LRM 080526A

LEGISLATIVE REQUEST MEMORANDUM

This is a scoping document to be prepared with information already known or readily available, without much additional research; inform Council of the options including resource call on staff and budget.

Title: Explore Options to Allow a Shared Micromobility Program, Including E-Scooters, E-Gliders and E-Bikes, Within the City

Requesting Councilmember: Councilmember Jon Pascal; Councilmember Jay Arnold; Deputy Mayor Neal Black	Department: Public Works Author: Stephen Padua, Transportation Manager
Date of Request: August 5, 2026	Due Date: September 15, 2026

REQUEST SUMMARY

A clear, concise description of the issue(s) to be addressed, and why the City should be involved.

This Legislative Request Memo (LRM) was introduced by Councilmember Pascal as a joint request with Councilmember Arnold and Deputy Mayor Black. Many municipalities in the Puget Sound region have established micromobility partnerships to offer their communities another affordable option to travel around town. Kirkland previously explored micromobility options in 2019,[1] which resulted in changes in policies and code but, at that time, the City could not identify any micromobility companies that could adequately address the access, safety, and clutter concerns of the Kirkland community.

Today, all the surrounding cities around the City of Kirkland have established partnerships with a micromobility company, specifically, Lime Micromobility. On August 3, 2026, representatives from Lime Micromobility sent a letter of interest to Kirkland City Council requesting that the City explore the newest micromobility options offered by Lime and similar companies and consider implementing a shared micromobility program.

The intent of this request is to evaluate the concept of implementing a shared micromobility program in Kirkland, as a potential strategy to enhance transportation options for the Kirkland community and the surrounding region.

[1] https://www.kirklandwa.gov/files/sharedassets/public/v/1/city-council/agenda-documents/2019/march-19-2019/10f_business.pdf

BENEFITS

Preliminary potential benefits of the proposal.

Exploration of a shared micromobility program has several benefits for the larger community:

- May provide an affordable transportation option.
- Expands first-mile/last-mile connectivity to transit stops, increasing transit use.
- Reduces traffic congestion by shifting shorter trips away from car use and, relatedly, also:
  - Lowers greenhouse gas emissions and improves air quality; and
  - Reduces vehicle parking demand, freeing up curb space use.
- Supports economic activity, by enhancing access to shops, restaurants, and services.
- Encourages a healthier lifestyle.
- Provides useful transportation data insights to support options the community wants and needs.

IMPACTS

Preliminary potential impacts of the proposal (including legal/financial).

Preliminary research has identified the following potential impacts of allowing micromobility operations in Kirkland. Additional research is needed to completely understand all impacts and what it means for the Kirkland community.

- **Staffing**: Supporting this project will require extensive coordination on operations, regular contract management, and significant community engagement and communications. It will also require staff resources to draft proposed legislation and supporting proposal requests, policies, and permits.
- **Costs**: The project will require an initial City investment to address community concerns within the right-of-way, parking of devices, and any other requirements for the program.
- **American Disabilities Act (ADA)**: Management of device parking is essential to mitigate and prevent obstruction of accessible routes that meet ADA requirements.
- **Safety**: A new micromobility program will need to address safety concerns related to sidewalk use, use in parks, parking of devices impeding access, users obeying all traffic laws, and mitigate injuries from collisions. In addition, currently, there is no regulation requiring helmet use for bicyclists and users of e-bikes and motorized scooters in Kirkland, and significant head injuries are increasing without helmets on electric micromobility devices.
- **City risk**: The addition of a new transportation program adds liability risk, similar to other private use of the right-of-way and public property.
- **Regulatory and permitting framework**: The City will need to explore potential code changes or other legislation for a selection and/or permitting process for a shared micromobility program and allowed use of the right-of-way.

COUNCIL VISION AND GOALS

List all that apply.

Balanced Transportation

EQUITY

Preliminary discussion on how the proposal may impact diversity, equity, and inclusion.

A shared micromobility program may have the following positive impacts on diversity, equity, and inclusion:

- Offering more affordable transportation options for low-income residents who may not have access to a car or who cannot afford the up-front and maintenance costs of owning micromobility devices.
- Improving access to jobs, services, and community spaces for underserved neighborhoods.
- Supports mobility for individuals with limited transportation choices, including those who cannot drive due to age, ability, or cost.
- Create opportunities for inclusive community engagement through discounted fare programs and accessible device design.

A shared micromobility program may have the following negative impacts on diversity, equity, and inclusion:

- Create accessibility challenges if mis-parked devices block sidewalks, curb ramps, or transit access, making mobility harder for users of the right-of-way, particularly people with disabilities or those traveling with strollers.
- Augment digital access barriers for community members who lack smartphones, credit cards, or comfort with app-based systems.
- Generate safety inequities with uneven infrastructure such as bike facilities, lighting, signage.

STAKEHOLDERS / OUTREACH

Preliminary potential stakeholders impacted and outreach to be considered.

A shared micromobility program may impact the broader community, including but not exclusive to:

- Low-income and underserved communities,
- People with disabilities,
- Local businesses,
- Transit agencies,
- Schools and parks,
- Senior communities,
- Environmental groups,
- Public safety personnel, and
- Public works staff.

Potential outreach strategies to connect with stakeholders include but are not exclusive to:

- Email listserv and social media messaging,
- Neighborhood Association meetings,
- Direct communication and coordination with advocacy groups,
- Partnership with the groups on community messaging,
- Consultation with healthcare providers, transit authorities, public safety personnel, public works operations staff to mitigate program impacts, and
- Community meetings.

RESOURCES AND BUDGET

Preliminary potential staff resources needed and whether current staff and budget authority could accommodate the request.

Any of the options considered (detailed in the next section), would require additional staff resources and/or a re-prioritization or a suspension of current work plan items. There is no existing staff capacity to take on a new initiative of this scope and scale. A few work plan items for the Transportation Division that would need to be considered for suspension or prioritized for a later time include:

- Implementation of parking study,
- Implementation of ongoing transit study, or
- 84th Ave Feasibility Study

Additionally, depending on the preferred option, operating funds may be required to manage and operate an ongoing program.

Should Council direct staff to move forward, staff will return to provide specific estimated costs and an implementation timeline associated with this effort.

OPTIONS

Potential options or alternatives that could be evaluated.
If Council chooses an option, what would be the timeframe?

Staff have identified four potential options:

1. **Do not proceed with a micromobility program:** Not currently budgeted in 2027/2028.
2. **Pilot a shared mobility program:** Identify a private partner to pilot a program within a limited area for a limited time. This would allow the City to identify issues, problem-solve, and determine if an ongoing program is supported by the community.
3. **Contract and partner with a private company:** The City would issue a Request For Proposal (RFP) to select a firm to operate and manage a shared micromobility program. Timeline to get a program fully operational is estimated to take six to twelve months, dependent on time to make code amendments and setup permitting and the chosen company's readiness to launch.
4. **Procure and operate own program fleet**: The City would conduct an extensive procurement process which would take a minimum of 1-2 years to achieve operational readiness.

Notably, the pilot under Option 2 does not take less staff resources than the large-scale program in Option 3, although it provides a small-scale, short-term test to evaluate a new program before launching a large-scale program.

Under any option, significant upfront staff resources would be needed to create policies and potential legislation, oversee permitting, manage a request for proposals process, coordinate with operators and public works crews, set up reporting, conduct field work, and manage public engagement. Once in operation, a program will likely impact public works, police, and code enforcement resources, and supporting legal resources, to ensure safe operations and minimal impact on the community.

Option 4 requires significantly higher level of staff and budget resources. This would include recruiting new operations staff for management of the fleet, maintenance, and distribution/relocation. Significant additional resources are also required for procurement of City-owned micromobility fleet, larger vehicles for distribution/relocations, and space for storage and maintenance of fleet.

REVIEWS REQUIRED

Department Director responsible for acquiring Finance and Legal review before submitting to City Manager.

Legal review required	☒Reviewed by Legal ☒Implications requiring further legal analysis	Signature: Darcey Eilers Date: 9/4/2026
Legal Notes: ☒Legislative change ☐State/federal change		
Fiscal review required	☒Reviewed by Finance ☐Implications requiring further financial analysis	Signature: Michael Olson Date: 9/2/2026
Finance Notes:		
Director review required	☐Reviewed	Signature: Date:

City Manager	☒Approved	Signature: Kurt Triplett Date: 10/12/2026
City Manager Notes:		