



Legislation Text

File #: 19-42, **Version:** 1

TITLE:

Discussion of electric scooters and other shared active transportation systems

PURPOSE: The purpose of this agenda item is to provide an opportunity for the Board to discuss electric scooters and other shared active transportation systems.

DEPARTMENT: Planning

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INFORMATION: Town staff have been observing the unfolding ‘shared active transportation’ revolution currently taking place in the major municipalities in North Carolina and throughout the nation. Shared Active Transportation refers to a variety of different shareable vehicles which can be un-powered or electric powered. These can include un-powered bikes, E-bikes, electric-assist bikes, electric scooters, and electric motorized jitney (a small rideshare vehicle). Additionally, different methods of system control for shared bikes and scooters have developed over time, these include: docked, dockless, and semi-docked. For more information about the differences between these vehicles types and system control, please refer to the Staff Report (Attachment E).

Carrboro’s proximity to the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (UNC) limits the locations where these programs can operate, due to the agreement between the University and the docked bikeshare system already in place. The operator of this system, Gotcha, has approached the Town of Chapel Hill (who in turn have reached out to Carrboro staff) to begin determining the effectiveness of a joint system between the University and both Towns. Gotcha could provide dockless bikeshare, e-scooters, and small electric motorized vehicles (jitneys) within Carrboro, Chapel Hill, and UNC. There would be no cost for the equipment and Gotcha would recover revenue through user fees and advertisements placed on the vehicles. The cost of any ancillary infrastructure related to the system, including but not limited to: bikeshare parking, scooter corrals, or jitney pickup locations in Carrboro would be the responsibility of the Town to install or provide. The primary method of payment is through a centralized Gotcha smartphone app, but Gotcha bikes and scooters can also be accessed via a physical RFID enabled pre-paid/reloadable card. This card can also be used to provide discounts to low-income users. Gotcha bikes are subject to all the Town’s current regulations pertaining to bicycles. The following Town Code sections would apply to the regulation of E-scooters:

- Chapter 6-1.10: Definition of Mo-ped
- Chapter 6-1.21: Definition of Vehicle
- Chapter 7-1.a: Regulation of Sidewalk Obstructions
- Chapter 7-1.b: Regulation of Sidewalk Sales

In addition to user agreements and planning for infrastructure support, local governments in the state have been developing ordinances to regulate use of these, and the regulations range from prohibition of certain types to requirements for shared active transportation. Examples from around the state are included for reference.

- Asheville E-scooter program ordinance: Outright ban on E-scooters (Attachment A)
- Greensboro E-scooter permit ordinance (Attachment B): permit fee, per scooter fee, impound fee, max 200 scooters per company
- Durham Shared Active Transportation Ordinance & Permit Requirements (Attachment C): permit fee, per scooter/e-bike/bike fee, performance bond requirement, hard cap on total number of scooters and bikes
- Charlotte Shared Mobility Ordinance and Permit Requirements(Attachment D): min/max number of bikes, min # of scooters, max # of scooters based on 30-day rolling average # of trips per scooter per day (if <2.0 trips/scooter/day, remove scooters; if >3.0 trips/scooter/day, add scooters), scooter speed restriction, sidewalk parking restrictions, anonymized data submission requirements

For additional information regarding the types of shared active transportation, program structure, programs currently being operated by other cities in North Carolina and available E-scooter behavior data (taken from pilot programs around the country) please see the Staff Report (Attachment E).

FISCAL & STAFF IMPACT: No impacts have been noted in relation to discussing this topic.

RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommend that the Board discuss the topic and provide comments and guidance regarding shared active transportation systems in Carrboro.