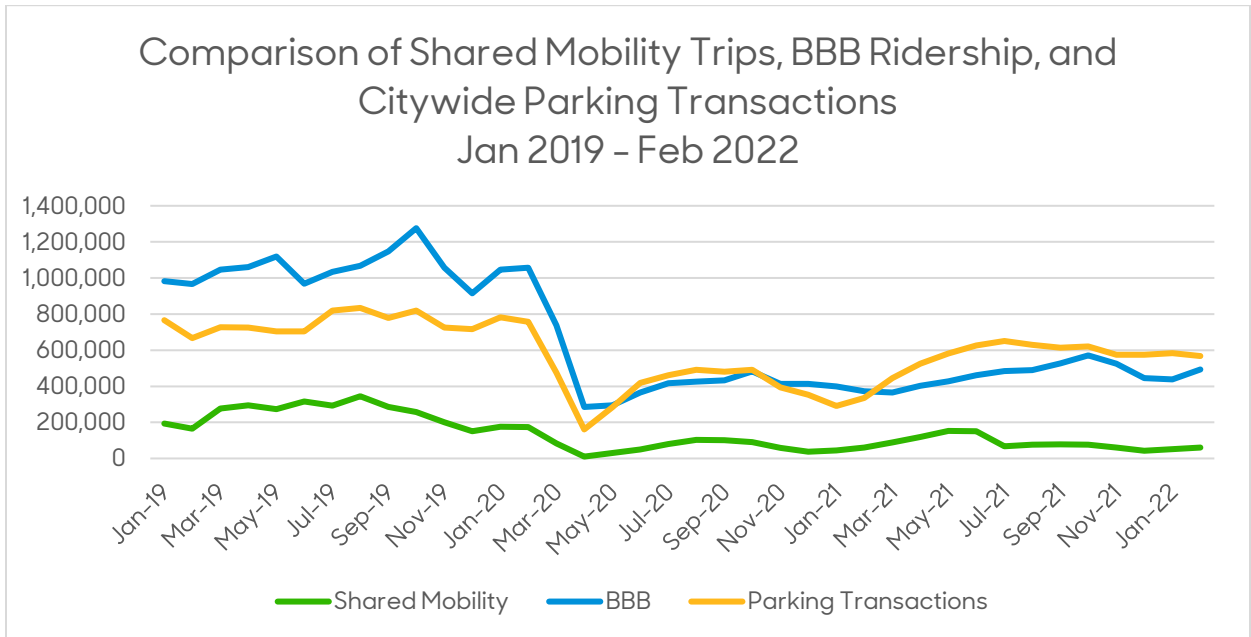
- Scale of Program: The City of Santa Monica allowed up to four operators and an initial launch of 2,200 total devices citywide with a fleet cap of 3,250 devices (equal to the first Pilot Program cap). Fleet size caps could be adjusted based on a demonstrated sustained fleet utilization.
- Progressive Penalty Structure: Operators are required to comply with all [Administrative Regulations](#) and are subject to a clearly defined progressive penalty schedule for non-compliance, which defines the terms of escalating penalties for public right-of-way (PROW) and administrative regulation violations.
- Operating Fees: The costs to oversee and enforce the program are recovered through Annual Operator fees, Device fees, and impound fees. Operators continue to pay for the use of the PROW through a PROW fee (\$0.20/trip).

Discussion

When the COVID-19 pandemic began in March 2020, travel throughout the City was dramatically altered. Between March and December 2020, the City experienced reductions in parking transactions of 52%, Big Blue Bus (BBB) ridership of 59%, and of shared mobility ridership of 77%, when compared to the same months in 2019. In 2021 during the first six months of the second Pilot Program, movement in the City continued to be impacted by the pandemic, with parking transactions and BBB ridership remaining at approximately 77% and 44% respectively, while shared mobility ridership remains at only 26% of pre-pandemic levels.



Total Shared Mobility Ridership Jan 2019-Feb 2022. Data Sources: Breeze Bikeshare data and Service Provider Mobility Data Specification (MDS) Data, Jan 2019-Feb 2022, pulled from Remix and Ride Report



Mobility Options within Santa Monica Jan 2019-Feb 2022 Data Sources: Service Provider Mobility Data Specification (MDS) Data, January 2019-February 2022, Big Blue Bus, and Smarking. Data available through February 2022.

During the time of the slowdown, the City experienced a decrease in bad rider behavior and haphazard parking, which was largely driven by the reduction in overall ridership, particularly among the tourist population and first-time riders. However, staff anticipates that as COVID-19 restrictions are lifted and more public activity resumes, ridership will return to near pre-pandemic levels. Correspondingly, staff anticipates that persistent rider issues that have largely subsided may once again become more prevalent as ridership levels increase.

As the second Pilot Program continues through Spring 2023, staff will continue to oversee operations, work with permitted service providers to ensure compliance with the program Administrative Regulations, seek ways to maximize technologies to improve service, and evaluate the program based on the following primary focus areas, each of which are detailed below:

- Role of shared mobility within the transportation network
- Access and Reliability
- Affordability
- Safety

Role of Shared Mobility within the Transportation Network

According to the resident travel survey (2017), 51.5% of drive alone vehicle trips in Santa Monica are under 3 miles. The shared mobility devices (e-scooters, e-bikes, sit-down scooters) provide low-emission mobility options for residents, workers, and visitors, and an alternative option for 1-3-mile short trips around town. Between July 1, 2021, and March 31, 2022, riders generated 602,304 trips, averaging 1.4 miles in distance and 10.2 minutes in duration. While ridership growth has been slow to return to pre-pandemic levels, a core userbase continues to rely on these services for regular transportation needs. In the most recent rider survey (conducted January 2022), 42% of the respondents reported that they ride daily or

between 1–6 times per week, 25% reported riding 1–3 times per month, and 22% reported riding only once or less than once a month.

For those riding, the prevalence of shared mobility options continues to influence how they choose to move about the City, especially as it relates to choosing to walk or drive. Of the 299 survey respondents, 41% said that they would have walked their most recent shared mobility trip if the e-scooters and e-bikes were not available, 45% said they would have made the trip by car (e.g., personal vehicle, ride hailing, taxi, etc.), and 53% reported taking ride hailing services less often since first using shared mobility devices.

Shared mobility supports a wide range of different trip purposes in Santa Monica for residents, workers, and visitors. Of the survey responses, 43% of riders live in Santa Monica, 37% live in greater Los Angeles County, and 20% reside outside of LA County. The most common trip purposes are recreation (28%), to/from restaurants and dining (22%), and commuting to/from work (21%). As the pandemic caused many to work from home, 8% fewer riders report taking shared mobility to/from work in the second Pilot Program than did the first program

Access & Reliability

For shared mobility to be an integral option in the City's transportation network, it must be accessible and reliable throughout the community. The Pilot Program is structured to ensure that the number of available vehicles matches the demand, and those who want to ride can easily locate their preferred device. A total of 2,200 devices were permitted at the beginning of the second Pilot Program. The City allows operators to increase their fleet sizes upon request if they show a sustained utilization rate of four trips per device per day, up to a total citywide fleet of 3,250

devices. Between July 1, 2021, and March 31, 2022, 1,563 devices of the permitted fleet were available on average. Operators did not deploy the fully permitted amount because demand has been suppressed by the pandemic.

The City selected five distinct device types to operate in the second Pilot Program with the anticipation these devices would provide greater access to riders with diverse mobility needs. Respondents to the rider survey report riding the 2-wheel e-scooters (73%), Class 1 e-bikes (68%), 2-wheel seated e-scooters (50%) the most of the five device types.

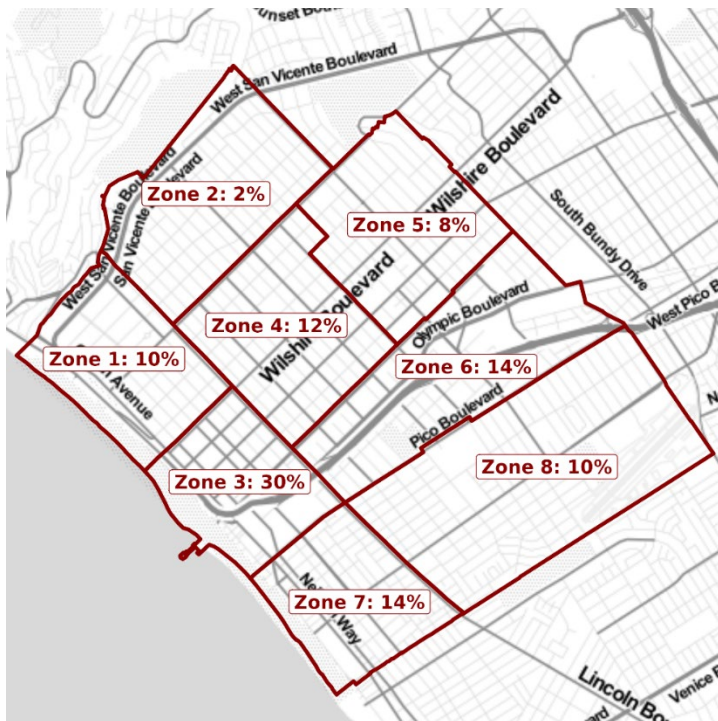
Vehicle Type	Total Permitted	Average Available July 2021 – March 2022	Types of Vehicles Ridden by Survey Respondents
e-scooters, 2-wheel	700	575	73%
e-scooters, 2-wheel w/seat	200	227	50%
e-scooters, 3-wheel	200	26	9%
e-bikes, class 1	600	358	68%
e-bikes, class 2	500	327	31%
Total Devices	2,200	1,513	

Shared Mobility Vehicles Pilot Program 2.0 Snapshot. Data Sources: Service Provider Mobility Data Specification (MDS) Data, July 2021-March 2022, Bi-Annual Shared Mobility Pilot Program User Survey conducted January 2022.

While the variety of devices creates more options for users, it also adversely affects reliability and access. For example, a rider that prefers a specific operator or a specific type of device may encounter challenges easily locating or accessing that preferred device because the overall number of devices is divided among many device options and operators. In the recent rider survey, 49% of the rider survey respondents selected “difficult to locate” as a barrier preventing them from riding

more, while 25% selected “don’t like switching to or between new operators,” and 12% selected “too many operators.” These responses indicate that some riders are frustrated navigating between multiple mobile apps while being unable to access their preferred device.

During the first Pilot Program, operators sought to deploy devices in areas that could generate the most trips and revenue, which often lead to limited access in some neighborhoods and an oversaturation in sensitive and congested areas like Downtown. To remedy this challenge in the second Pilot Program, the City requires operators to deploy and maintain a daily device availability by dividing the operator’s fleet among eight deployment zones to ensure equitable access and limit occurrences of oversaturation.



Map of Shared Mobility Deployment Zones with Required Daily Average Fleet Availability Percentages

In zones that tend to generate less ridership (like, Zone 5 Wilshire East, Zone 6 Pico, and Zone 8 Sunset Park), operators maintained 1-3% fewer devices than the defined threshold required by the Administrative Regulation. However, on average, the operators sustained the availability service levels across most zones. As ridership levels increase, staff will continue to direct providers to meet the deployment thresholds established in each zone, building up to the maximum device count permitted.

Affordability

Currently, the four operators offer similar payment plan options and charge a similar rate per trip. All four operators charge a \$1 unlock fee and between \$0.33 - \$0.39 per minute of use. At these rates, an average 1-mile trip costs approximately \$2.57 - \$3.05¹, which is slightly higher than the rates being charged at the end of the first Pilot Program (\$0.23 - \$0.30 per minute). While the second Pilot Program has delivered some cost reduction for some of the shared mobility options, primarily for low-income riders and casual users, rates continue to be much higher than other public transportation options and can create a cost burden for everyday users. For example, BBB costs \$1 per trip and Metro bus and rail lines cost \$1.75 per trip

The demographics of the current userbase skew towards those who are wealthier. Based on the bi-annual user survey, 47% of participants make over \$100,000 per year. The issue of affordability for users who make less than \$100,000 is a barrier for habitual participation and shared mobility use. When asked "What barriers prevent you from using e-scooters or e-bikes in Santa Monica?" 36% of survey respondents selected *too expensive* (the second most selected reason).

¹ Estimated based on an average 10.2 minutes for a 1.3-mile trip.

The City requires that each permitted provider offer low-income qualified rates that are easily accessible. The low-income programs that each of the four providers offer are based on requirements that range from home zip code, participation in state or federal programs or SMC enrollment status. The incentives range from monthly memberships at a reduced price, reduced or eliminated unlock fees, and per minute trip costs ranging from \$0.05 to \$0.29 cents per minute. In total, 307 riders are enrolled in the low-income options offered, who took a total of 8,367 trips.

The low-income and neighborhood-specific programs can drastically reduce costs and improve access for many qualified individuals; however, the structure of signing up can present challenges such as requiring detailed paperwork of participation in federally funded programs to determine eligibility, language barriers, and can be difficult to navigate through the providers' websites. Overall, the impact of the low-income and neighborhood specific programs helps to lower the barrier of accessing shared mobility options without the per trip cost burden. To address the affordability issues, the City aims to direct providers to offer shared mobility options at equitable costs and maintain fleet reliability in neighborhoods throughout the city, specifically in priority neighborhoods such as Pico.

Expanding outreach and equity programs will support Santa Monica's equity goals by serving residents of various incomes and broader user groups. In the next phase of the Shared Mobility Program, staff intends to work with operators to focus on expanded membership options that lower barriers to entry for low-income individuals.

Safety and Enforcement

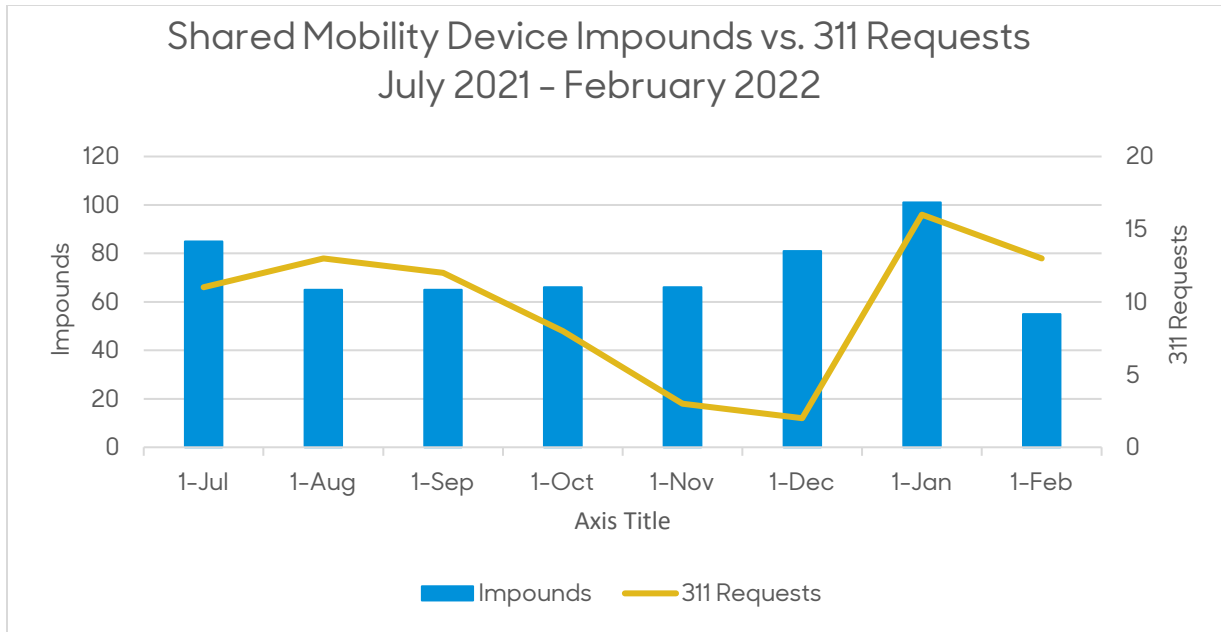
Since the start of the pandemic, the City has experienced fewer occurrences of bad rider behavior, haphazard parking, double riding, etc. In addition to the drop in ridership in the City, staff attributes this trend to several factors that have contributed to overall improved safety in shared mobility.

- Improved Devices: Companies have invested in more durable devices that are built to withstand the extreme nature of shared use. Additionally, the devices include a wide range of new features that improve safety, including better lights and braking systems, turn signals, two sided kickstands, auditory notifications, integrated parking incentives, and improved in-app and on device safety messaging.
- Testing Innovative Technologies: One company is testing sidewalk riding detection technology that slows riders to nearly a stop and emits a noise when ridden on the sidewalk. 219 devices were equipped with the technology. All 219 of these devices have detected sidewalk riding at some point since being launched. The technology and data analytic tools continue to be refined, which will enable the City to gain better insights to the factors that contribute to sidewalk riding. Double kick stands make the devices harder to knock over. Brighter lights and turn signals increase visibility of riders and enhance predictability of turning movements. The parking incentives generate more positive user behavior such as locking to former Breeze Bike Share docks and parking vehicles properly so that they do not impede upon pedestrian movements.
- More Experienced/Frequent Riders: With fewer first time and tourist riders, those who ride are more familiar with and more likely to follow the rules of the road. In the rider survey, 68% of respondents understand that sidewalk riding is prohibited, and 70% know that shared mobility devices cannot be parked blocking sidewalk curb ramps. However, of those same respondents, 6% acknowledge that they ride on the sidewalk when a bike lane is not available. 35% reported lack of bike lanes as a primary barrier to riding more often.
- Improved Infrastructure: The City continues to improve infrastructure and safety for shared mobility riders, cyclists, and all roadway users. In October 2020, the City Council adopted the Bike Action Plan Amendment, establishing a 5-year action plan for expanding protected bike lane infrastructure in the City. Since January 2020, the City has installed or improved approximately 1.5

miles of protected facilities, including on Broadway, Ocean Avenue, and 23rd Street.

While operators largely met operational requirements defined in the Administrative Regulations, some challenges linger regarding haphazard parking, poor rider behavior, and PROW management. According to Santa Monica Police Department (SMPD), there were 16 total reported collisions involving shared mobility devices from July 2021 to March 2022. It is SMPD procedure to take a crash report if a participant has a complaint of pain or more serious injury, so information on non-injury collisions is not available. Seven of the collision records do not indicate cause, while the other cited factors include improper turning, wrong side of road, impeding traffic, unsafe starting, and violating automobile right-of-way. The data does not confirm which party was responsible.

The City continues to work with operators to quickly address reported violations or to impound devices and issue citations. From July 2021 – March 2022, the City has received 115 311 requests about shared mobility devices, which mostly cited mis-parked devices or bad rider behavior. Code Enforcement issued citations for 40 violations and impounded 584 devices for ADA blockages, being parked in the street, and blocking the PROW, operator response times, amongst other violations. Increased Code Enforcement presence, support from contracted enforcement assistance, and attention to removing problem devices from the PROW encourages operators to be proactive in addressing issues quickly and maintaining their fleets in an orderly manner.



Shared Mobility Device Impounds and 311 Requests July 2021-February 2022. Data Sources: CODE Enforcement, 311 Data Log

The City will impress upon providers to expand upon their educational campaigns and technological innovations to prevent and mitigate incorrectly parked vehicles to ensure that sidewalks, curb ramps and PROW remain clear for pedestrians, cyclists, scooter users, and motorists. Another highly cited cause of concern was the use of electric devices on the Beach Bike Path. Class 1 and Class 2 e-bikes are allowed to ride on the bike path; however, all other electric devices are prohibited. While e-scooters operated as part of the pilot program are remotely disabled upon entering the bike path area, many people now own personal devices (e-skateboards, e-scooters, etc.) and brick and mortar rental companies lease various e-devices to the public. The increased presence of these devices generated concerns related to the speeds of the vehicles and potential safety issues associated with riders moving quickly through areas with high bike and pedestrian volumes and sand on the path.

Conclusion

Shared mobility has grown to become an integral component of Santa Monica's multi-modal transportation landscape, and after nearly 5 years continues to be impacted by private sector volatilities that can drive new and unique public private partnerships, company acquisitions, and sometimes unreliable service. For the program to be successful in Santa Monica, it must continue to grow ridership and utilization, increase access and reliability, create affordability for all users, and improve safety and PROW management.

To that end, on March 9, 2021, City Council directed staff to pursue a contracted model for shared mobility services following the completion of the current Pilot Program. A contracted model would:

- Procure one or more vendors to provide shared mobility services under contract with the City.
- Deepen partnerships with operators with longer-term commitments that will enable them to prioritize long term investments in newer devices and innovative technologies.
- Increase the City's influence on user rates, equity programs, maintenance/operations standards through negotiated terms and enforceable service level agreements (SLAs).
- Create the opportunity to negotiate revenue sharing, sponsorship opportunities, and/or reduced operations fees.

Next Steps

- Staff will continue to work with permitted operators to maximize shared mobility services and improve safety in Santa Monica through the duration of the second Pilot Program.
- Staff will develop the solicitation and negotiation process for the next phase of shared mobility to begin in 2023.
- Staff will return to City Council in late summer 2022 with recommended ordinance language for the next phase of Shared Mobility in Santa Monica.

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