



City of San Antonio

Legislation Details (With Text)

File #: 18-5160
Type: Public Hearing
In control: City Council B Session
On agenda: 9/12/2018
Title: Public Hearing to gather community input on the proposed dockless vehicle ordinance. [Iori Houston, Assistant City Manager; John Jacks, Director, Center City Development & Operation]
Sponsors:
Indexes:
Code sections:
Attachments:

Date	Ver.	Action By	Action	Result
9/12/2018	1	City Council B Session		

DEPARTMENT: Center City Development and Operations

DEPARTMENT HEAD: John Jacks

COUNCIL DISTRICTS IMPACTED: City-wide

SUBJECT:

Public hearing on the proposed dockless vehicle ordinance.

SUMMARY:

This is a Public Hearing to gather community input on the proposed dockless vehicle ordinance.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Center City Development and Operations provided a high level briefing on dockless vehicles at the January Transportation Council Committee meeting. This briefing provided an overview of the emerging industry, focused primarily on dockless bicycles which had been introduced in Dallas, Seattle, and elsewhere. Since then, dockless scooters have overtaken dockless bikes as most common type of vehicle in the rapidly growing dockless industry. Dockless vehicles are a new transportation mode that includes GPS enabled bicycles, electric assisted bicycles, or electric scooters. They are introduced by private companies who place the vehicles in the city's right of way so they can be used by subscribers through a phone application.

On June 22nd, the company Bird deployed a fleet of dockless scooters in San Antonio. Following Bird's entrance to the market, Lime also launched a fleet of dockless scooters on July 25th. These companies have grown their fleets since implementation. Bird has shared that their current fleet consists of approx. 400 scooters and Lime has approx. 345. Trip data provided by these firms shows that over 100,000 trips have occurred. In addition to Lime and Bird, five other companies have expressed interest in operating in San Antonio.

On August 20th, CCDO shared an overview of proposed regulations for dockless vehicles with the Transportation Committee. To obtain community input to inform the proposed regulations, a public meeting was held at the Central Library on July 31st and an online survey has been initiated with over 2,000 survey respondents. A B Session briefing focused on the proposed regulations will be presented on Wednesday, September 12th, the same day as this Public Hearing. This Public Hearing is an additional opportunity for the community to give feedback on the proposed regulations related to use and parking of dockless vehicles before City Council considers their adoption.

ISSUE:

CCDO's proposes a pilot program with regulations that will clarify rules for dockless vehicle operators and riders. These regulations will cover where vehicles can be ridden, how they should be parked, establish a minimum age for riders, and require a local fleet manager. CCDO proposes a six month pilot program that aims to address concerns identified since dockless vehicles were introduced here in June. The City does not intend to limit the number of vehicles or operators throughout the six month pilot program, but will instead utilize data provided by the companies to ensure that their fleet size is appropriate and that an excessive number of vehicles haven't been put into service.

One of the biggest concerns these vehicles pose is the potential for conflicts with pedestrians on sidewalks; issues have arisen when vehicles are parked or deployed in a way that blocks ADA curb ramps, placed perpendicular to the sidewalk on a narrow sidewalk which encroaches on the minimum 36" ADA clearance, and when operators fail to yield to pedestrians. Riders must utilize bike lanes when available and yield to pedestrians. City Code currently prohibits the use of any electric or motorized vehicles on the river walk, park trails, creek ways, or in parks and plazas. The Parks department and the San Antonio River Authority have recommended that this prohibition remain during the pilot program while they study whether these modes are appropriate in these areas.

As noted above, clear and intuitive parking rules provide an opportunity for an orderly dockless vehicle ecosystem. CCDO proposes that vehicles must be parked in a way that maintains the 36" ADA minimum sidewalk clearance. Additionally, bus stations, curb ramps, and street furniture like benches should not be blocked by vehicles. Companies will have two hours to correct violations unless the vehicle is located in a highly sensitive area, in that scenario the company will be required to rectify the issue within one hour.

The proposed regulations will also include a minimum age of sixteen years old. The vendors in contact with the City typically require users to be eighteen years of age or more. This age limitation is proposed in case a company enters the market without a minimum age.

ALTERNATIVES:

This item is a public hearing to gather additional public input.

FISCAL IMPACT:

None.

RECOMMENDATION:

This item is a public hearing to gather additional public input.