National Capital Region
**Transportation Planning Board**

Item 7
Bike/Ped Subcommittee Meeting
7/16/2019

**MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** Bicycle and Pedestrian Subcommittee of the TPB Technical Committee
**FROM:** Michael Farrell, TPB Transportation Planner
**SUBJECT:** Summary of May 30 Dockless Bike and Electric Scooter Share Workshop
**DATE:** July 16, 2019

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## MAY 30 DOCKLESS WORKSHOP

On May 30, 2019 the TPB hosted its third in a series of regional workshops on dockless electric scooter and bicycle sharing. Representatives from the District Department of Transportation, Montgomery County, Arlington, and Baltimore City presented on their pilot programs, to an audience of over sixty planners, consultants, public officials, and members of the general public.

The main purpose of the workshop was to allow the agencies tasked with regulating these new modes of transportation to share lessons from pilot programs, and discuss their plans going forward.

## TAKE-AWAYS

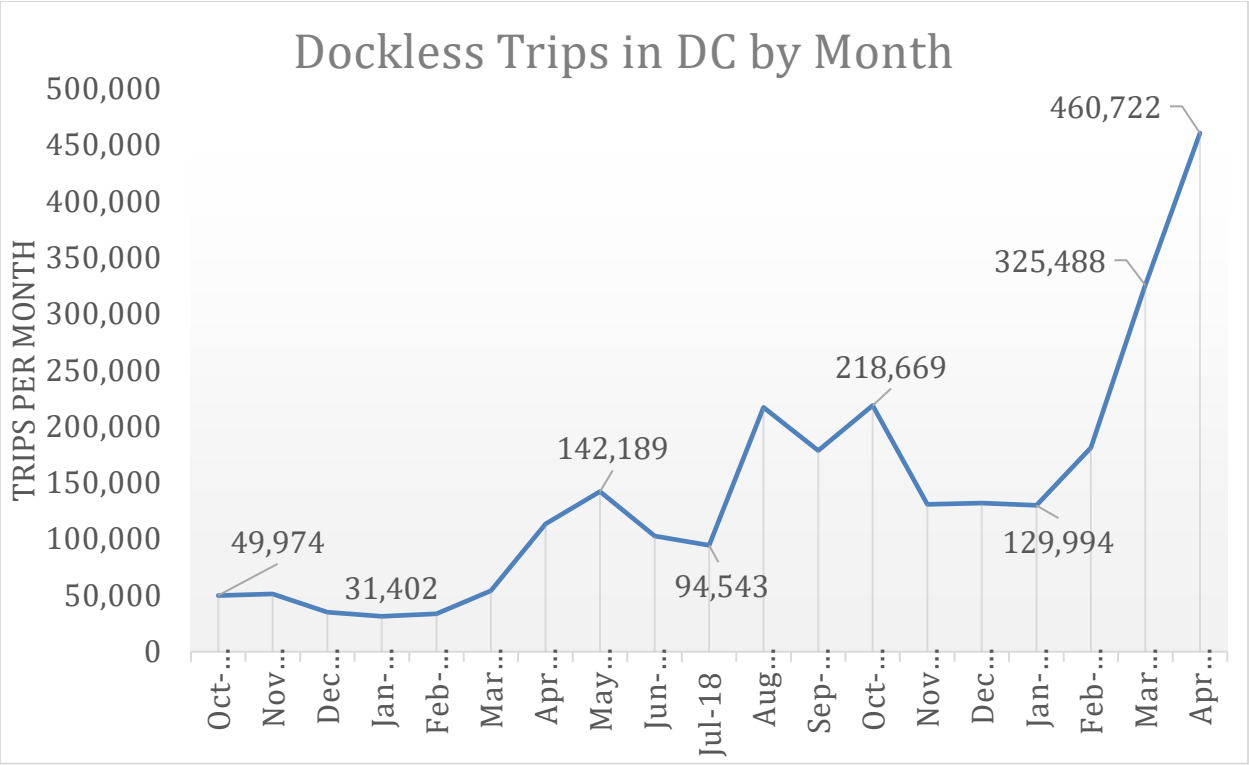
- Electric scooters are booming in the Washington-Baltimore region yet with the boom, concerns about safety and equity have bubbled up from both users and non-users alike.
- It was reported that, according to a City of Portland survey, about half of e-scooter trips are diverted from some form of motor vehicle trip, usually a ride-hailing or taxi trips, which would mean fewer car trips, and less pollution and carbon emissions.
- Electric scooters are likely to be part of the transportation scene for the foreseeable future and deliver significant benefits to the region in the form of congestion mitigation and emissions reductions.

## WHAT ARE DOCKLESS ELECTRIC SCOOTERS?

The term dockless originally referred to bikeshare programs that allowed people to rent and leave a bike anywhere within a certain jurisdiction, within certain rules. In a short time (since mid-2018), however, dockless bikesharing has mostly given way to dockless electric scooters.

## DOCKLESS IN WASHINGTON AND BALTIMORE

At the workshop DC and Baltimore representatives reported data they had on e-scooter usage. In April 2019 there were over 460,000 dockless trips in the District of Columbia, up from 119,000 trips in the cold-weather month of January.



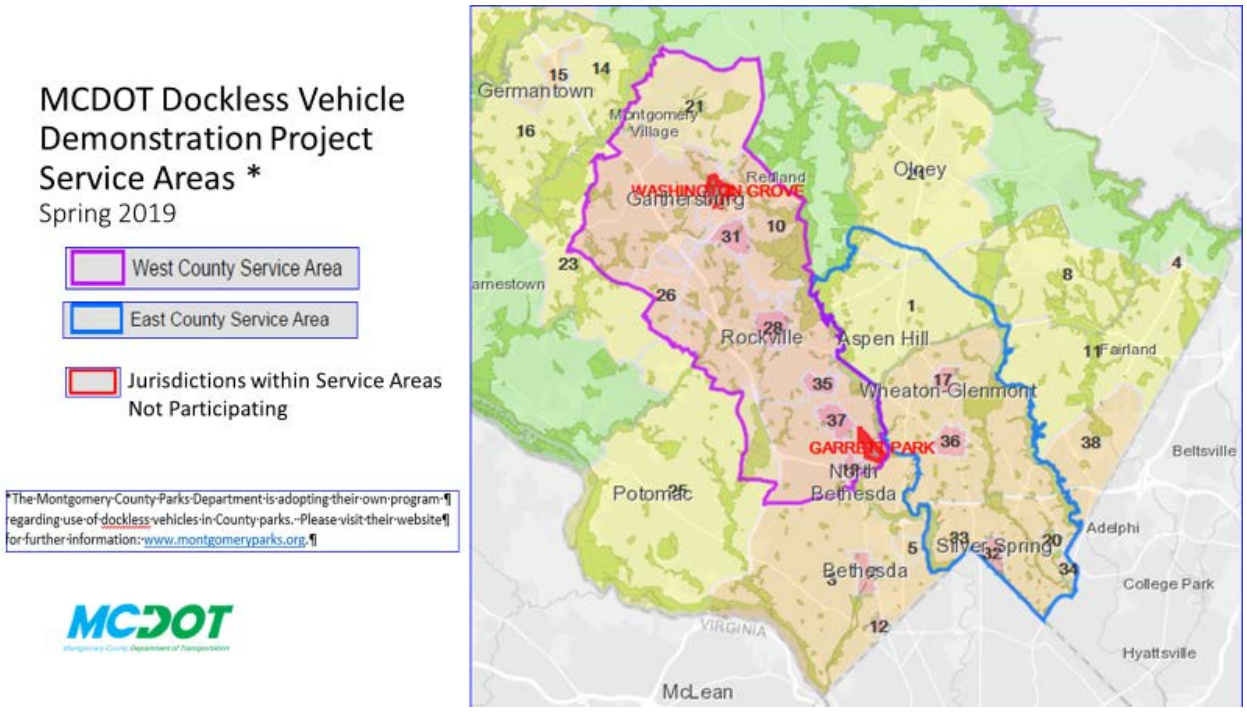

Baltimore had 723,252 trips between August 15, 2018 and January 31, 2019. The Baltimore representative reported that the number of rides-per-vehicle deployed in Baltimore have been among the highest in the nation – peaking at nearly seven riders per scooter per day in late September 2018. It is expected that more people will be using them over the summer months.

DC and Baltimore's results indicate that the e-scooters are popular with users and are commercially successful for the operators. The operators can charge higher fees with e-scooters than was possible with dockless bikes, while maintaining a use rate of roughly three trips per day per vehicle, fueling a transition from dockless bikes to dockless e-scooters.

## ARLINGTON AND MONTGOMERY

Arlington will likely extend its current e-scooter demonstration project through the end of the year.

Montgomery County will launch a pilot e-scooter program shortly, which will include much more of the County than does the current dockless bike share system.




## DOCKLESS SCOOTERS AND EQUITY

It was reported at the workshop that electric scooters have been more successful than bikeshare at attracting low-income and minority users. Women, and people whose jobs require formal clothing, are more likely to use e-scooters than dockless bikes. Riders do not get as sweaty or mess up their clothing using an electric scooter. E-scooter operators charge per trip, which is helpful for people who may not have the cash on hand for an annual membership.

In Baltimore the e-scooters have been popular in the low-income neighborhoods near downtown, which are close to major job centers but lack rail transit, or direct, frequent bus service. Equity zones in Baltimore showed 21% of vehicles in the zones in the morning, 17.4% of total trips originating there, and 28% of vehicles ending up in the equity zones.

## ACCESS FOR ALL COMMITTEE FEEDBACK

TPB Access for All Committee Chair Kacy Kostiuk presented at the workshop, following discussion of dockless vehicles at a recent AFA meeting. The AFA identified a number of issues and possible solutions for consideration by the agencies at the workshop. Major issues identified by the AFA included:

- Sidewalk obstruction by improperly parked vehicles
- Speed and sidewalk riding
- Safety issue for people who are blind or have visual impairments -- may not hear approaching bike/scooter
- Accessibility and affordability

- Availability and equity of distribution
- Education and outreach
- Regionwide coordination

Chair Kostiuk also presented some ideas for solutions identified by the AFA, such as requiring docking and/or charging fines for not docking (in-app fee or other structure); bright colors and/or reflective tape to make scooters more visible; and more designated bike/scooter lanes with required use.

## SCOOTERS AND SAFETY

At previous dockless workshops, participants identified some major issues including safety, conflicts with pedestrians and people with disabilities, and improper parking. Those problems are real, but the agencies believe that they are manageable. Studies and data on e-scooter safety are still rare for this new technology, but some information is available from studies in Baltimore and Austin, Texas, and was discussed at the workshop.

For example, the Baltimore City DOT and its partners evaluated their programs by tracking related injuries, analyzing data submitted by vendors. According to the Baltimore City Health Department, from August 15, 2018 to February 6, 2019, there were 63 emergency visits related to scooters, which translates to 0.87 ER visits per 10,000 scooter rides. There were no fatalities.

Based on the numbers gathered so far, the agencies do not believe that safety has been enough of a problem to justify shutting down or significantly curtailing the e-scooter programs. The main agency safety response so far has been to limit e-scooter operating speeds. Since most scooter collisions are reported to be single-vehicle crashes, lower speeds usually mean a less serious injury in the event of a crash. While federal rules allow a 20 miles per hour speed for e-bikes, and the State of Maryland limits e-scooters to 20 miles per hour, the City of Baltimore has limited e-scooter speeds to 15 miles per hour, as is the plan for Montgomery County. The District of Columbia and Arlington allow only ten mph.

## WHAT'S NEXT?

Due to the rapidly changing character of the field of shared "micromobility," and expressed need for information sharing and cross-jurisdictional coordination, we expect to continue dockless mobility workshops regularly, for as long as our members find it useful. Presentations and agendas from all workshops have been posted on the Bicycle and Pedestrian Subcommittee web site. We will also explore other means of information sharing and coordination.