

BIRD

February 18, 2019

Re: Item 3- E-Scooter Pilot Program

Dear City Councilmembers,

Thank you for all the hard work and thoughtful consideration you have put into addressing the concerns and challenges Long Beach faces as the region evolves toward a more sustainable, multi-modal future. We have been thrilled to serve the Long Beach community and hope to continue making close ties in the area as we grow and evolve our service.

We are writing to you today to share our thoughts on the proposed regulations for the continuation of the e-scooter pilot program. Below, please find our suggestions on how we can ensure a successful program in Long Beach.

According to the most recent US Environmental Protection Agency 2018 report, the transportation sector accounts for 28 percent of greenhouse gas emissions into the air. "The largest sources of transportation-related greenhouse gas emissions include passenger cars and light-duty trucks, including sport utility vehicles, pickup trucks, and minivans." The average distance on a Bird ride in Long Beach is 1.4 miles, a distance too far to walk for many. Bird is reducing GHG emissions in communities and improving the quality of life of residents who are exhausted from sitting in traffic. During the past 8 months in Long Beach there have been hundreds of thousands of Bird rides which translates into a measurable reduction in carbon emissions had any of those trips been taken via car.

As the creator and industry leader in electric scooter mobility, Bird takes the importance of safety education about our evolving transportation option very seriously. In order to support and protect the safety and welfare of our riders and communities, Bird dedicates significant resources to providing clear instructions about safe practices on our vehicles.

Since launching, we have voluntarily deployed the following safety mechanisms in cities we operate in:

- Required all riders to scan their driver's license to ensure riders are 18 or older.
- Provided more than 65,000 free helmets to our riders.
- Implemented comprehensive online and offline safety campaigns and tutorials.
- Created a forward-thinking and inclusive Global Safety Advisory Board.
- Reduced improper rider parking and nest congestion with locally-hired Bird Watchers.
- Introduced our Community Mode platform that empowers individuals to report instances of poor parking and damaged vehicles to the company.

Over the past year, Bird has created solutions to many of the problems that city staff have brought to our attention. For instance, at the end of every ride, riders are prompted in the app to take a photo of their Bird with a message at the top that reads: "Please park nicely. Don't block sidewalks, ramps or doorways." According to the staff report before you today, the City of Long Beach survey found, "Overall, the majority of respondents indicate that e-scooters tended to be parked responsibly in the public right-of-way (i.e., upright and out of the pedestrian path of travel)." Staff recently asked for us to create "No Parking Zones" around the city, Bird immediately complied. This feature prohibits riders from ending their ride in these zones. We also complied with staff's request to geospeed the beach

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bike path, even though other operators do not have these technological safety features and thus have a competitive advantage over us.

Given our proven commitment to partnering with your city, we submit recommendations to the proposed regulations for the next phase of the e-scooter program. City staff recommends a fee of \$120 per vehicle in the City of Long Beach. We understand that the city must recoup costs to manage the e-scooter program, however we ask that rather than imposing a stagnant cost of \$120 per vehicle, we propose using a revenue share model on a per ride basis. If the city was to collect 5 cents a ride based on utilization data, with the proposed increase in vehicles in your staff report Long Beach would generate in excess of \$300k a year. This would be on top of the proposed \$25,000 annual permit fee per operator.

In order to be a sustainable business while keeping our prices affordable for our riders, we are asking cities to move away from fees and move towards a revenue share model. Charging companies upfront costs per vehicle will prohibit us from expanding into Long Beach neighborhoods that do not presently have access to our transportation option. If we are to move forward with a model based on revenue share this will allow us to bring more vehicles to Long Beach, thus empowering more Long Beach residents to leave their car at home.

We hope you will consider these adjustments, and we look forward to continue working closely with you on making Long Beach a leader in transportation innovation.

Sincerely,

Tim Harter
Government Partnerships
Bird Rides, Inc.