



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 1, 2019

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CITY OF CHICAGO LAUNCHES ELECTRIC SHARED SCOOTER PILOT PROGRAM

Pilot Designed to Improve Transportation Options and Quality of Life on the West Side of Chicago
will Begin June 15; Permit Applications Open Today

The City of Chicago's Department of Business Affairs and Consumer Protection (BACP) and the Department of Transportation (CDOT) announced today that applications are open for vendors to participate in Chicago's Electric Shared Scooter Pilot Program. Based on recommendations from the New Transportation and Mobility Task Force, the Pilot will assess the viability of this new mobility option for Chicago residents and visitors. The initiative will last four months, beginning June 15, and addresses the Task Force's emphasis on equity, safety and sustainability.

"The City is committed to improving transportation access, reducing single-occupancy vehicle use, and providing first- and last-mile solutions to support public transit," said CDOT Commissioner Rebekah Scheinfeld. "This program is designed to test how scooters as a mobility option can support these goals and to evaluate the impact of the technology on Chicagoans."

Users can access the scooters wherever it is legal to lock a bike in the public way. Riders will typically use a smartphone to unlock and ride the devices within the pilot area, though vendors will offer services for non-smartphone users and cash-based options. The pilot zone, located on the west side of the City, will be bounded by Halsted St. and the Chicago River on the east, Irving Park Rd. on the north, the City boundary and Harlem Ave. on the west, and the Chicago River on the south. Two priority areas have been identified within the pilot zone, where at least 25% of scooters must be placed every morning.

"This geography, and particularly the priority areas, were selected for the opportunity to pilot scooters in a variety of community types," said BACP Commissioner Rosa Escareno. "We want to support innovation and new emerging industries- this pilot program will allow the City and its residents to better understand how electric shared scooters impact the city. We have engaged with advocates, community groups, business groups, and elected officials within the pilot area and look forward to working closely with residents to evaluate the program."

The scooter program is made possible through an Emerging Business Permit issued by BACP and will include 2,500 scooters in the pilot area, divided evenly among all selected vendors. To minimize sidewalk clutter, scooters must be parked upright; away from street corners, bus stops, and buildings; and with a minimum six-foot clearance on the sidewalk. Vendors will be required to retrieve and move improperly parked electric shared scooters within two hours.

To ensure a safe riding environment, scooters will be prohibited from operating on the sidewalks and will be limited to a maximum speed of 15 miles per hour. The scooters also will be equipped with a warning bell, front and rear lights, hand and foot brakes, and a 24/7 phone number for each vendor. Operating hours for the pilot program will be from 5am-10pm, with the scooters removed from the public way every night by the vendors. Scooter operators will be required to provide the City with real-time and continuous data on operations, ridership, and safety, to ensure that the City is able to effectively manage the pilot and determine next steps.

To understand the impact of scooters and prepare for this pilot program, BACP and CDOT have led a series of focus groups and listening sessions with community groups, advocates for individuals with disabilities and local transportation stakeholders. Based on their feedback, this pilot has been designed to test the potential of scooters as an inclusive and equitable mobility option for Chicago residents. The City will continue to engage with stakeholders during the rollout and duration of the pilot to gain their feedback and evaluate the effectiveness of the program.

“Scooters can potentially provide an affordable, environmentally-friendly transportation solution for thousands of Chicagoans,” said Sharon Feigon, Executive Director of the Shared Use Mobility Center. “We are very excited to test the impact of this new mobility option in Chicago through the scooter pilot program.”

In March, the New Transportation and Mobility Task Force released a report to establish a forward-looking and innovative transportation roadmap for Chicago. In addition to advising a short-term, modest 2019 scooter pilot in a defined area, the Task Force also recommended: increasing transportation funding by raising the state’s motor fuel tax and developing reliable alternative long-term funding streams; establishing a Chief Mobility Officer; incentivizing business to provide public transit benefits to employees; launching a pilot to study the impacts of autonomous vehicles; and ensuring that micro-mobility services and new mobility options are equitable, safe and accessible.

For more information, go to: <https://bit.ly/2WhdI3z>