



Testimony from Bird Rides, Inc.
Bill 36-21, Motor Vehicles and Traffic – E-Scooters – Operation Requirements and Registration

Thank you, Councilmember Katz, Vice President Albornoz, and all Council Members for your leadership and careful consideration of Montgomery County’s e-scooter regulations.

Bird is a shared e-scooter company that operates in more than 350 communities around the world and we have had the privilege to operate shared e-scooters in Montgomery County since 2019. We greatly value our partnership with the County, MCDOT, and the other community stakeholders who have helped make the Dockless-Bike and E-Scooter program a success.

Bird in Montgomery County

With 13,458 riders and 77,230 rides in Montgomery County, Bird scooters have become an important transportation option for residents and visitors. In our third year of operations it is clear that micromobility is safe, sustainable, and grows the economy

- **Safe:** Bird has a medical incident rate of 0.00201% of rides, or 1 in 50,000 rides, which is comparable to bike injury rates and over two times lower than cars (1 in 20,000).
- **Sustainable:** Montgomery County riders replaced 25,000+ vehicle miles travelled (VMT) and avoided 23,000+ lbs of CO2 emissions.
- **Economic Impact:** Emory University researchers found “[\\$921 in spending created per e-scooter deployed on average over 6 months](#)” in the local economy.

We are proud to help our riders make this important impact, helping to advance the County’s ambitious climate goals to reduce greenhouse gas emissions 80% by 2027 and 100% by 2035. Our years of experience have allowed us to build efficient and orderly operations, responding quickly to community concerns and decreasing complaints. This strong record enabled Bird to expand our service, recently being invited into new communities like Gaithersburg and Germantown.

Scooters have also proven to be a useful mode of transportation when other modes are disrupted. During the COVID-19 pandemic we saw longer trips and new travel patterns as residents took advantage of our naturally socially distant service to make essential trips. We continue to offer free rides for healthcare workers. In response to the recent Metro disruptions

we have adjusted our deployments to serve commuters impacted, helping them reduce congestion from added car trips.

We share your commitment to safety and sustainability and we support the Council's effort to formalize the regulatory framework for e-scooters. Our existing MOU with MCDOT includes many of Bill 36-21's requirements for scooter parking and vehicle specifications. We look forward to building on that foundation in the next phase of the program.

Safety and Community Engagement

We require riders to be 18 years of age or older and we strongly encourage all riders to wear helmets. Helmets are available free of charge on our website or through our app, and we regularly distribute free helmets in the community. Most recently we held scooter safety training sessions in Wheaton (9/18/21) and Rockville (10/16/21) alongside the Adult Learn to Ride bicycle classes from the Washington Area Bicyclist Association (WABA).



At these events we gave out free helmets and taught attendees how to safely ride and correctly park our scooters. We also made residents aware of our Community Pricing program, which offers a 50% discount to low income riders, Pell grant recipients, select local nonprofit and community organizations, veterans and senior citizens.

While this program began as a pilot, we have seen it mature into an important component of the County's climate and mobility strategies. We look forward to continuing our partnership in the months and years ahead.

Sincerely,
Perry Holmes
Manager, Government Partnerships
Bird Rides, Inc.

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