

Scooter Share Pilot Program: Six Month Report

February 2021



King County

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II. Executive Summary

The King County Council, via Ordinance 18989¹ and amended by Ordinance 19137², required King County's Records and Licensing Services Division (RALS) of the Department of Executive Services to manage an electric scooter share pilot program in the North Highline Urban Unincorporated Area. The Ordinance also required RALS to consult and coordinate with other County agencies including, but not limited to, the Metro Transit Department, the Parks and Recreation division of the Department of Natural Resources and Parks, the Department of Local Services, and the Seattle King County Department of Public Health.

In addition to the County agencies mentioned above, RALS consulted with the Office of Risk Management and the King County Prosecuting Attorney's Office. Information was also gathered from local and out-of-state municipalities with previous or active scooter share programs, and local disability rights advocates. The information gathered was used to develop criteria for shared scooter operators to deploy scooters in the pilot area.

Two shared scooter operators, Lime and Spin, were issued permits. The pilot period began when shared scooters first became available to the public for use, August 17, 2020, and runs through August 16, 2021. A total of 2,710 scooter trips were taken between August 17 and December 31, 2020. The scooter utilization rate (trips per scooter per day) was highest in August at .9 and decreased to a low of .14 in December. The lower utilization in winter is commensurate with utilization patterns in other jurisdictions, though utilization in North Highline is overall consistently lower than other jurisdictions. Fortunately, no injuries have been reported and very few complaints have been received.³

A number of factors contributed to the low usage, not the least of which is the COVID-19 pandemic and the associated restrictions on work, travel and social activities. Civil unrest as well as wildfire smoke warnings with public health recommendations to limit outdoor activities have likely contributed to lower than expected usage. Fall and winter weather and less daylight hours likely further dampened interest. Other factors may include the limited geographic size of the pilot area and the cost of riding a scooter.

The ongoing COVID-19 pandemic has limited the ability for the operators to conduct their typical community launch activities, such as in-person first-time rider trainings and safety demonstrations. However, the operators and RALS have engaged the community in other ways, including virtual safety lessons and soliciting feedback in multiple languages. RALS will continue working with the operators to explore and expand community engagement opportunities in the coming months.

Opportunities to assess the benefits and sustainability of the shared scooter program will develop in the second half of the pilot program year.

¹ [Link to Ordinance 18989](#)

² [Link to Ordinance 19137](#)

³ King County's mid-pilot community survey includes one response that a user had an accident. RALS contacted both scooter share operators, King County Sheriff's Office, and The City of Seattle, but could not confirm the incident. The survey is anonymous, so RALS cannot contact the respondent for further detail.

III. Background

Department Overview

The Department of Executive Services (DES) provides both internal services to King County agencies and public services directly to King County residents. The divisions and offices that make up DES include: Business Resource Center, Finance and Business Operations Division, Office of Emergency Management, Facilities Management Division, Fleet Services Division, Inquest Program, King County International Airport-Boeing Field, Office of Risk Management Services, and the Records and Licensing Services Division (RALS). RALS is responsible for recording property and other documents, real estate excise tax payments, internal mail services, records management, regional animal services, licensing for vehicles, vessels, and regulating the for-hire transportation industry.

For-hire transportation includes taxicabs, for-hire or “flat-rate” vehicles, and transportation network companies (TNCs). RALS promotes public safety and consumer protection by administering and enforcing for-hire transportation regulations, from approving initial applications to ongoing compliance of all taxi, for-hire, and TNC companies and drivers who operate in all of unincorporated King County, the Port of Seattle (Seattle-Tacoma International Airport), and within the city limits of Auburn, Bellevue, Burien, Covington, Enumclaw, Federal Way, Issaquah, Kenmore, Kent, Kirkland, Maple Valley, Redmond, Renton, Sammamish, SeaTac, and Shoreline via interlocal agreements. Through an interlocal agreement with the City of Seattle, the County and City work together to regulate the local for-hire industry.

Shared scooters are a new line of business for King County and RALS, with RALS working to develop and foster the program. The elements of a scooter share program parallel RALS’ existing for-hire transportation regulatory program in terms of public safety, consumer protection, right-of-way usage, and equity of shared mobility options. Licensing of shared scooter operators could potentially evolve into a service RALS provides to other local jurisdictions through a regional model.

Historical Context

The North Highline Urban Unincorporated Area is more commonly referred to as White Center, though it includes a slightly larger area than just White Center. North Highline is located just south of Seattle and borders the cities of Burien to the south and Tukwila to the east. A demographic analysis from the White Center Community Development Association (WCCDA) reports the majority of the White Center population is comprised of communities of color, with one in three residents born outside of the United States and 43 percent of residents over five years of age speak a language other than English.⁴ The report states that the foreign-born residents in White Center are more likely to report incomes below poverty level than native-born residents.

Other than the few blocks of White Center’s commercial core and two King County Housing Authority (KCHA) communities, the North Highline population of approximately 19,551 people is spread throughout the area in mostly single-family dwellings^{5, 6}. Outside of the White Center core, most homes

⁴ WCCDA White Center Demographic Trends 2013-2017, page 4, <https://www.wccda.org/demographic-trends> (accessed January 2021)

⁵ Total population for the North Highline urban unincorporated area (White Center Census Designated Place and Boulevard Park Census Designated Place) is available at <https://data.census.gov/cedsci/>. (accessed February 2020)

⁶ King County Land Use map, <https://tinyurl.com/ybeow6yw> (accessed December 2020)

in North Highline have a “car-dependent” walk score, minimal score for biking infrastructure, and a below average score for access to transit.⁷

The North Highline area is typically served by seven Metro routes and one Sound Transit route.⁸ However, two Metro routes serving the western side of the area are currently suspended due to COVID-19.⁹ Of the remaining six routes, one serves the eastern side on a north/south route, two run almost the same north/south route through the White Center commercial core, two run almost the same north/south route past the KCHA developments, and only one route runs east/west along SW Roxbury Street, which is the northern border of the area.

Many communities have experienced decreased traffic due to the COVID-19 pandemic causing many people to work from home. North Highline, however, has experienced significantly increased traffic along the north boundary of the area, particularly on SW Roxbury Street, due to the closure of the West Seattle Bridge in March 2020. Rerouting a large portion of West Seattle traffic has led to stop and go conditions on SW Roxbury Street during peak commute hours. Many drivers re-route onto other area streets, increasing local traffic and making travel at certain times of the day more difficult. The plan to repair the West Seattle Bridge estimates it will reopen to traffic in mid-2022.¹⁰

Scooters are part of the growing new trend of micromobility, which generally includes personal or shared scooters and bikes that are human-powered or have electric motors. The National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO) reported that people in the United States took 136 million shared bike and scooter trips in 2019, which is a 60 percent increase from 2018.¹¹ Shared scooter trips specifically increased 130 percent in 2019 over 2018, from 38.5 to 88.5 million. The report also cites survey data from the six biggest ridership cities showing 45 percent of shared micromobility trips replaced trips that would have otherwise been completed by car (either a personal or TNC vehicle). For North America as a whole, the North American Bikeshare Association (NABSA) reports a slightly lower number, 36 percent, of micromobility trips replaced a car trip.¹²

Micromobility operators reported a significant reduction in trips during the first few months of the COVID-19 pandemic. By summer 2020 however, many operators reported trips had rebounded back to, or even surpassing, pre-pandemic levels. Most operators launched free or reduced fee trips to essential workers and are highlighting the open-air and socially distanced health benefits of shared micromobility compared to traditional transportation options.

⁷ Walk, transit, and bike scores are available by entering addresses into sites such as [walkscore.com](https://www.walkscore.com) and [redfin.com](https://www.redfin.com). A description of the scoring is available on Redfin: <https://www.redfin.com/how-walk-score-works>. Scores were reviewed for addresses throughout the North Highline area in January 2021.

⁸ King County Metro Transit System: Southwest Area map, <https://tinyurl.com/yd9p9b6f> (accessed December 2020)

⁹ Routes 22 and 113 are “suspended as part of the temporary reduced service network due to the COVID pandemic and its associated loss of ridership and revenue”, Metro Transit, <https://tinyurl.com/y6j6449k> (accessed January 2021)

¹⁰ Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT) November 19, 2020 blog post, <https://tinyurl.com/yaewsngt> (accessed December 2020)

¹¹ NACTO report: Shared Micromobility in the U.S.: 2019, <https://nacto.org/shared-micromobility-2019/> (accessed December 2020)

¹² NABSA 2019 Shared Micromobility State of the Industry Report, <https://nabsa.net/about/industry/> (accessed December 2020)

Many cities worldwide have launched scooter share programs in the past few years, but King County may be among the first to have a pilot in an unincorporated neighborhood. This scooter share pilot program is the first micromobility program launched by King County. The City of Seattle subsequently launched their own city-wide scooter share pilot program with scooters becoming available for use one month after the North Highline area.

Current Conditions

To develop the scooter share pilot program, RALS began by connecting with local disability rights advocacy groups, reviewing materials from scooter programs in other jurisdictions, and engaging other County departments. Learning from other jurisdictions and incorporating state and local laws, RALS prepared for the pilot and assembled the King County Scooter Share Pilot Program Limited-Use-Permit Application and Contract¹³ with support from the Office of Risk Management and the King County Prosecuting Attorney's office. The contract details the program requirements, including the specific items listed in Ordinance 18989:

- Where and when scooters are allowed to operate and park
- Fleet size
- Time of operation
- Indemnification agreement
- Insurance coverage
- Distribution and maintenance of scooters
- Submitting feedback
- Multiple language options
- Operator reporting
- Scooter identification
- Education and outreach
- Options for persons who are unbanked or without a smartphone
- Compliance terms

Applications were initially solicited in March 2020 and two operators applied, however neither application fulfilled the requirements. Applications were again solicited in May 2020 and two operators applied. Both applications met the requirements and were issued permits: Lime received one on August 17, 2020 and Spin received one on September 7, 2020. The permit allows each operator to deploy up to 50 scooters per day.

RALS engaged many stakeholders over the course of developing the pilot program including:

- King County Metro Transit
- King County Parks and Recreation
- Seattle-King County Public Health
- King County Sheriff's Office
- Department of Local Services, including Roads Services and Community Services
- Seattle Department of Transportation New Mobility Program
- City of Burien
- The National Federation of the Blind of Washington
- Rooted in Rights of Disability Rights Washington
- Abilitreck
- King County Housing Authority (KCHA)
- Highline School District
- White Center Community Development Association (WCCDA)

Facilitating scooter share integration into the North Highline community, scooter information and feedback opportunities are available in multiple languages from both the County and the operators. Lime and Spin offer their apps and call center support in multiple languages and offer an "Access"

¹³ King County Scooter Share Pilot Program Contract, <https://tinyurl.com/y973zuv2>

program for anyone already enrolled in a city, state or federal low-income program to use scooters at discounted rates. The Access program also provides ways for users without smartphones or credit cards to unlock scooters. Further detail about how the languages and the Access programs support the County's Equity and Social Justice goals is described in the Report Requirements section of this report.

Adding shared scooters as a transportation option aligns with King County's Strategic Plan in several ways:

- Mobility goal: optimizing the mobility system with equitable access;
- Healthy environment goal: reduce countywide greenhouse gas emissions via shared scooter trips replacing many car trips; and
- Efficient local government goal: optimizing and aligning operational goals via RALS' collaboration with Metro to augment Metro transit service and work toward seamless integration of transportation options.

Since scooters were first deployed, RALS has monitored fleet size and location, the number of trips, and other key data points. RALS also works with the operators to discuss program progress and outreach activities. Ridership in the pilot area has been less than other jurisdictions for both operators and COVID-19 pandemic social distancing requirements have stunted their traditional outreach methods for rider education and helmet giveaway events.

Adapting and getting creative during this time, Spin has pivoted their rider safety and education training to a digital format and Lime is planning a similar online training. Both operators provide opportunities to earn credits for participating in the trainings and Spin will send helmets to participants upon completion. Spin has also partnered with KCHA for streamlined enrollment of their residents in the Spin Access program and for free helmet distribution.

In addition to partnering with the KCHA, Spin also reached out to Neighborhood House, Partner in Employment, The Salvation Army Seattle White Center Community Center, White Center Chamber of Commerce, WCCDA, the White Center Library and WorkSource Seattle-King County. Spin also presented at a WorkSource Seattle-King County Employer Voice virtual event to introduce community members to Spin hiring opportunities and to promote Spin Access.

Lime is working on partnering with local businesses to distribute helmets and will advertise to local residents the shops where they can pick up a helmet. Lime is also working with HopeLink to offer free scooter rides.

The limited size of the pilot may be a factor in low ridership. However, Lime was issued a scooter share permit by the City of Seattle and began deploying scooters in Seattle on September 16, 2020 giving Lime users the freedom to travel across jurisdictions, yet rides originating in the North Highline area still remain lower than anticipated. RALS launched a community survey in mid-January 2021 to help evaluate the pilot; some of the results may help determine which factors could increase the use of scooters and improve adoption by area residents.

The cost of using shared scooters may also contribute to low ridership. This may be mitigated with continued efforts to spread awareness about the Access program. The below table shows the cost of a

common ride, based on the combined median trip duration of nine minutes and 27 seconds for both operators, for users with and without the Access program:¹⁴

Lime Standard Cost \$4.62	Lime Access Cost \$1.27	Spin Standard Cost \$3.58	Spin Access Cost \$1.27
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From developing the program requirements through ongoing assessment of the pilot, RALS has continuously collaborated with Metro to align the scooter program with larger transit goals, such as: envisioning all travel modes available in one app for route planning and payment, sharing Lime and Spin Access program information with ORCA LIFT customers, ensuring scooters do not block access to buses at stops, etc.

Report Methodology



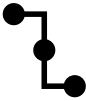

The following Report Requirements section provides data and details to fulfill the requirements of Ordinance 18989. Each operator has provided the County access to their trip information dashboards. RALS contracted with a third-party data aggregator to combine data feeds from both operators into one data dashboard to monitor program performance. For data points that are not available through the dashboards, RALS contacted the relevant party to provide the information, such as the King County Sheriff’s Office regarding safety incidents and operator staff regarding Access program usage.

RALS also conducted two community surveys. The first survey was used early in the pilot period to gauge how the community is responding to the presence of scooters, while the second survey assessed whether opinions have changed and asked how the program may be improved (final results of the second survey are pending¹⁵).

IV. Report Requirements

Scooter Usage

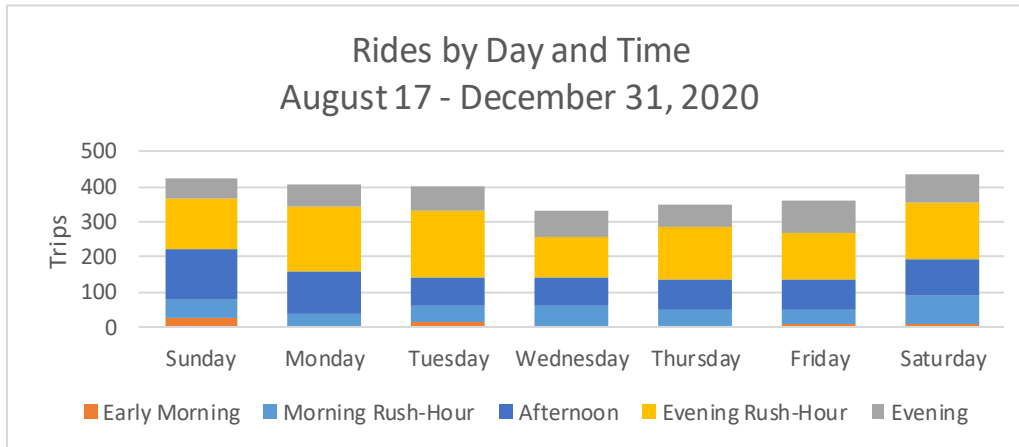
The following aggregated data points fulfill the scooter usage report requirements in Ordinance 18989. The data is for the period August 17 to December 31, 2020.

			
Total # of Trips 2,710	Average # of Scooters Available per Day 58	Median Trip Distance .58 miles	Median Trip Duration 9 minutes, 26 seconds

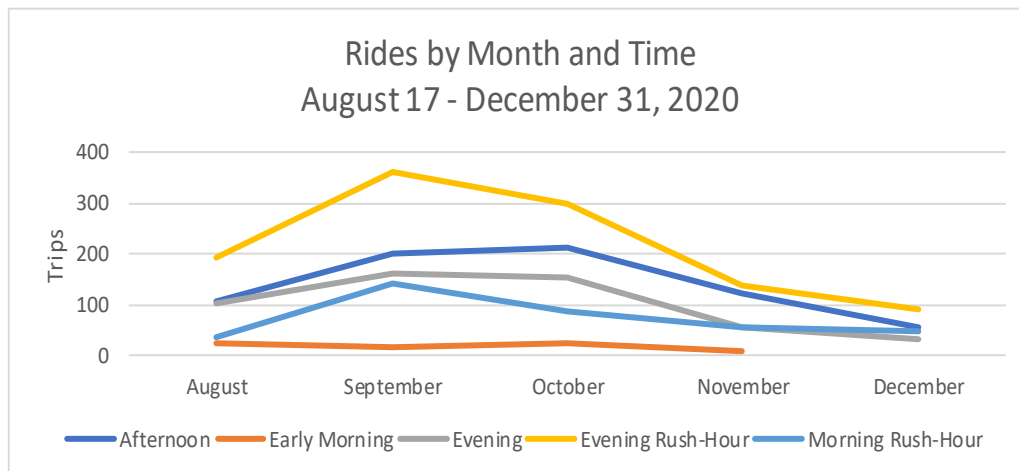
¹⁴ Rates shown reflect the rates that were in effect at the beginning of the pilot period. Operators may change rates during the pilot after notifying RALS. The estimated cost of a trip, as identified in the above table, includes a \$0.22 per trip fee for standard trips and a \$0.11 per trip fee for Access trips established as part of the limited-use permit issued to each scooter share operator. For trips taken on a scooter provided by Spin, Spin is absorbing the per trip fee for both standard and Access fares, though the above table includes the fee.

¹⁵ The second survey will remain open to collect responses after this report is completed, so results included in this report are for the period January 11 – 27, 2021.

As illustrated in the chart below, for the period August 17 – December 31, 2020, scooters in the pilot area are most used on Saturdays and Sundays and are least used on Wednesdays and Thursdays. Scooters are most often used during the evening rush hour period (4:00 PM to 8:00 PM) and least likely to be used in the early morning hours (1:00 AM to 7:00 AM). Low usage during the early morning hours may be affected by and possibly a greater reflection of, limited scooter availability (rather than usage demand) since the operators often redeploy or reposition scooters by 8:00 AM each day.



In addition to the days of the week and hours of the day, initial activity shows a seasonal impact. The following charts shows the decline in trips when viewed by Month:



Given interest in the nexus between micromobility and transit service, scooters are typically deployed along bus routes, particularly SW Roxbury St, 8th Ave SW, 15th Ave SW, and 16th Ave SW. Scooters are also deployed near businesses and places with higher housing density such as apartment buildings. They are not often available in the residential areas to the west and east of the White Center core. The most common trip routes stay close to the same streets where they are deployed. It is unclear if these routes are popular because they are located where the need is or if it is because they are where scooters have been deployed and are more readily available. RALS is working with the operators to encourage

deployment more broadly throughout the pilot area to test if access to scooters in the more residential portions of the pilot increases usage.

On average, there were 58 scooters available each day, with an average of six scooters per day that were unavailable for various reasons (low battery, maintenance, etc.).

Scooter utilization is a measure of how often a scooter is used per day, per scooter deployed and available for use. The utilization rate can be used to help analyze demand, determine optimal fleet deployment, etc. Utilization is a key component to achieve business sustainability and, though the exact rate varies for each operator and the jurisdiction, one operator suggests that the typical operator needs three to four trips per day in order to break even¹⁶. RALS received input from one operator suggesting a target of two trips per scooter per day with an average of one mile per trip for the North Highline pilot to be sustainable. As shown in the table below, the utilization rate for the County’s scooter pilot was highest in August when the pilot first launched and lowest in December (.9 and .14 respectively).

Jurisdiction	Population Density (Pop/Sq mi) ¹⁷	Period	Date of Pilot Launch	Utilization (Highest Month)	Utilization (Lowest Month)	Average Distance per Trip
North Highline KC (WA)	5,554.26	Aug - Dec 2020	8/17/2020	0.9 (Aug)	0.14 (Dec)	0.89
Portland, OR	4,966.63	Apr - Dec 2019	4/26/2019	2.5 (Jul)	1.3 (Dec)	1.06
Seattle, WA	9,255.72	Sep - Dec 2020	9/16/2020	1.6 (Sep)	0.59 (Dec)	1.16

Looking at scooter share pilot programs in other jurisdictions may provide helpful context when considering the utilization rates and the average distance per trip for the County’s pilot. As indicated in the above table, the City of Portland, Oregon relaunched their scooter pilot on April 26, 2019. Portland achieved their highest monthly rate in July and their lowest rate in December (2.5 and 1.3 respectively). Portland reported an overall average trip distance of 1.06 miles per trip¹⁸.

The COVID-19 pandemic created unprecedented conditions that make it difficult to compare the County’s scooter share pilot program to launches in other jurisdictions that occurred prior to the pandemic. The City of Seattle’s scooter pilot may be a more apt comparison since the City’s launch on September 16, 2020 also occurred during the COVID-19 pandemic. For Seattle, two of the three

¹⁶ amNY article “LINK e-scooters eyeing NYC bodegas to serve transit desert communities”, <https://www.amny.com/news/137530120/> (accessed January 2021)

¹⁷ The population per square mile for Portland and Seattle was calculated based on the population and square miles available on <https://worldpopulationreview.com/us-cities>. Total population for the North Highline urban unincorporated area (White Center Census Designated Place and Boulevard Park Census Designated Place) is available at <https://data.census.gov/cedsci/>. (accessed February 2021)

¹⁸ City of Portland Bureau of Transportation 2019 E-Scooter Findings Report, pages 18, 29, and 30, <https://tinyurl.com/ycjxey4z>

permitted scooter share operators began deployment in November, increasing the number of scooters deployed.

Complaints and Incidents

In accordance with report requirements in Ordinance 18989 regarding complaints and incidents, the following information is provided based on direct reports to RALS and confirmation RALS received from the King County Sheriff's Office, Public Health, and the operators. Overall, the number of reported problems with shared scooters is low and no safety incidents were reported.¹⁹

One complaint was provided to RALS from a community member who reported that an operator deployed scooters just south of the pilot area in Burien. Lime explained it was due to an issue with how the geofence map was updated when they began deploying in Seattle. Lime corrected the map and deployment issue.

One person called the RALS phone number on the King County decal on a scooter to report he found it damaged in Sea-Tac. RALS relayed the information to Spin and they picked up the scooter the same day.

Lime reports receiving three complaints, all of which were scooters found in Burien, just south of the pilot area. The response time for the first complaint was close to two days and over a week for the other two. Lime says the long response time was due to their issue tracking system routing them to their Washington D.C. team, rather than their Seattle, Washington team. They corrected the tracking system and also extended the "No Operating Zone" boundary for the pilot area to better enforce riding within the operating area.

Lime also shared they received three maintenance reports. Each scooter was immediately locked (unrentable) and was retrieved within 24 hours.

Spin reports they have not had any parking, operating, safety, maintenance, hazard, or redistribution incidents, other than the dismantled scooter reported to RALS.

Between the two operators, a total of 31 scooters have been lost or destroyed due to vandalism.

King County Parks and Recreation had to move, or notify one of the operators to move, scooters many times early in the pilot period, though the deployments have been improving since then.

Demographics and Equity

Ordinance 18989 includes a requirement to analyze equity impacts of the scooter share pilot program. This analysis is essential to evaluating the success of the scooter share pilot. Transportation and mobility are a pro-equity policy component in the County's Equity and Social Justice Strategic Plan, which cites an effort to "create broader and more meaningful access to transportation through improved engagement with communities and provide translations into many languages."²⁰

¹⁹ See footnote three on page three.

²⁰ King County Equity and Social Justice Strategic Plan 2016-2022, page 45, <https://tinyurl.com/rltu6lg> (accessed January 2021)

One determinant of equity listed in King County Ordinance 16948 is “transportation that provides everyone with safe, efficient, affordable, convenient and reliable mobility options including public transit, walking, carpooling and biking.”²¹ Through the efforts described below, RALS strived to create a scooter share program with no gaps to access for any person in the community.

According to King County demographic maps²², the most common languages other than English in the pilot area are Spanish and Vietnamese. Demographic information from WCCDA²³ and Metro²⁴ also show Spanish and Vietnamese as the top non-English languages spoken in the area.

The scooter share program contract requires scooter use information and customer service to be available in multiple languages commonly spoken in the North Highline area. Between the two operators, Lime and Spin offer scooter user interfaces in over 30 languages, including Spanish (both Lime and Spin) and Vietnamese (Spin, but not Lime).

King County also has scooter share program information available in multiple languages. The program website is available in English, Spanish and Vietnamese²⁵, including online feedback forms in each language. RALS provided a summary handout in these three languages to Parks and Recreation, KCHA, and other entities to share with the community if their staff is approached for scooter share information. Additionally, the mid-pilot survey is available in all three languages (74 percent of respondents took the survey in English, 19 percent in Spanish, and 7 percent in Vietnamese).

For security and privacy, neither Lime nor Spin collect user demographic information. King County’s mid-pilot survey includes respondent demographics.²⁶ Of the 208 total survey responses, 34 respondents said they have used a scooter and the demographics of those users is shown in the charts on the following page . The ages of respondents who have used a scooter are well-dispersed across a broad range, but a large percentage of respondents who have used a scooter are male. Of the respondents who have used a scooter, 50 percent are white, which is a higher proportion than the community as whole (as described in the Historical Context section).

²¹ King County Ordinance 16948, <https://tinyurl.com/uk3j4mk>

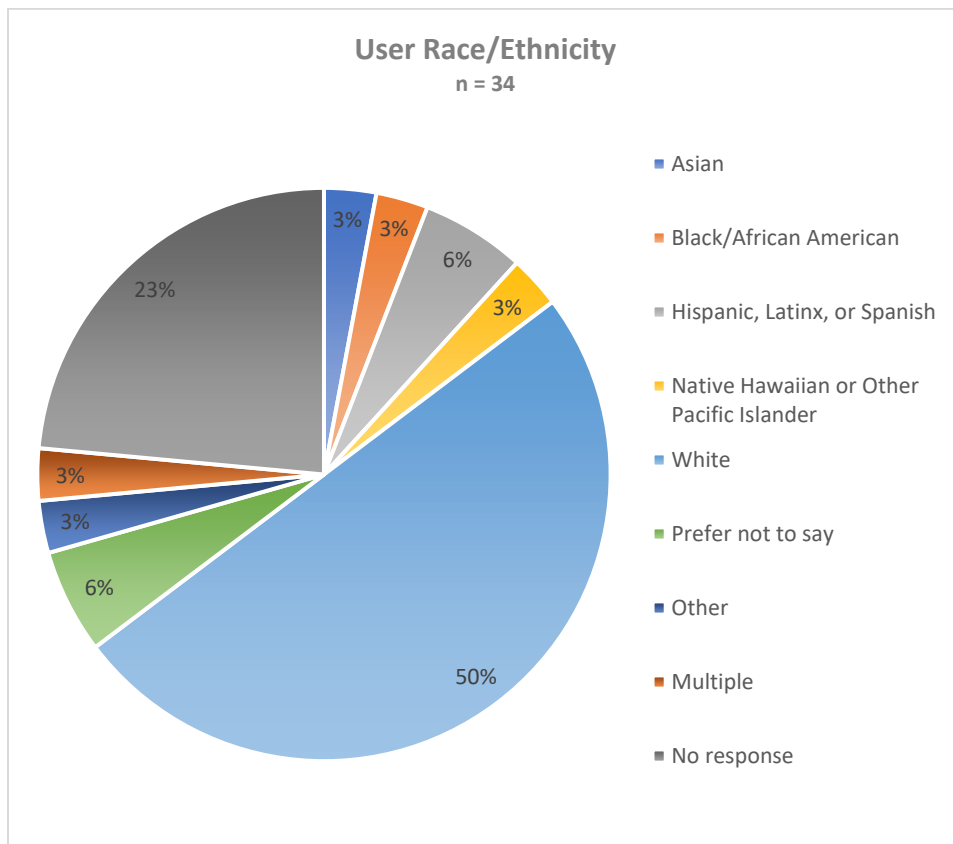
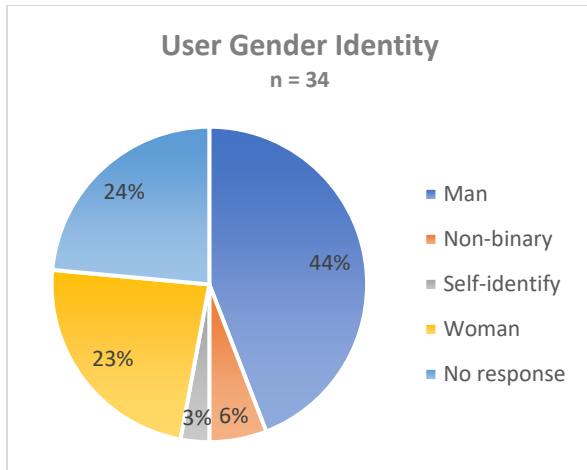
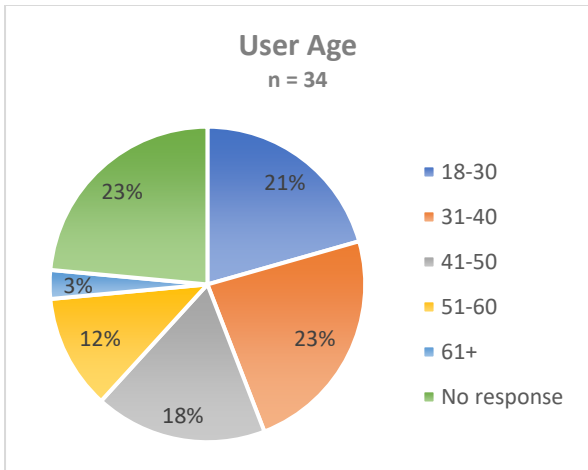
²² King County Languages Spoken demographic maps based on the 2010–2014 American Community Survey 5 Year Average provided by the Census Bureau, PDFs and interactive Census viewer, <https://tinyurl.com/y3bfy5p8> (accessed October 2019)

²³ WCCDA 2017 Community Survey Report, page 5, <https://tinyurl.com/y46n9uyr> (accessed October 2019)

²⁴ Metro has been conducting community engagement for the 2021 launch of RapidRide H Line that will travel along Delridge in West Seattle, through White Center, and into Burien. Metro shared the full engagement report with RALS showing the language analysis by census tract. The full report is not available on a website, though engagement information that is available to the public (<https://tinyurl.com/yxwoxwa2>) shows translation and interpretation in Spanish, Vietnamese, Somali, and Khmer (Cambodian), as was determined in the full report.

²⁵ The English website is: www.kingcounty.gov/scooters and links to the [Spanish](#) and [Vietnamese](#) versions are in the upper right corner (or under the introductory paragraph when viewing on a mobile device).

²⁶ See footnote 15 on page nine.



The pilot program contract also includes a requirement for operators to have at least one method by which a user without a smartphone, bank account, or credit card can rent a scooter. Operators were required to explain how they meet the language and equitable access requirements in their applications.

Lime and Spin both offer significant discounts of 70 percent or more to anyone enrolled in a city, state or federal low-income program through their Access programs. Users register for Access on the operator’s website by uploading proof of enrollment in the low-income program. In addition to discounted rides, Access users can also unlock scooters via text message if they do not have a

smartphone and can load funds onto their account either with a pre-paid debit card or with cash at select locations. There was a total of eight Access users with 53 trips that have been almost evenly spread across both operators as of the end of December 2020.

Spin has partnered with KCHA to streamline the enrollment process for their residents and to distribute helmets to them. In spring 2021, Spin is planning to offer an in-person safety demonstration and Access registration event for KCHA residents.

In addition to ensuring shared scooters are equitably available to whomever would like to use them, program requirements also strive to limit negative impacts to the community with several components regarding safety and parking. For example, to keep sidewalks clear and safe for use for pedestrians and people using wheelchairs or other mobility assistance devices, the program includes requirements to limit riding on or improperly parking scooters on sidewalks, as well as methods to quickly remedy the situation if it does occur. Using geo-fencing technology, “No Parking Zones” were established to restrict ending a scooter ride within an 80-foot buffer area for all bus stops in the pilot area to limit scooters from blocking transit users getting on and off buses.

Connections to Transit

Access to a shared scooter can play a key role in the first or last mile connection to transit. Ordinance 18989 requires this report to include whether scooter usage has impacted transit ridership. There are no major transit hubs in the North Highline area, but scooters are typically deployed along the bus routes in White Center, as described in the Scooter Usage section above.

Access to scooters at transit stops allows transit riders the option to take a scooter to their next destination after getting off a bus at a transit stop; alternatively, transit riders could also take a scooter from their origin in White Center to a transit stop to board a bus. The availability of scooters along these routes has not yet demonstrated a notable impact on transit ridership. However, the lack of impact may not have the same implications as it would in non-pandemic conditions.

The “reserve” feature in the operator app is one way to incorporate scooters into a commute. A user can check the scooter app ahead of time, such as while they are on a bus, to see if there is a scooter near their connection and reserve that scooter to guarantee it will be available where and when they need it. However, this feature is not free, and the user must pay for the time the scooter is on reserve.

As an incentive to transit commuters, Spin offers users \$1 off their next ride when they park in “Preferred Parking Spots,” which are specific areas near Metro bus stops serving route 131 and 120. The assumption is that scooters facilitate access to transit and destinations in White Center, such as shops and other businesses, near the bus stops. As of December 31, 2020, 26.3 percent of Spin trips ended in one of these spots.

Public and Community Feedback

A key component of Ordinance 18989 is to gather public feedback throughout the pilot period. RALS seeks this feedback using a variety of methods and has engaged the Department of Local Services, WCCDA, KCHA, and Evergreen High School to spread awareness.

King County's scooter share pilot program website is available in English, Spanish, and Vietnamese and includes a webform in all three languages for the public to submit feedback about the program. Only three webforms have been submitted since the pilot began, all in English:

- A suggestion the County should have done more community outreach ahead of the launch;
- An opinion that the scooters are like litter and are dangerous; and
- A message supporting making the scooter program permanent and expanding it into other communities.

As described in the Complaints and Incidents section, RALS received two reports of scooters needing to be relocated. RALS also received general feedback from both the King County Sheriff's Office and Parks and Recreation that none of the people they have seen riding scooters were wearing a helmet, although they do not often see the scooters in use. Both agencies suggested the lack of micromobility-friendly infrastructure (such as bike lanes, paved shoulders, or level road-to-shoulder transitions) in the North Highline area as a likely contributor to low usage, in addition to the cost of using the scooters.

For the first two months of the pilot period, King County hosted a community survey to gather input on how the scooter program will be received by the community. The survey was anonymous, was provided in English, was promoted on Facebook and Twitter, and received 43 responses. Key points from the survey include:

- The demographics of the respondents were not representative of the community as a whole, with the majority of the respondents saying they are white²⁷ and all but one said English is their preferred language.²⁸
- 31 of 43 respondents said they would not ride a scooter and, while some cited safety and clutter issues, the majority cited general angst about the scooter program as their main concern.
- Of the 12 respondents who said they would use a shared scooter:
 - Most cited three key benefits of scooters: reducing environmental impacts, being able to get around without a car, and that they're fun.
 - In response to what kinds of trips they would use scooters for, only three said to/from a bus stop, none said to/from work, and the most common was to/from stores or restaurants and social activities.
 - The top responses for how these trips would be made without a scooter were personal car and walking, with bus and for-hire transportation cited a few times each.

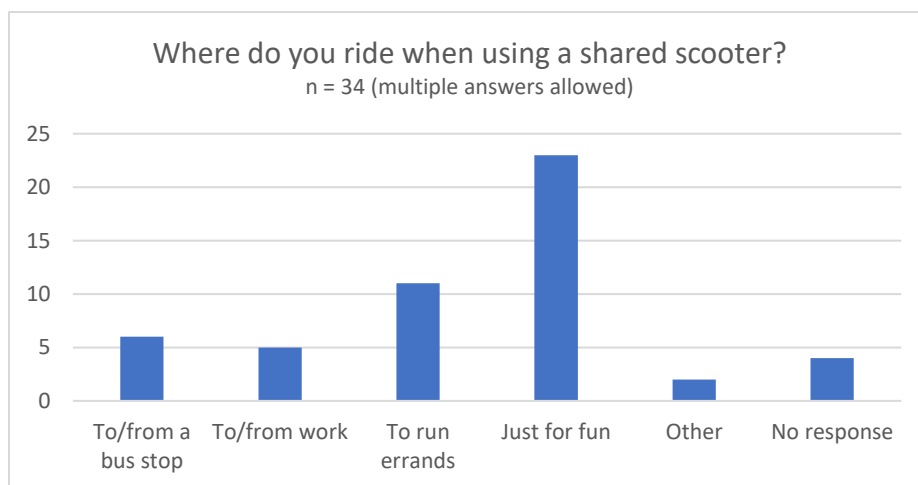
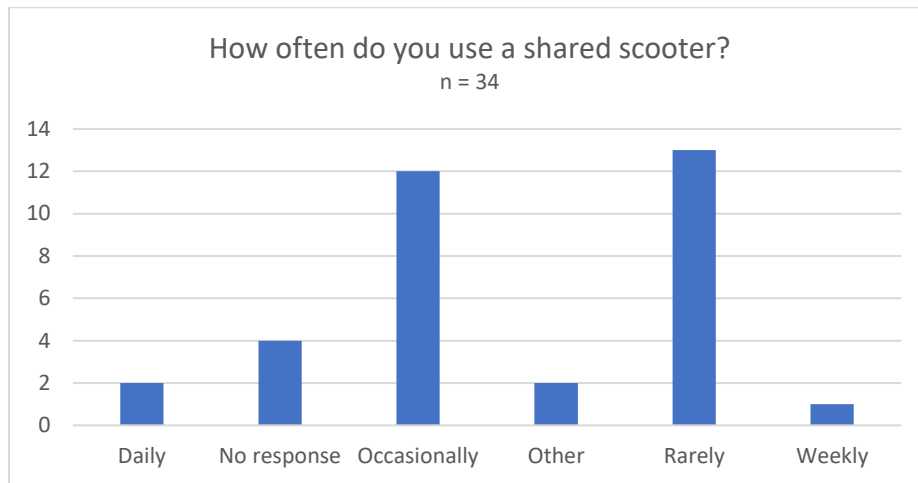
RALS also began a second community survey in mid-January 2021, available in English, Spanish, and Vietnamese, to assess whether opinions have changed and asked how the program may be improved.²⁹ As with the first survey, the majority of respondents are white (56 percent). Also consistent with the first survey is a common sentiment that the shared scooters are a safety and clutter nuisance.

²⁷ In response to the race/ethnicity question, 19 respondents selected "White", 12 selected "Prefer not to say", and the other 12 respondents represented a wide mix of other race/ethnicities.

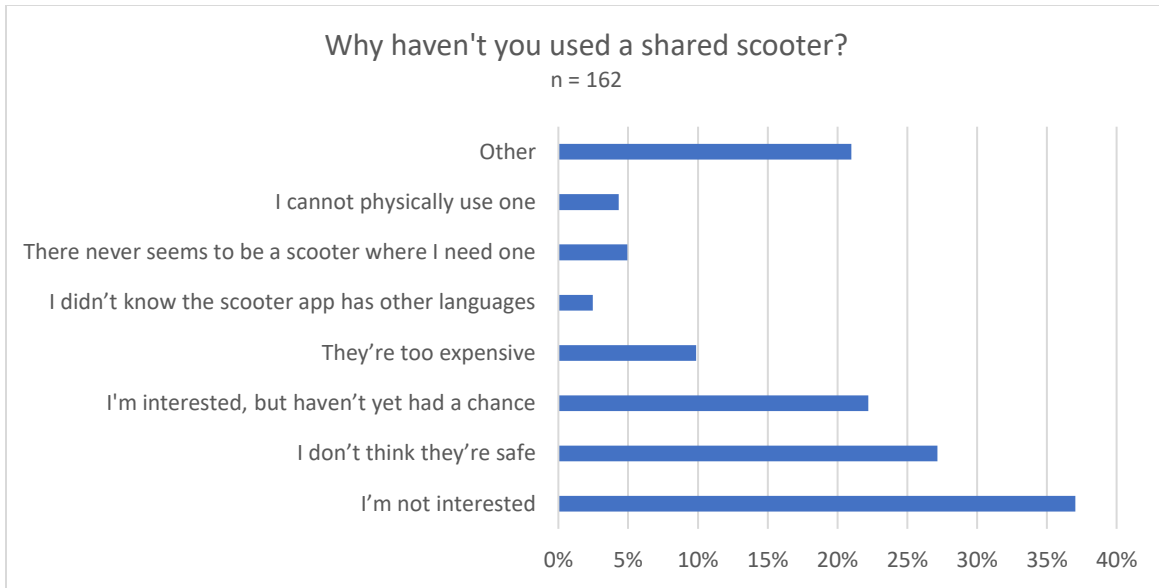
²⁸ For comparison, Metro Transit's RapidRide H Line Public Engagement Report also describes the majority of their survey respondents in the greater White Center area were white/Caucasian English speakers, despite their online survey offering real-time translation into 101 languages.

²⁹ See footnote 15 on page nine.

Of the 34 respondents who have ridden a shared scooter, the majority said they use scooters “rarely” or “occasionally” and “just for fun”, as shown in the charts below. Only 20 of the respondents who have used a scooter said that the availability of shared scooters has improved the way they get around.



Of the survey respondents who said they have not ridden a scooter, the top reason was lack of interest, as shown in the chart below. Among the “Other” responses, the COVID-19 pandemic was the most common reason provided, either due to cleanliness concerns or limited outings.



In the survey, when asked if there is anything that could be changed that would increase use of shared scooters, the top two responses included: better infrastructure (road quality, bike lanes, etc.) and cheaper/lower cost to use the scooters. Of the 176 respondents who answered the survey question “Should the County continue the shared scooter program in the White Center area?”, 45 percent said no, 40 percent said yes, and 15 percent said maybe, citing a variety of ideas such as “if others really enjoy them”.

Program Costs

The following table shows the costs to the County related to the development, implementation, and administration of the scooter share pilot program through December 31, 2020.

Item	Amount
Expenditures	
Staff time	\$112,640
King County decals for deployed scooters	\$ 426
Survey Monkey account	\$ 594
Legal notices and survey advertising	\$ 270
Data aggregator (2021 expense)	\$ 0
Translations	\$ 287
Total Expenditures (as of January 25, 2021)	\$114,217
Revenue	
Application fees	\$ 1,000
Per trip fees	\$ 599
Total Revenue	\$ 1,599

Significant research and outreach went into establishing the scooter share pilot program in North Highline, including reviewing scooter share pilots and permanent scooter share programs locally and in other jurisdictions across the Country. RALS reviewed local scooter share pilot programs in the cities of Redmond, Tacoma, and Bothell to prepare the County’s pilot. Seattle’s scooter pilot planning timeline

was similar to the County's, which created opportunities to discuss various program features to align where possible. RALS also reached out to programs in other major US metropolitan markets, including the cities of Portland (OR), San Francisco (CA), Oakland (CA), and Chicago (IL).

The County's North Highline scooter share pilot is comparatively small, based on geography and population, compared to all other jurisdictions reviewed. The time and work involved in planning and preparing for the North Highline scooter pilot, managing the Request for Proposal (RFP), contract administration, and launch readiness efforts all contributed to the initial upfront investment needed for a successful pilot to be executed. The smaller size, and the temporary nature of a pilot, did not necessarily lower the County's cost in establishing the program. Preparing RFP, drafting the Scooter Share Contract, establishing appropriate types and levels of insurance coverage, considering data reporting standards and internal capacity for large data file analysis, setting up a web page, and drafting and negotiating a contract for a data analysis provider all required significant effort. In addition, the pandemic, political unrest, and other local priorities resulted in shifting schedules and delays that were difficult to anticipate.

Although not strictly required by ordinance, a goal of the pilot is for the program to be cost neutral, meaning the cost of program administration is offset by pilot program revenue. Various administrative fees were considered to offset pilot program costs. As the pandemic escalated in early 2020, scooter share operators closed operations in many markets around the world. Suddenly, companies involved in aggressive expansion efforts were forced to curtail their efforts, reduce spending, and take evasive measures to survive. As a result, RALS established a relatively low barrier to entry by intentionally keeping initial upfront and one-time fees low and opting for an on-going per trip fee model. This approach shares some of the risk associated with the upfront cost and creates a scalable revenue model where revenue increases or decreases with the growth or decline of program participation.

One item that was not initially required for the scooter share pilot program, and that would be necessary if the County chooses to implement an ongoing shared scooter program, is an environmental review through the State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA). A SEPA review, conducted with the assistance of a SEPA administrator, will be required prior to transitioning the program beyond the pilot stage.

Although the fees collected from the operators do not currently cover the cost of the program, particularly the startup costs noted in the table above, revenue will increase as scooter trips increase. With much of the up-front cost of the program already incurred, program costs are leveling out and the gap between expenditures and fees collected should begin to close.

V. Conclusion and Next Steps

In summary, the low number of complaints and lack of safety incidents is promising, though low ridership is notable. During the pandemic, shared scooters are a transportation mode that reduce the risks associated with in-person interactions in enclosed spaces. Integrating shared scooters into the community's transportation portfolio now may leave a lasting impact post-pandemic of reducing car trips.

RALS is actively working with the operators to encourage creative new ways to engage the community until pandemic conditions improve enough to allow for in-person events. In the second half of the pilot period, RALS will explore opportunities to partner with other agencies to improve scooter usage by increasing public awareness, convenience, and access to scooters. Examples include but are not limited to, aligning or grouping promotional opportunities, coordinated events, expanding allowable areas to ride, etc. RALS is committed to continuous program improvement through work with the operators, the community, and other stakeholders.