

Dockless Vehicle Program: Permit Extension Update

August 1, 2020 – January 31, 2021

The Baltimore City Department of Transportation (BCDOT) launched an annual permit for Dockless Vehicles on August 1, 2019. Permits were awarded with the expectation of an annual (1 year) permit cycle, but due to the COVID-19 State of Emergency, the permit cycle was put on hold, and existing permits were automatically extended as required by Governor Hogan’s Executive Order. The permits remain indefinitely extended during the remainder of the State of Emergency. BCDOT will continue to evaluate and adjust the program as needed. In an effort to be transparent and constantly evaluate the Dockless Vehicle Program, the following is a summary of the first six months of the permit extension. For more information, visit: <https://transportation.baltimorecity.gov/bike-baltimore/dockless-vehicles>

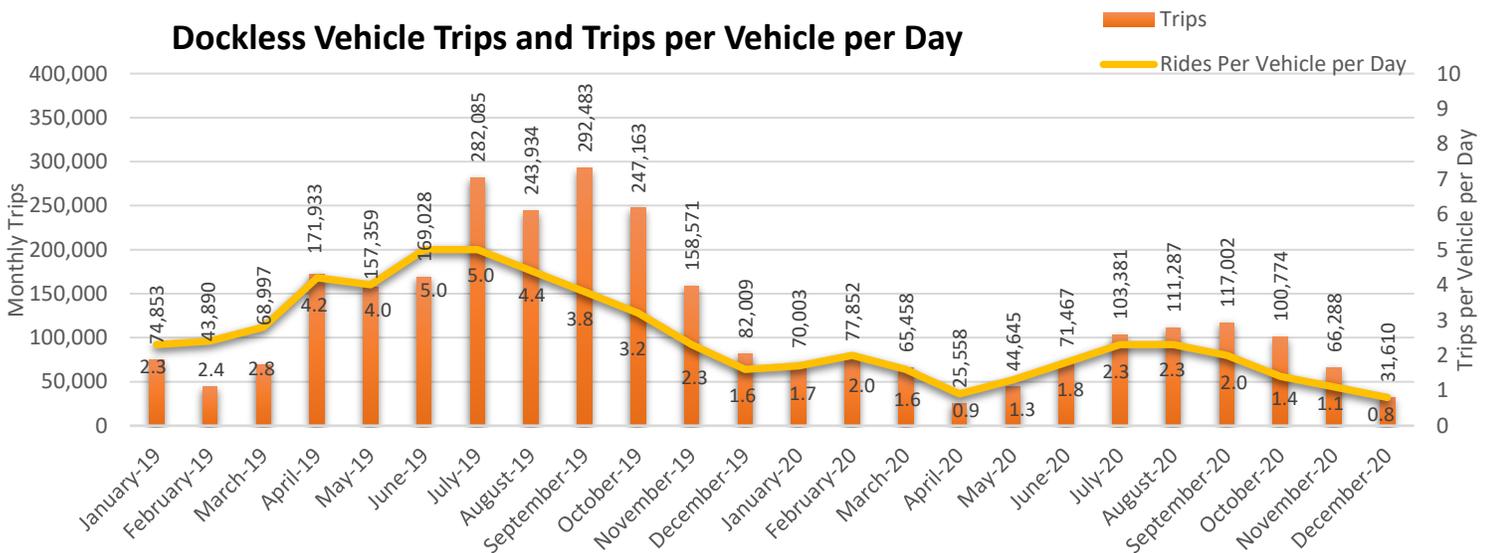
Tentative Permit Cycle Timeline

Once the State of Emergency is lifted, the BCDOT Dockless Vehicle Program will restart the permit cycle. Any company will be able apply for a permit through the competitive application process which will help BCDOT select the Dockless Vehicle companies that are best for Baltimore City.

- State of Emergency lifted
- BCDOT Releases final Rules & Regulation for 30 days of Public Comment
- BCDOT Releases Final Rules & Regulations and Permit Application Opens
- Permits are awarded 60 days after State of Emergency is lifted
- New Permits become active 90 days after State of Emergency is lifted

Program Data and Trends

Since the COVID-19 pandemic began, transportation patterns have shifted tremendously. Key metrics for monitoring the success of the Dockless Vehicle Program include the number of trips and how they are dispersed across Baltimore City.



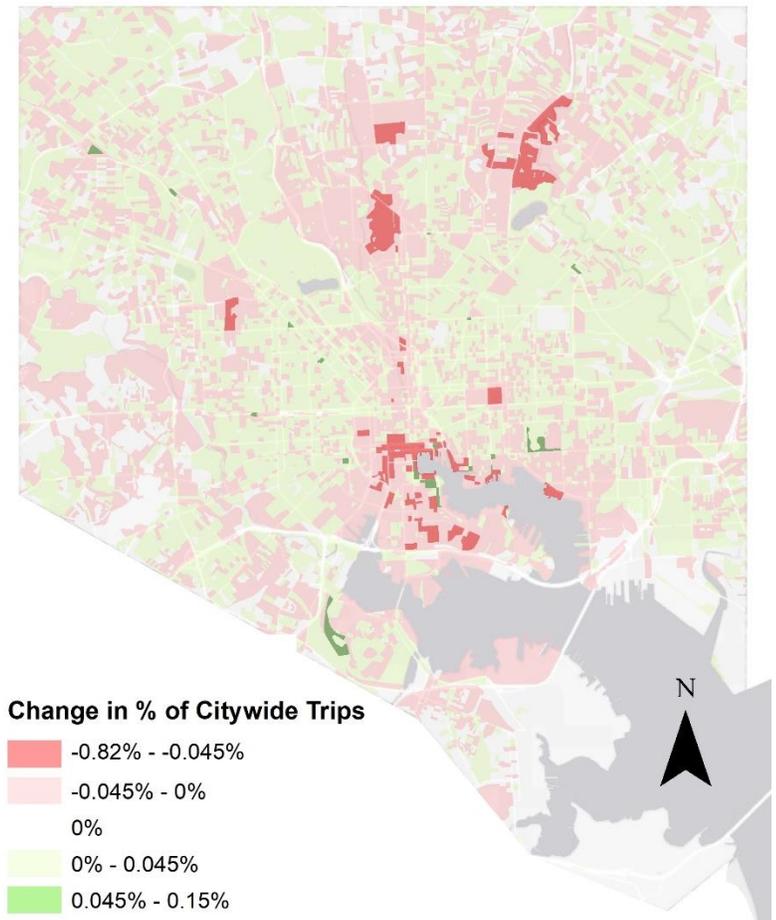
In 2020 trips dropped 55.6% from 2019. Trips per vehicle per day averaged 1.6 for 2020, indicating that there were appropriate number of dockless vehicles deployed to meet the reduced demand.

The map shows the differences in the proportion of total trip origins in each Census Block between the periods of August 15, 2019 – January 15, 2020 and August 15, 2020 – January 15, 2021. * Notable geographic trends after the emergence of COVID-19 include substantial declines in the proportion of trips in the Inner Harbor, Downtown, and at colleges/ universities. There were increased proportions of trips at parks (i.e., Federal Hill Park, Patterson Park), several equity zones, and along rail transit corridors.

These trends also align with shifts in temporal patterns which showed a shift away from rush hour trips to more midday and weekend trips.

* The percentage change are very small since trips are distributed among Baltimore City’s 13,475 Census Blocks, but the darker colors indicate Census Blocks more than approximately 3 standard deviations outside of the mean.

Change in Proportion of Trips
Aug. 15, 2019 – Jan. 15, 2020 vs. Aug. 15, 2020 – Jan. 15, 2021



DOT Support and Expenditures

BCDOT support of the Dockless Program is directly funded through company permitting fees — the following are highlights from the past six months.

Program Management and Evaluation

- **Equity Evaluations:** BCDOT is still closely monitoring the effectiveness and placement of required Equity Zone deployments. During this extension BCDOT performed observations in the zones where permittees are required to place vehicles each morning in order to modify the zones to reflect the COVID-19 ridership changes. These observations are a base for the: Johns Hopkins University Bloomberg School of Public Health’s New Mobility Initiative which will further evaluate equity strategies and vehicle use across Baltimore City.
- **Fleet Management:** Monthly vehicle maintenance and parking inspections have continued as a way for BCDOT to inspect vehicle fleets for maintenance, upkeep, proper parking, and test response time for vehicle retrieval or repositioning. Each month, BCDOT performs checks in a different location in the city.
- **Data Management:** BCDOT renewed its annual contract with Populus to securely store, aggregate and visualize data coming from the dockless vehicles. Data is conveyed from vehicles in the MDS API format and the City of Baltimore recently joined the Open Mobility Foundation which regulates data endpoint development.

Looking Ahead:

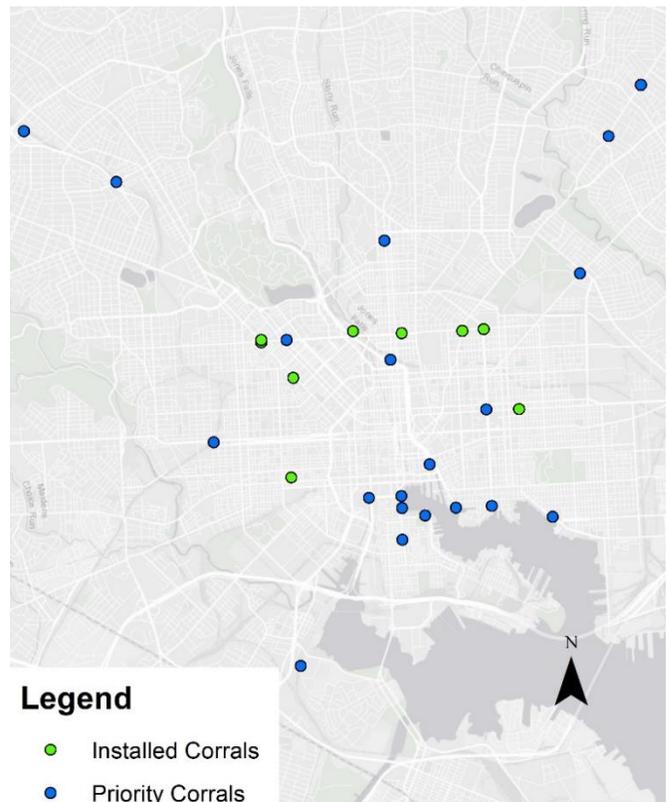
- **Policy Updates:** While the permit is extended, BCDOT is routinely tracking developments from around the world and adjusting the planned Rules and Regulations for the Dockless Vehicle permit. BCDOT is planning another annual survey and public comment period to get feedback on the policies for the next permit.

Infrastructure

- Scooter and Bike Parking Corrals: To increase courteous parking, BCDOT designed low-cost scooter and bike parking corrals. Pilot corrals were installed along North Avenue and at Public Markets. After analyzing the installations and Spin's Preferred Parking Spots program to incentivize proper parking, BCDOT is has prioritized the next 20 locations. Locations were selected based on: transit connections, reducing vandalism, and equity zones with strong ridership.



A pilot parking corral at the Upton Metro Station



Legend

- Installed Corrals
- Priority Corrals

Corral Locations, installed and coming soon.

- Bike Facility Maintenance: Bike facilities are the safest place to ride a scooter, but new riders and vehicular differences mean scooters can be more at risk to maintenance issues. Following the maintenance audit completed in the spring, dockless vehicle permit fees are used for work orders including replacing over 100 flex post, converting two storm drains to be bike friendly, and adding green “skips” to improve intersection safety along frequently travelled corridors.

Looking ahead

- Corrals and bike facility maintenance will continue to be a focus for the program to encourage safe and courteous use of dockless vehicles.

Education & Outreach

- Public Service Announcement: After meeting with the Mayor’s Commission on Disabilities, BCDOT alongside the Office of Equity and Civil Rights completed a PSA highlighting how to consider others on the roadway. The video with tips for safely riding and parking scooters will be broadcast with the installation of corrals.
- Traffic Enforcement Officers Training: BCDOT Traffic Enforcement Officers (TEOs) who are tasked with enforcing non-moving violations and directing traffic celebrated Bike (and scoot!) to Work Week with a training about bike and scooter laws, safety, and learned new skills in BCDOT’s Safety City.

Looking Ahead

- The BCDOT Transit Bureau released an RFI for a community event sponsorship program. Through this program, BCDOT aims to support and have a presence in local events, particular in underserved areas. Dockless Vehicles are one service which will be showcased at sponsored events.

Vendor Updates

Going into 2021, two operators are active in Baltimore City under the extended permits: Spin and Lime. The companies have adjusted operations to meet challenges and are gearing up for spring! Check out their latest projects below.



In August of 2020, Spin launched its discounted **Preferred Parking Spots** program focused on incentivizing safe, acceptable parking all throughout Baltimore. Here's how it's working:

- Riders park near the \$ sign in the app and take a picture of where they parked. Riders then receive \$0.50 credit applied to their Spin Wallet balance for future rides.
- Almost 4,500 trips have ended inside Preferred Parking Spots with approximately \$2,250 paid out in rider credit.
- Some of our top Preferred Parking Spot destinations include popular transit stops located in our equity zones, such as West Cold Spring Station and Upton Station in West Baltimore. The DOT corrals will soon be PPS in the Spin app.

In 2020, Spin launched its new safety campaign, **Spin Safe Digital**. Users who get 100% on the Spin Safety Quiz get \$5 credit for rides. So far in Baltimore:

- 192 people have taken the Safety quiz, and more than 600 have viewed the website
- Community partners like Bikemore have shared Spin Safe Digital with their networks

To take the quiz and receive the credits, please visit:
<https://www.spin.app/safety>

It is an exciting time for Lime and we continue to be excited to partner with the City of Baltimore and BCDOT. Lime is quickly approaching 2 million trips in Baltimore. This is a significant milestone for any City and we are excited to have provided this many trips in Baltimore.



Despite the obvious challenges for industries worldwide (including micromobility) during Covid, Lime has maintained a robust number of scooters and bikes - launching our bike service with 75 Jump bikes in October -- and will continue to provide scooter and bike services in 2021. Additionally, as we learn more about Covid, Lime has continued to update our protocols to keep our riders and staff safe.

Lime continues to partner with Bikemore as our Lime Hero, which is a program that allows users to round up their donation to the nearest whole unlock value once enrolled. Lime is excited to continue to offer this in Baltimore.

Did you know that there are open and public Dockless Vehicle meetings?

The Dockless Vehicle Committee meets monthly to review data, report issues, and discuss ongoing improvements to the program. The unofficial committee generally meets on the second Wednesday of each month at 10:00 a.m. via teleconference. The next meetings will be on February 10, March 10, and April 14, 2021.

For more information about the BCDOT Dockless Vehicle program meetings, please visit:

<https://transportation.baltimorecity.gov/dockless-vehicle-committee>

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