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**TO:** Powered Scooter Share Program Staff and Interested Parties  
**FROM:** Jeffrey Tumlin, Director of Transportation *Jeffrey Tumlin*  
**THROUGH:** Kate Toran, Taxis, Access & Mobility Services Director *Kate Toran*  
**DATE:** May 30, 2024  
**SUBJECT:** FY25-FY26 Powered Scooter Share Permit Program

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This memorandum directs SFMTA Scooter Share Program staff regarding the issuance of permits for powered scooter share operations in San Francisco. This directive reflects due consideration of the public interest and safety of the transportation system and is based on findings and analysis by the SFMTA.

In accordance with San Francisco Transportation Code Sec. 916, SFMTA scooter share program staff are directed to:

- Issue permits to Lime and Spin, with a start date no later than July 1, 2024, for a two-year term. Each permit will initially allow up to the same number of devices that Lime and Spin are currently allowed to operate under their respective permits (2,750 per permittee).
- Maintain the maximum allowable number of scooter share devices in the Power Scooter Share Program, capped at 10,000.
- Permittees have the potential to increase the number of scooters incrementally during the permit term, based on demonstrated compliance with the fleet expansion criteria detailed in the permit terms and conditions.
- Monitor the performance of each permittee to determine their adherence to the permit terms and conditions. As part of this ongoing monitoring, the SFMTA will evaluate compliance with all plans and proposals submitted in the permittees' applications, which will be incorporated into each permit by reference. SFMTA will make policy recommendations, including amending the Transportation Code if necessary.



This directive reflects the SFMTA's thorough review of the two powered scooter share applications received. The actions detailed in this memorandum ensure that the Powered Scooter Share Program (Program) continues to serve the public interest, maintain safe and accessible public rights-of-way, and provide mobility options to underserved communities, while also continuing to provide opportunities for mobility innovation.

## **BACKGROUND**

### **2017-2021**

Powered scooter share systems have expanded rapidly after first appearing in North America in 2017 and have since become an established component of the urban mobility landscape. However, numerous challenges surfaced in March 2018 when several companies deployed scooter share programs in San Francisco in the absence of a permitting or regulatory scheme. While scooter share programs introduced a new transportation option with the potential to reduce traffic congestion, parking demand, and carbon emissions, their initial deployment significantly impacted the safety and accessibility of San Francisco's sidewalks due to illegal sidewalk riding and scooters left in locations that impeded pedestrian access and created hazards.

Based on these concerns and San Francisco's past experience regulating shared mobility systems, the Board of Supervisors and the SFMTA Board of Directors amended Divisions I and II, respectively, of the Transportation Code in 2018 to authorize the SFMTA to implement a 12-month Powered Scooter Share Pilot Program.<sup>1</sup> Based on the conclusions of the SFMTA's mid-Pilot evaluation provided in April 2019, the SFMTA Board amended the Transportation Code to make the program permanent and authorize the Director of Transportation to establish the number of permittees and a cap on the number of powered shared scooters per permittee.

Following adoption of revised Transportation Code provisions in July 2019, in October 2019, SFMTA staff implemented a revised permit process and issued four permits in from a pool of 11 applications. The 2019-2020 permit program took lessons learned from the Pilot and strengthened oversight of Powered Scooter Share in San Francisco, particularly with respect to safety and disabled access, accountability, labor, equitable access, community engagement, and sustainability.

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<sup>1</sup> Further background on the regulation of scooters in San Francisco can be found in the Reference Documents section.



In February and March 2020, the Mayor and San Francisco Health Officer each issued orders in response to the COVID-19 emergency, with the Health Officer's order requiring that residents remain in place, with the only exception being for essential needs. Powered Scooter Share was deemed an essential service and was therefore able to continue operations.

On July 30, 2020, the SFMTA issued a policy directive providing updated guidance regarding expansion for Powered Scooter Share fleets to allow for growth based on success meeting key service, compliance, and equity goals, and highlighting the importance of micromobility in the recovery plan of San Francisco's transportation system during the COVID-19 pandemic.

In response to the COVID-19 emergency, on August 18, 2020, the SFMTA Board suspended the requirement that 2019-2020 Powered Scooter Share Program permits not exceed a term of one year and authorized the SFMTA to extend the permits through April 15, 2021. On January 19, 2021, the SFMTA further extended the term of the Powered Scooter Share Program permits through June 30, 2021, to allow permittees additional time to recover from surges in the pandemic, and to align the permit program to a fiscal year schedule consistent with other SFMTA permit programs.

## **2021- Present**

On July 1, 2021, the SFMTA launched the [FY2022 Powered Scooter Share Program permit](#). The [permit](#) had a one-year term, with an option to extend for a second year. The option to extend was exercised, and then on April 18, 2023, the SFMTA Board of Directors authorized an additional one-year permit term extension beginning July 1, 2023, which extended the permit through FY2024. The FY2022-FY2024 permit terms and conditions included a strong emphasis on community engagement and labor harmony. With an increased focus on accessibility, adaptive scooters became a [permanent part of the City's fleet](#) and introduced the Complimentary Adaptive Program (a longer-term rental program).

During the FY2022-2024 permit term, SFMTA staff focused on improving safety for riders and all road users. In March 2023, SFMTA implemented the [Safe Micromobility Parking Incentive Policy](#), which created a financial incentive for scooter companies to quickly move improperly parked scooters. The program has resulted in faster relocation of scooters blocking the safe path of travel, improving safety for pedestrians. Additionally, during the FY2022-2024 permit term the SFMTA conducted several [sidewalk-detection technology demonstrations](#). Ultimately, the SFMTA Board amended the Transportation Code to require permittees to deploy sidewalk-detection technology on their scooters. Scooter permittees are required to send the SFMTA a monthly report of instances of sidewalk riding. These reports help staff understand where



sidewalk riding happens most frequently, allowing the enforcement team to focus its efforts on those hotspots.

Furthermore, in 2023 the SFMTA launched a [scooter safety education campaign](#) with the goal of reaching riders of both privately-owned and permitted shared scooters. Phase I of the campaign featured public service announcements on buses and in transit shelters. Phase II of the safety campaign is composed of short educational videos and will launch later this year.

SFMTA staff also prioritized disability community engagement over the course of the FY2022-2024 permit term. Staff organized [adaptive scooter](#) demonstration events for the [general public](#) and in coordination with the Arc's [AccessSFUSD program](#). Through these events, staff received extensive feedback on SFMTA's adaptive scooter programs. Additionally, staff solicited feedback from the Multimodal Accessibility Advisory Committee and the Mayor's Disability Council.

Throughout the FY2022-2024 permit term, the SFMTA has emphasized transparency, updating the [Shared Mobility Dashboards](#), which track metrics like trips, citations, 311 complaints, fines and fees, and more. Finally, the SFMTA partnered with an external consulting firm to conduct a [formal evaluation](#) of the Powered Scooter Share Program.

### **FY25-FY26 Powered Scooter Share Application**

The [FY25-FY26 application](#) was published on March 29, 2024, and applications were accepted until May 1, 2024. As part of the application process, the SFMTA answered more than 20 questions at its Question and Answer session held on April 12 and posted the [answers online](#). The full [scoring rubric](#) (Evaluation Scoresheet) was published with the application so that applicants and other interested parties would understand how the applications would be evaluated.

The application requirements and review criteria are aligned with San Francisco's Guiding Principles for Emerging Mobility Services and Technologies (Guiding Principles), which were adopted by the SFMTA Board of Directors on July 18, 2017.<sup>2</sup> The Guiding Principles are a framework to assess the benefits and impacts of all emerging mobility services and technologies in San Francisco. Table 1 summarizes the primary Guiding Principles as they relate to each application section evaluated by staff.

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<sup>2</sup> <https://www.sfmta.com/reports/item-13-principles-emerging-mobility-services-and-technology>



In addition, the SFMTA’s review considered an applicant's experience in operating and maintaining shared mobility systems (Section I – Experience and Qualifications) to assess capacity to successfully operate a reliable powered scooter share system in San Francisco. Staff considered applicants’ experience providing service in other cities, as stated in their applications, including the size and number of markets they serve, and particularly their capability to deliver service in comparably large, dense cities, and experience operating permitted systems of greater than 500 scooters. Staff also considered depth of experience, including average daily active fleet size in at least three and no more than ten dense, urban North American cities served, and whether applicants have successfully deployed a lock-to system in these markets. Finally, staff considered negative performance in the form of the five most recent, serious suspensions, penalties, citations, and/or warnings received from a local authority in any city in which the applicant has operated.

**Table 1 – Emerging Mobility Guiding Principles with Relevant Application Section(s)**

Guiding Principle	Relevant Application Section(s)
Safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Section A – Device Standards and Safety Assurances</li> <li>• Section E – Plan for Safe Scooter Riding and Parking (Safe Riding Measures and Safe Parking Measures subsections)</li> </ul>
Disabled Access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Section D – Adaptive Scooter Program</li> </ul>
Equitable Access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Section B – Pricing Structure</li> <li>• Section C – Operations Plan (Distribution Strategy)</li> </ul>
Collaboration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Section H – Community Engagement Plan</li> </ul>
Labor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Section G – Hiring and Labor Plan</li> </ul>
Sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Section F - Recharging, Maintenance, Cleaning, and Sustainability Plan</li> </ul>
Accountability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Section J – Mobility Data Specification (MDS) and General Bikeshare Feed Specification (GBFS) Endpoints</li> <li>• Section E – Plan for Safe Scooter Riding and Parking (Safe Riding Measures, Safe Parking Measures, and Accountability Measures subsections)</li> </ul>



The application scoring process included two stages as set forth in the application. First, staff reviewed each application for initial determinations on responsiveness and acceptability in an Initial Screening process. Initial Screening consisted of a pass/fail determination as to whether an application met all threshold requirements, including application completeness, compliance with format requirements, responsiveness to the material terms and conditions of the permit requirements, and compliance with minimum qualifications. Applications were not given numeric scores during the Initial Screening process.

Applications that passed the Initial Screening process proceeded to scoring according to the Evaluation Scoresheet. Applicants were required to receive an average score of 2 or greater for each of the nine sections or were disqualified from further evaluation.

Staff applied scores using the following rubric:

- "1" ratings were given to responses that included the least compelling solutions, demonstrated the minimum level of commitment and ability to solve known challenges and concerns and met the minimum requirements.
- "2" ratings were given to responses that included ordinary or typical, but unexceptional solutions, demonstrated a moderate level of commitment and ability to solve known challenges and concerns and exceeded the minimum requirements.
- "3" ratings were given to responses that included significantly more detailed approaches, demonstrated a higher level of commitment and ability to solve known challenges and concerns, and substantially exceeded the minimum requirements.
- "4" ratings were given to responses that included robust, unique or innovative approaches, demonstrated the highest level of commitment and ability to solve known challenges and concerns, and exceeded the minimum requirements to the highest degree.

Scored criteria were then summed and averaged for each section. The average score for each application section then was given the following weight:

- Section A – Device Standards and Safety Assurances (10%)
- Section B – Pricing Structure (10%)
- Section C – Operations Plan (15%)
- Section D – Adaptive Scooter Program (optional, 10%)
- Section E – Plan for Safe Scooter Riding & Parking (20%)
- Section F – Recharging, Maintenance, Cleaning, and Sustainability Plan (5%)



- Section G – Hiring and Labor Plan (15%)
- Section H – Community Engagement Plan (5%)
- Section I – Experience and Qualifications (10%)

Overall application scores were then calculated based on these percentages.

The SFMTA received applications from two applicants, Lime and Spin. The SFMTA thoroughly reviewed each application, documenting the degree to which proposals demonstrated the ability to meet or exceed each of the criteria outlined in the application and accompanying guidelines. Multiple staff reviewed various sections of each application, and then scored responses based on the Evaluation Scoresheet published with the application.

### **PERMIT ISSUANCE DECISION**

Based on review and consideration of the two submitted applications, the SFMTA will grant a permit to Lime and to Spin for a period of two years. Each permit will allow for 2,750 scooters with the potential for additional scooters at the SFMTA’s discretion. The SFMTA will retain the maximum combined number of permitted scooters allowed in the Program at the same level as for the FY2022-FY2024 Powered Scooter Share Program, which is up to 10,000 scooters total.

This final decision is based on the following factors:

1. The two selected permittees meet and exceed the requirements set by the SFMTA Board of Directors for this permit program.

The applications from Lime and Spin met or exceeded the SFMTA’s requirements across the full range of criteria, including all required elements specified in the application.

2. Two permits for a total of 5,500 Scooters is adequate to meet current user demand.

The SFMTA has determined that 2,750 scooters per operator (Lime and Spin) is an appropriate initial fleet size based on its experience during the current permit program. As of April 30, 2024, the total permitted fleet size in San Francisco is 5,500 – Lime and Spin are each permitted to operate 2,750 scooters. However, the actual April 2024 deployment across the two permitted operators averaged only 3,120 devices, total trips were approximately 93,000, and the average trips per scooter per day during the same month was 1. This compares with the pre-pandemic period of February 2020, when scooter operators deployed an average of 3,190 devices and provided 214,000 trips, for an average of 2.3 trips per scooter per day. These data taken together suggest significant room for growth of user demand at current



fleet sizes. Altogether, the SFMTA finds that starting the new permit term with a total fleet size of 5,500 devices will allow operators to continue to provide adequate levels of service across San Francisco, while allowing the opportunity for careful future expansion in a manner that serves the public interest.

## APPLICATION SCORING SUMMARY

The results of the application evaluation process are shown in the following Table 2.

**Table 2: Final Application Scores**

Applicants	Total Score (out of 100)
<b>Spin</b>	<b>77.13</b>
<b>Lime</b>	<b>73.10</b>

## PERMIT PROGRAM AND NEXT STEPS

By July 1, 2024, the SFMTA will issue the two-year permits to Lime and Spin. As part of the upcoming permit term, staff will continue to collect data regarding compliance with parking and riding rules as well as documenting public feedback about the program, which may result in policy recommendations for regulating scooter share programs going forward, including amendments to the Transportation Code if necessary.

Additionally, the SFMTA is engaged in a number of initiatives to further support the Powered Scooter Share program and improve safety outcomes, including:

- Ongoing installation of bike parking citywide to ensure that adequate parking is available both for privately-owned bicycles and shared micromobility options such as bikeshare and scooter share.
- Develop a new [Bike and Rolling Plan](#), which is expected to be adopted in early 2025. This new plan will direct future changes to the biking and rolling network, support facilities, programs, and policies and includes all devices that can legally use the biking and rolling network, such as scooters.
- Launch Phase II of its scooter safety campaign later this year, focusing on three key scooter safety rules: no sidewalk riding, no speeding, and no double riding (two people riding one device). The SFMTA has also expanded the [Bicycle and Scooter Safety Education and Outreach Program](#) to include free classes on safe scooter riding to the general public.





- Continue working with the San Francisco Fire Department and scooter permittees to ensure compliance with [lithium-ion battery regulations](#), and the SFMTA will continue working with the Port of San Francisco on safe parking and riding on Port property.

Additional program updates may be shared via the SFMTA's [Powered Scooter Share Permit Program webpage](#).



## REFERENCE DOCUMENTS

San Francisco Fire Code

SECTION 325. – LITHIUM-ION BATTERIES USED IN POWERED MOBILITY DEVICES

<https://sf-fire.org/media/2956/download?inline>

2023 Geofencing Specifications

[https://www.sfmta.com/sites/default/files/reports-and-documents/2023/11/geofencing\\_specifications\\_scooter\\_parking\\_20231031\\_spin.pdf](https://www.sfmta.com/sites/default/files/reports-and-documents/2023/11/geofencing_specifications_scooter_parking_20231031_spin.pdf)

[https://www.sfmta.com/sites/default/files/reports-and-documents/2023/03/geofencing\\_specifications\\_scooter\\_parking\\_20230324\\_lime.pdf](https://www.sfmta.com/sites/default/files/reports-and-documents/2023/03/geofencing_specifications_scooter_parking_20230324_lime.pdf)

2023 Powered Scooter Share Evaluation Report

<https://www.sfmta.com/reports/powered-scooter-evaluation-report-9112023>

2023 Safe Micromobility Incentive Policy Parking

[https://www.sfmta.com/sites/default/files/reports-and-documents/2023/05/sfmta\\_policy\\_update\\_safe\\_micromobility\\_parking\\_incentive\\_23.0501.pdf](https://www.sfmta.com/sites/default/files/reports-and-documents/2023/05/sfmta_policy_update_safe_micromobility_parking_incentive_23.0501.pdf)

2021 Revised Policy Directive

[https://www.sfmta.com/sites/default/files/reports-and-documents/2021/08/revised\\_2021\\_powered\\_scooter\\_share\\_policy\\_directive\\_final\\_signed\\_1.pdf](https://www.sfmta.com/sites/default/files/reports-and-documents/2021/08/revised_2021_powered_scooter_share_policy_directive_final_signed_1.pdf)

January 2021 Amendments – Transportation Code Division II

[https://www.sfmta.com/sites/default/files/reports-and-documents/2021/01/1-19-21\\_item\\_10.1\\_powered\\_scooter\\_share\\_transportation\\_code\\_amendment\\_resolution.docx.pdf](https://www.sfmta.com/sites/default/files/reports-and-documents/2021/01/1-19-21_item_10.1_powered_scooter_share_transportation_code_amendment_resolution.docx.pdf)



August 2020 Amendments – Transportation Code Division II Section 916

[https://www.sfmta.com/sites/default/files/reports-and-documents/2020/08/8-18-20\\_item\\_10.3\\_approval\\_-\\_scooter\\_share\\_transportation\\_code\\_amendments\\_resolution.docx\\_.pdf](https://www.sfmta.com/sites/default/files/reports-and-documents/2020/08/8-18-20_item_10.3_approval_-_scooter_share_transportation_code_amendments_resolution.docx_.pdf)

2020 Scooter Share Policy Directive

[https://www.sfmta.com/sites/default/files/reports-and-documents/2020/08/final\\_dot\\_scooter\\_policy\\_directive\\_7.30.20.docx\\_.pdf](https://www.sfmta.com/sites/default/files/reports-and-documents/2020/08/final_dot_scooter_policy_directive_7.30.20.docx_.pdf)

October 2019 Amendments – Transportation Code Division II Section 916

[https://www.sfmta.com/sites/default/files/reports-and-documents/2019/10/10-15-19\\_item\\_10.4\\_tc\\_amendment\\_-\\_definition\\_of\\_scooter\\_resolution.docx\\_.pdf](https://www.sfmta.com/sites/default/files/reports-and-documents/2019/10/10-15-19_item_10.4_tc_amendment_-_definition_of_scooter_resolution.docx_.pdf)

July 2019 Amendments - Transportation Code Division II

<https://www.sfmta.com/reports/7-16-19-mtab-item-13-powered-scooter-share-transportation-code-amendment>

**2018 Powered Scooter Share Pilot – Policy Directive**

[https://www.sfmta.com/sites/default/files/reports-and-documents/2019/08/scooter\\_policy\\_directive\\_08.28.2018.pdf](https://www.sfmta.com/sites/default/files/reports-and-documents/2019/08/scooter_policy_directive_08.28.2018.pdf)

June 2018 Amendments – Transportation Code Division II

[https://www.sfmta.com/sites/default/files/reports-and-documents/2018/06/6-19-18\\_item\\_10.3\\_pilot\\_scooter\\_share\\_program\\_permit\\_-\\_transportation\\_code\\_amendment\\_resolution.pdf](https://www.sfmta.com/sites/default/files/reports-and-documents/2018/06/6-19-18_item_10.3_pilot_scooter_share_program_permit_-_transportation_code_amendment_resolution.pdf)

2019 Powered Scooter Share Mid-Pilot Policy Memorandum

[https://www.sfmta.com/sites/default/files/reports-and-documents/2019/08/scooter\\_policy\\_directive\\_041519\\_signed.pdf](https://www.sfmta.com/sites/default/files/reports-and-documents/2019/08/scooter_policy_directive_041519_signed.pdf)

2019-2020 Powered Scooter Share Permit Program Policy Directive (Revised)

[https://www.sfmta.com/sites/default/files/reports-and-documents/2019/08/scooter\\_policy\\_directive\\_041519\\_signed.pdf](https://www.sfmta.com/sites/default/files/reports-and-documents/2019/08/scooter_policy_directive_041519_signed.pdf)

May 2018 Amendments – Transportation Code Division II

[https://www.sfmta.com/sites/default/files/reports-and-documents/2018/05/5-1-18\\_item\\_11\\_pilot\\_scooter\\_share\\_program\\_permit\\_resolution.docx\\_.pdf](https://www.sfmta.com/sites/default/files/reports-and-documents/2018/05/5-1-18_item_11_pilot_scooter_share_program_permit_resolution.docx_.pdf)

April 2018 Amendments – Transportation Code Division I

<https://sfbos.org/sites/default/files/o0099-18.pdf>