
From: Emily Ranson <emranson@gmail.com>
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To: CouncilMail
Cc: Ted Cochran
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Hi,

I have attached the testimony the Howard County Bicycle Advisory Group directed its co-chairs to write in support of CR19-2024.

Best,

Emily

February 15, 2024

The Howard County Bicycle Advisory Group (BAG) is an advisory group established by Howard County Code Section 6.408 to "advise the County Executive and County Administration" on matters of bicycle transportation, particularly the implementation of the Bicycle Master Plan. In our public meetings, we discuss various issues relating to bicycles and pedestrians, including the county's ongoing scooter program and plans.

At our meeting on February 13th, the BAG voted to request that our chairs write a letter of support for the scooter program in general and the Office of Transportation's proposal to charge the vendor for the scooter program a \$2,000 fee in particular.

Last year, the County's request for proposals for scooter companies to operate within the county charged a fee of \$10,000. Unfortunately, last year there were no companies who bid on the opportunity to operate within the county, and we understand the business risks of setting up a new scooter program for a company.

Scooters are an accessible option for residents and guests to move about the urban corridors of the county. In the six-month 2022 pilot program in downtown Columbia, Wilde Lake, Harpers Choice, and Oakland Mills, scooters were used over 12,800 times for short trips, indicating that they help meet a real need in this area.

We want to encourage vendors to provide this service in 2024, that also incorporate common-sense changes to requirements such as designated scooter parking areas and seven-day vendor staffing.

We therefore support the Office of Transportation's proposal to reduce the fee to \$2,000 for their 2024 RFP for a scooter vendor.

Thank you,

Emily Ranson & Ted Cochran
Chairs of the Howard County Bicycle Advisory Group