



City of San Antonio

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Title: Briefing on the Dockless Vehicle Pilot Program and staff recommended program changes. [Lori Houston, Assistant City Manager; John Jacks, Director, Center City Development & Operations]

Sponsors:

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Code sections:

Attachments: 1. PORTSA_MAP.pdf, 2. Dockless Vehicle Community Engagement Report - May 2019_DRAFT.pdf, 3. Dockless Electric Scooter-Related Injuries Study, 4. B Session Staff Presentation

Date	Ver.	Action By	Action	Result
5/15/2019	1	City Council B Session		

DEPARTMENT: Center City Development & Operations

DEPARTMENT HEAD: John Jacks

COUNCIL DISTRICTS IMPACTED: City-wide

SUBJECT:

A briefing on the Dockless Vehicle Pilot Program and recommended program changes

SUMMARY:

Center City Development & Operations (CCDO) will provide a briefing on the Dockless Vehicle Pilot Program and the recommendations related to regulating dockless vehicles.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

On October 11, 2018, City Council adopted a pilot program that created both a permitting structure and operational rules for dockless vehicles. These regulations established rules for how companies are allowed to deploy vehicles in the right-of-way and also clarified rules for users. Staff has been monitoring the program and coordinating enforcement with the San Antonio Police Department. By February 2019, seven companies have obtained permits and there are currently 14,100 scooters and 2,000 bicycles permitted.

On February 14th, City Council amended the pilot program to address issues with scooter clutter, safety, and

impacts to Centro's Ambassador and power washing services. There was also significant concern that there are too many dockless vehicles in the San Antonio market and a moratorium was approved that prevented issuing additional permits. The mid-point amendments included hours of operation between 6 am and 11 pm and imposed stricter standards for correcting vehicles in prohibited area. Since implementation in late February, the number of total accidents reported to EMS since nighttime riding was prohibited has decreased by 36.4% and the number of accidents requiring medical transport has decreased by 27.4%.

Throughout the course of the pilot program, staff has engaged our stakeholders, the community, and riders on this issue. A community survey was initiated in January through the City's SASpeakUp platform and was widely shared on social media and through partner organizations. The SASpeakUp survey received 4,666 responses from residents providing their feedback on both the benefits and concerns related to dockless mobility. In addition, a survey of riders was performed with 805 participants who provided insight on how often they utilize dockless vehicles, for what purposes, and what mode of transportation they would have taken if not for the dockless vehicle trips. Finally, a telephone town hall was held on April 16th with 746 residents participating. The town hall was an opportunity for residents to ask questions of City staff and it also included a poll where participants could provide their feedback. A synopsis of the community input collected by the City is attached.

A recent public health study found that 33% of injuries identified were of first time riders. In addition, roughly 30% of injuries were of riders who had taken more than one but less than 10 rides. This means that approximately 63% of accidents were from riders who were relatively new to this mode of transportation. This suggests that greater education prior to initial use may reduce the likelihood of injury. Looking at all of the accidents in the study, half of them were categorized as severe, roughly 50% included an injury to the head, and 15% of accidents included evidence of a traumatic brain injury.

The pilot program experience, SASpeakUp initiatives, and the CDC study informed staff's recommendation. The Transportation Committee endorsed bringing this topic before the full Council for consideration at their May 29th meeting.

ISSUE:

This pilot program has helped the City better understand the depth of the market and the impact of these vehicles in San Antonio. It is clear there is demand for dockless vehicles as demonstrated by the 2 million rides in San Antonio. However, concerns with dockless vehicles remain and staff is recommending that the City facilitate a more orderly operating environment by selecting firms through a Request for Proposals (RFP). Recommendation highlights are as follows:

- Staff recommends issuing an RFP to select up to three firms.
- The term of the contract will be two years with one 1-year extension.
- Staff recommends that those firms be authorized to operate 5,000 vehicles in total, while building flexibility into the contracts to expand deployment over time if ridership is high and deployment issues and other problems have been addressed. This new cap of 5,000 authorized vehicles compares to the 16,100 vehicles that operators currently have the right to deploy.
- Proposals will be reviewed for experience, plan, and economic terms.
- The fee structure will be based on the City's ability to recover the program costs and an additional component of the RFP will include a revenue sharing opportunity that could be used to support other city programs.

- CCDO also plans to create flexibility for future innovative dockless products; should a significant innovation in the market occur, such as a new mode that has significant promise, the City will have an opportunity to bring an operator into the market for that purpose.

This RFP will be issued in early June and staff anticipates that the selected firms would be considered by City Council in August or September.

Staff has several other recommendations for rider and pedestrian safety, as well as recommendations for creating a more orderly environment.

- Staff recommends that riding on sidewalks be prohibited once the selected operators have the exclusive right to operate on October 1st.
- Staff recommends a maximum speed of 15 mph for dockless vehicles.
- Staff is recommending that each vendor selected encourage the use of helmets and propose a helmet program that would make available helmets for new users that do not have a helmet or visitors that did not bring their helmet.
- Staff will require that operators encourage and incent the use of parking corrals and parking zones.
- Staff is recommending that the current hours of operation that were implemented by City Council in February (6 am to 11 pm) remain in place until at least 6 months into the new program. This will help us evaluate the impact of the recommending changes such as prohibiting vehicles on the sidewalks.

To allow for this RFP process to conclude without the removal of dockless vehicles from our streets, City staff recommends an extension for companies currently under operation through the anticipated contract award. CCDO proposes a 50% reduction in permits for all companies currently permitted for over 1,000 vehicles. These changes would go into effect after a company's initial permit expires. This reduction has not been applied to operators with a 1,000 permits or less as that may significantly impact their ability to operate. A table with the proposed permit counts under the extension is below. This assumes that all currently permitted operators will seek a permit extension.

Company	Permitted Vehicles	Permit Count Under Extension
Lyft	2,000	1,000
Razor	1,000	1,000
Bird	4,500	2,250
Lime	4,000	2,000
Jump	4,000	2,000
Spin	500	500
Blue Duck	100	100

The recommendations have been coordinated with various stakeholder groups to include Tech Bloc, Centro, SARA, VIA, Visit San Antonio, Tourism Council, San Antonio Hotel Lodging Association, dockless vehicle providers and other community partners. Staff will return to City Council on May 30th for City Council consideration of the RFP approach and the extension of the current permits through September 30th with the amended permit amount. Staff will also return to City Council in August or September with the selected vendors and necessary ordinance amendments.

ALTERNATIVES:

This item is for briefing purposes only.

FISCAL IMPACT:

This item is for briefing purposes only.

RECOMMENDATION:

This item is for briefing purposes only.