Report
June 2026

Shared-Rideables Industry Assessment 2025

City of Sacramento
Our ref: 24794601
City ref: K15195100 Contract Number: 2024-1296

steer

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Disclaimer

The City of Sacramento (the City) commissioned Steer Davies & Gleave Inc. (Steer) for the Shared-Rideables project (the Project), the scope of which included Industry Assessment among other tasks.

The Industry Assessment included interviewing various operators of shared mobility. These interviews were conducted in October and November 2025, and as such any information included in this document pertains to that period. The details presented in this document are not updated to include any change in information since then.

The summary of these interviews contained in this document were developed exclusively for the City within the specific context and objectives of the Shared-Rideables project. Any application, interpretation, or use of these findings beyond the defined scope of the Project must receive prior authorization from the City. The information provided should not be repurposed or relied upon outside of this approved context without explicit consent.

1 Background

Steer's work to support the Shared-Rideables program of the City of Sacramento (the City) includes providing policy recommendations, as the City is assessing changes in the Shared-Rideables' policy and regulatory requirements. One pillar to inform this policy analysis work was to conduct an Industry Assessment by interviewing existing operators under the Shared-Rideables permit program and other operators from the industry with services in other cities. The objective is to understand challenges faced by the operators and gain insights into policies of other cities that these operators find amenable, some of which are identified as best practices to inform policy recommendations.

The industry assessment encompassed structured engagement sessions with current and other operators to gather market intelligence and identify opportunities for program enhancement.

Steer interviewed the following five operators:

- Existing operators: Bird, Lime
- Other operators: Lyft, Hopp (operated by Bolt), and Veo

Steer prepared a questionnaire for both sets of operators, which was reviewed and approved by the City. Steer conducted one-on-one virtual interviews in October and November 2025 using this questionnaire designed to gather feedback on current permit requirements, identify barriers to effective service delivery, and explore opportunities for program enhancement that benefit both operators and the local communities. The interviews also delved into emerging technological developments that could improve service delivery or monitoring capabilities.

The questionnaire was shared with the operators ahead of the interviews. Steer may have asked some or all the listed questions, depending on the relevance to the operator being interviewed.

As part of these industry interviews, Steer asked the operators about their operations and insights into industry practices when reviewing the City's permitting requirements. Additionally, operators were asked to share any examples of best practices from other cities' regulations, based on their varied experience.

This document provides a summary of responses received by topic which will inform the development of policy recommendations in the next phase of this project.

2 Industry Assessment Responses

The responses gathered from the Industry Assessment are divided into the following topics:

1. Permit Requirements – response to overall operational requirements per the permit including equity, fees, deployment, etc.
2. Program Management - response to City's role and the program structure.
3. Technological Innovations and Solutions - pilot testing various technological solutions that improved service delivery and enhance monitoring capabilities.
4. The Ecosystem - other aspects outside of the permit program where improvements may benefit the Shared-Rideables program.

A summary of responses by topic is presented as follows. The information provided below reflects the participants' actual responses without additions or modifications. Any clarifying points are added as footnotes.

1. Permit Requirements

The operators provided responses pertaining to some of the specific requirements within the Shared-Rideables permit program. To provide complete context, the responses are presented corresponding to that specific permit requirement.

Permit Requirements	Operator Comments
Opportunity Area Deployment 20% of active devices must be deployed to opportunity areas each morning.	• The 20% deployment requirement is on the higher side, also resulting in lower trips per vehicle per day. The City should consider lowering it to ~15% or scale the requirement based on fleet size. • Higher number of thefts and vandalism in opportunity areas make it challenging to meet the target of 20% opportunity area fleet deployment[1]. • Increase/ encourage Opportunity Area deployment through transit-based

[1] It should be noted that thefts and vandalism are industry-wide issues, that tend to happen in various cities where shared-mobility operates.

Permit Requirements	Operator Comments
	deployment (such as nearby transit stations or stops).
Permit Application Fees: • First-time permit: $4,440 • Annual renewal: $2,220 • Parking/infrastructure fee: $0.10 per trip per device • Vehicle fee: $104 per scooter/year, $52 per bike/year (bike fee waived in opportunity areas)	• The operators perceive that the permit application fees of the City are on the higher side.[2] • An operator also mentioned that per trip fee adds to the uncertainty of costs, as it is directly dependent on the rides and it is witnessing that per trip fees are being replaced by vehicle fees. • City should consider reducing per trip fees in Opportunity Areas. • Operational fees can be tied to device utilization, with higher usage resulting in lower fees, providing flexibility based on actual program performance.
Deployment and Parking • Devices must not be parked in a manner that exceeds the number of devices the bike rack is designed to hold • Not be deployed in a way that takes up all available bike and scooter parking. Twenty percent (20%) of each bicycle rack must remain empty for privately-owned bicycles or scooters • Not be parked in the same location for more than 48 hours • All shared bikes and scooters must be deployed and parked upright and within the footprint of the bicycle rack or designated parking area. Devices must not be deployed in a manner that violates the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements, impedes ADA access, or paths of travel • All devices must have an integrated locking mechanism which cannot be removed using simple tools and which securely holds the scooter upright	• Insufficient bikeway and parking infrastructure in the City lead to low compliance with parking requirements and unsafe riding behaviors • Increase the number of parking drop-zones, especially on-street corrals, since limited parking is available at bike racks. • Operators quoted that the usual industry practice to move an idle vehicle is 72 hours. • The City should consider providing warnings to the operators to remove vehicles that block sidewalks instead of directly warranting a fine[3], like when the operators are provided a 2-hour limit to respond to other complaints of improperly parked vehicle received via 311. • The City should consider enforcing geofenced parking spaces, such as in high-complaint areas, while allowing free-floating parking elsewhere. The geofenced parking would be enforced through the mobile application that won't allow the user to end their trip unless parked in an approved area.

[2] The statements that City of Sacramento fees are higher does not align with research findings, source: **Shared Micromobility Program – Best Practice Review 2025**

[3] Parking citation is issued **only** when a vehicle is blocking an accessible path of travel, which is a federal offense under ADA. An ADA issue must be responded to with the highest priority and ideally, immediately.

Permit Requirements	Operator Comments
when parked at a bike rack or other fixed object. • An operator shall, within two hours of notice, retrieve or relocate an improperly parked vehicle.	• A respondent quoted operational difficulties posed by the "lock-to" requirement of the permit[4]. • Two-hour turnaround for removing incorrectly parked vehicles is demanding but achievable, with typical industry response times being three to four hours.
Maintenance and Repair Plan: • Routine maintenance and cleaning of vehicles at least every six weeks or 200 miles, whichever comes first; • Outlet for customers to report issues, including 24-hour customer service	• Operators agree to the maintenance and repair requirements of the permit.
Safety Education and engagement events Operators must complete a minimum of 10 safety education and engagement events, with four (4) in opportunity areas.	• Some operators found this requirement to be reasonable, while others found it on the higher side, suggesting to reduce the number of events to focus on quality and scale of events, rather than the frequency. • Operator(s) have cited a need for City support to establish partnerships with local communities to host such events, especially in Opportunity Areas[5].

2. Permit Management

The operators provided responses to the structure of the permit including the role of the City, procurement, etc. These are summarized as follows:

- Increase engagement: Overall, when expanding to new markets, operators favor expansion into cities supporting a collaborative approach.
- Specifically, the City can consider increasing engagement on various aspects of the program such as:
  - Cadence of regular communication to discuss operational items, such as parking
  - In markets where a city issues permits through a Request for Proposal (RFP) process, the operator(s) quoted examples of active engagement from the city at a Request for Information (RFI) stage/ pre-application phase
- Consider competitive permit process (such as a Request for Proposal/ Application) with longer term contracts such as at least two years, instead of an annualized permit process.

[4] The permit requires that the e-scooters are equipped with an integrated locking mechanism, and that the operators deploy vehicles to bike racks or drop zones. The City does not require the devices be locked to the racks.

[5] The City has previously made such efforts but led to limited outcomes.

- The City should consider moving to an exclusive operator market, limiting operators to one or two.
- The City should consider shifting detailed regulatory requirements from city ordinance to the business application, empowering city staff and the permit manager to make iterative changes in collaboration with operators. Including specific requirements in the ordinance makes it difficult to adapt to changing circumstances, as any change requires City Council approval. Additionally, this would provide more autonomy to city staff and the permit manager to adjust requirements through the business application process

3. Technological Innovations and other solutions

The operators provided response to various technologies they are testing and/or piloting, that can benefit service delivery and monitoring capabilities. These responses are summarized below.

- Artificial Intelligence (AI) based parking validation technology to verify proper parking at the end of rides and help reduce parking incidents.
- Provide real-time parking information of capacity and/or availability with users via the mobile application
- Provide discounts to users on those vehicles that are idle for up to pre-determined number of hours, to encourage usage
- Developing a rating and penalty mechanism for appropriate riding and poor riding behavior, which is tied to providing user benefits
- Equipping vehicles with cameras that aid in crash recording, pothole detection, etc.

4. The Ecosystem

The operators also shared other aspects, outside of the program that impact operations. These are summarized below.

- The operators receive lagged information about parking citations at month end and are unable to transfer the citation fees to the users in real time
- Request that City provide support/ facilitate engagement with Old Sacramento and CSUS to increase service in these areas. Currently Old Sacramento is a no-deployment zone, however a user can ride an e-scooter into the area, whereas CSUS is not within the jurisdiction of City authority.
- Some operators partner with cities to develop and deploy tech enabled parking infrastructure for easier payment. However, these are applicable for docked vehicles which the City of Sacramento does not have.
- Overall, the state of California has strict indemnification requirements that result in high insurance and litigation costs.

Control Information

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