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Over-the-Rhine Community Council
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February 28, 2020

Dear Members of City Council,

The Over-the-Rhine Community Council members voted to send this letter to you regarding our views of the plans to develop a new city contract with an e-scooter provider.

We appreciate that “current scooter system use indicates that consumer demand for last mile transit options is increasingly strong” and that the city “seeks solutions to proactively meet this demand in a manner that not only supports but benefits both individuals and our collective community.”

We also appreciate that the city chose to develop and disseminate a survey of residents regarding the e-scooter system.

We are writing to urge the city administration and council to consider the safety of residents, pedestrians and riders in developing the plans for a new contract.

While it is unsafe and illegal, we understand why e-scooter users choose to ride on the sidewalk: in the absence of bike lanes, and increasing reckless driving, it does not feel safe to ride in the street.

In addition, we are concerned about the tripping hazard and barriers to people on other wheels (chairs and mobility scooters) created when users leave e-scooters on the sidewalk and in the public right-of-way.

We ask that City Council hold a public hearing on the new contract recommendation and that you consider these recommendations, in particular.

We remain deeply concerned about e-scooters on sidewalks and urge the city to develop a plan to address this serious safety issue, including:

Development of a system of bike and scooter lanes throughout the center city, main business district, Over-the-Rhine, and adjacent neighborhoods.

Require the Cincinnati Police Department to actively enforce the ban on sidewalk riding by scooter (and bike) users.

Consider the color choices and lighting of scooter to ensure they can be seen by drivers.

Develop a plan for parking of e-scooters by agents of the e-scooter provider and users. Consider best practices for parking areas in other cities in the development of a new plan. Require the new provider and users to comply with a new plan.

Finally, we have concerns about the current plan to limit the contract to one provider. This will create an effective e-scooter monopoly and the lack of competition can lead to problems in the long run.

Thank you for your consideration.

Maurice Wagoner
President, Over-the-Rhine Community Council
CC: City Manager, Mayor