

Opinion: City of St. Louis Public Safety Director Issues Viewpoint About Scooters Downtown

July 31 2022 7:35 AM

Viewpoint:

In June 201, the City of St. Louis, after continued discussions with residents and businesses, announced a scooter curfew in the Downtown and Downtown West neighborhoods. Following a string of public safety incidents in June 2022, many of which youth were injured, the City of St. Louis halted scooter-sharing operations in Downtown and Downtown West neighborhoods.



Since the decision to halt scooter operations in Downtown and Downtown West St. Louis, Bird and Lime have met with several city departments and community groups to address issues and concerns from neighborhood residents, businesses, and city staff

regarding policies to reduce the public safety hazard presented by unregulated scooter usage. Since limiting scooter operations in Downtown and Downtown West neighborhoods, the neighbors have experienced quieter weekends.

With these developments in mind, as well as community feedback from businesses and residents in these neighborhoods, the City of St. Louis has decided to continue halting scooter operations until the end of 2022.

Cities across the country have enacted similar policies and taken the time to pause operations while updating permits. Milwaukee, Wisc., restricted scooters in Downtown and nearby areas in August 2021 and released an updated pilot program in June 2022. Columbus, Ohio, has banned electric scooters from certain districts and parks to establish geo-fenced no-ride zones. Cincinnati, Ohio, has also banned electric scooters in certain areas of the city such as parks. Chicago, Illinois, excluded scooters downtown from two pilots in 2019 and 2020 and has a new permit where scooter operations downtown are very limited.

The City of St. Louis will continue to take a comprehensive approach to update the scooter permit to address the issues and concerns raised by businesses, residents, and community stakeholders.

The evaluation of a comprehensive approach to scooters will assist in better understanding the challenges for operations for the transportation option to be successful. We plan to revisit operations in Downtown and Downtown West in early 2023 based on performance and further community feedback. Scooter sharing will remain available across many of the neighborhoods in the City of St. Louis.

Dan Isom,

St. Louis City Public Safety Director