

NORTH AMERICA MICROMOBILITY INDUSTRY BEST PRACTICES

INTRODUCTION

Shared micromobility services have spread rapidly, providing safe, affordable, and low-emissions mobility at low cost to cities. As cities move from pilot programs to permanent regulations, the leading micromobility companies have come together to provide insights from our services around the world. Our recommendations are designed **to ensure cities receive safe and well-managed mobility services that can be sustainably delivered over the long term**. The items in this document should be read as a collective whole – together they create the conditions for successful shared micromobility systems for cities and industry.

Programs that achieve safety, sustainability, affordability, and reliability goals share the following common features:

ADMINISTRATION

1. Appropriate number of operators to avoid oversaturation of a market and provide healthy competition, customer choice, and easy administration for cities.

- a. As a general guideline, in markets with >1000 scooters, at least two operators and a maximum of three operators, with the following recommended ratios:
 - i. 1,000–2,000 scooters in total: maximum of two operators¹
 - ii. 2,000+ scooters in total: maximum of three operators²

2. Fleet size that balances reliability with tidiness, starting with a manageable initial fleet and growing in line with the success of the program and compliance with city priorities. Below are guidelines, with actual thresholds dependent on market conditions.

- a. **1 vehicle per 500 people** as an initial baseline. However, special population considerations, such as a large commuter base, seasonal population swings, and large student populations could require additional vehicles.
- b. **Fleet growth tied to operator performance** based on metrics measuring compliance with city priorities (tidiness, responsiveness, maintenance, etc.).

3. Long-term programs and contracts, allowing riders and operators to rely on micromobility over the long term.

- a. A minimum of a two year contract term for pilots and three to four years for permanent programs. These durations provide sufficient time for:
 - i. operators to ramp up services and invest long-term in the city's program
 - ii. the city to evaluate services
 - iii. the public to gain the long term confidence to depend on micromobility.

¹ For example: Phoenix

² For example: New York, Chicago



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4. Fees covering the reasonable and transparent costs of program administration and public space occupancy, consistent with fees paid by similar modes.

- a. Unlike almost all other transportation services – including prior bikeshare programs – *shared e-scooter operators typically provide services free of charge to cities.*
- b. Operators also frequently pay fees to offset cities’ costs to administer micromobility programs. To promote transparency, adoption of micromobility, and financially sustainable programs, any fees should:
 - i. Offset reasonable costs to the city of administering the shared micromobility program, with costs transparently shared with operators and the public.
 - ii. Be equivalent to fees charged to similar modes, like bikeshare, and a fraction of the per-mile fees charged to modes like ridesharing and cars that emit pollution, contribute to congestion, require higher enforcement and administration costs, and impose greater wear and tear on roads and infrastructure.
 - iii. Ensure the revenue to the city grows with the program through a per-ride fee.
- c. Fees should be set prior to vendor selection and applied consistently across all operators. This avoids negative outcomes such as operators overpromising on financial commitments, legal concerns over excessive fees, and operators winning bids and then withdrawing from the market due to unsustainable fees.
- d. Fines should be reasonable, commensurate with the harm caused by the infraction and account for barriers to safe compliance, like insufficient infrastructure.

5. Uniform and automated data sharing through MDS and GBFS protocols, which are designed by and for cities and the most common methods used today.

- a. MDS and GBFS facilitate easy and consistent submission of information to cities across operators and easy utilization of data by cities. MDS and GBFS are designed to protect rider privacy by excluding directly identifiable person data, keeping personal information safe and protecting cities from the threat that hackers will gain access to sensitive information.
- b. MDS and GBFS are continually updated to ensure cities are getting state of the art data feeds without requiring dedicated city resources.
- c. With uniform data sharing requirements, operators are able to spend more time working with cities to provide useful data for monitoring and evaluation, and less resource spent building bespoke data reports.

6. Selection processes designed to identify the operators best suited to provide quality service over the long term, tailored to a city’s unique needs.

- a. In mature markets, competitive public procurement (RFP, tender, etc.) is the method best suited to select the most appropriate vendor to serve a city’s needs. Competitive public procurement also ensures that the program is easily administered by the city and improves accountability for service delivery.
 - i. License structures and “open market” models are less desirable as they encourage the oversaturation of operators and vehicles and result in poorly managed fleets. The administrative costs of managing an oversaturated scheme are also likely to be higher for a city than in a controlled scheme selected via competitive public procurement.
- b. Competitive public procurements should draw on the experience of other procured services and ensure that operators are selected according to the quality of service provision.



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- i. Operators should never be selected based on financial contribution (“city fees”, “level of investment” or “user pricing”). It creates unsustainable market conditions and should be avoided. This leads to negative outcomes for cities, such as operators overpromising in bids or failing to deliver a quality service because the business is not financially sustainable. In the worst case, operators will abandon markets which are financially unsustainable – leading to service failure or a major gap in provision.
- c. Reliability, safety, sustainability, and fleet management should be the core criteria for selecting operators.
 - i. Where relevant, cities should require evidence of delivery in comparable cities to support claims made by operators in competitive public procurement or application documents.
- d. Outcome or performance-based criteria and regulations are preferable to requiring specific technology or operational practices, especially those that are just emerging and may not be applicable to the city’s unique circumstances.³
 - i. Outcome-based and technology-neutral requirements encourage operators to bring their experience and creativity to provide great service and curb negative externalities like antisocial behavior (sidewalk riding, tandem riding, misparking, etc.). This encourages innovation based on local conditions and new practices as they emerge.
 - ii. Procurement criteria or regulations which specify technological solutions risk limiting innovation, and cities becoming stuck with outdated regulations based on legacy technologies.

OPERATIONS

7. Operating area and hours that maximize access to destinations throughout the city and for residents working non-standard hours.

- a. Operating areas contiguous with the city boundaries are preferable to connect residents and visitors with destinations anywhere across the city.
- b. If a whole city operating area is not feasible, operating areas should be contiguous and connect people with the important centers of the city (cultural, business, recreational).
- c. Like cars and public transport, micromobility should be available at all times to support use for daily activities and by those who work non-standard schedules.⁴

8. Authorized parking conveniently located close to where riders start and end their trips to increase program use, reliability, and tidiness.⁵

- a. There are many different parking options. Density, existing infrastructure, and pedestrian patterns inform what will be most effective in any given city.
 - i. **Dockless parking** is well suited to lower density areas or where parking infrastructure (incl. racks and painted bays) is not sufficiently available,
 - 1. Needs clear rules about safe parking
 - 2. No-parking zones in sensitive or highly pedestrianized areas
 - ii. **Mandatory parking in dedicated, physical parking corrals** is well suited to denser urban areas like downtowns. Mandatory corrals require sufficient infrastructure and parking corral density:
 - 1. Minimum of 40 parking corrals/sq.km (roughly one per block)

³ [Beyond the Backlash: Using Performance-Based Regulations to Produce Results through Innovation](#)

⁴ [Keeping Detroit Moving: Lessons from the 2020 Essential Workers E-Bike Pilot](#)

⁵ [Can you Park your Scooter There? Why Scooter Riders Mispark and What to do about it](#)

2. Minimum of 3 parking spaces for each scooter (e.g. 3,000 spaces for, 1,000 vehicles)
- iii. **Hybrid parking with mandatory parking in dense areas and stationless parking in less dense areas**
 1. A practical system which corresponds to other comparable urban regulatory schemes, like zoning codes, and accounts for variation among neighborhoods and infrastructure.

9. 15 mph speed limit to ensure the safety of riders.

- a. 15 mph vehicle speeds are consistent with other vehicles like bikes or e-bikes, allowing for safer riding that aligns with the pace of traffic.⁶
- b. Riders are more likely to ride on sidewalks where speed is capped below 15 mph because they feel unsafe mixing with faster vehicles on the roadway.
- c. Based on our piloting of technology in many cities and data from third parties and cities, automatic speed reductions or throttling speeds on sidewalks is dangerous, as it forces riders onto unsafe streets and does not increase safety for pedestrians.

10. Helmets should be encouraged but not mandatory.

- a. Scientific research shows no reliable correlation between mandatory helmet laws and improved rider safety.⁷
 - i. Helmets create a false sense of safety among riders, drivers, and the public. Drivers are more likely to drive closer to riders wearing helmets.⁸
 - ii. Helmets are ineffective in protecting riders from car crashes – the largest cause of severe injuries and fatalities.
 - iii. There is safety in numbers. Where bikeshare is introduced, the number of people riding bicycles increases, which is associated with a decrease in the absolute number of bicycle accidents.⁹ By contrast, mandatory helmet requirements discourage people from using micromobility, including private bicycles, so safety declines.
 - iv. Riders are reluctant to use shared helmets – particularly in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- b. Helmet-wearing mandates exacerbate existing social inequalities, leading to lower use of micromobility by underrepresented groups and disproportionate impact of enforcement.
 - i. Lower-income groups may be unable to purchase their own helmets or have limited access to retail outlets selling helmets, and groups that wear cultural or religious headgear are deterred from using micromobility.
 - ii. Bike laws, including mandatory helmet requirements, are disproportionately enforced against minority riders.^{10, 11}

All operators part of this multi-operator working group remain competitors, independent of each other in their strategy and decision-making, and strongly abide by applicable competition laws. The sole purpose of this joint effort is to provide the best standards and practices to enhance the customer experience, health and safety, and sustainability of the micromobility industry.

⁶ [Sunday Drivers, or Too Fast and Too Furious?](#)

⁷ [Bicycling injury hospitalisation rates in Canadian jurisdictions: analyses examining associations with helmet legislation and mode share](#)

⁸ [Drivers overtaking bicyclists: Objective data on the effects of riding position, helmet use, vehicle type and apparent gender](#)

⁹ [ITF Discussion Paper: "The Safety of Bike Share Systems"](#)

¹⁰ [Chicago Tribune: "Black neighborhoods still see most bike tickets, police data show"](#)

¹¹ [ProPublica: "Walking While Black"](#)



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