

DATE: December 5, 2023

TO: Downtown Committee

FROM: Kirstin Hinds, Economic Development Strategist

SUBJECT: **Personal Delivery Device Pilot Program Update**

PURPOSE

The purpose of this memorandum is to provide the Downtown Committee with an update on bringing back the Personal Delivery Device Pilot Program and discussing program augmentations.

BACKGROUND

A personal delivery device (PDD) is an automated or remotely piloted device that contains storage space for packages, food, and other delivery items. The PDD Pilot Program was created in 2018 in response to the City being approached by PDD companies wishing to operate within the City's jurisdiction and not having policies to regulate the use of PDDs in the public right-of-way. A pilot program was approved by the City Council (Attachment 1—City Council Report, February 27, 2018). The pilot program provides guidelines and the approval process, including operational and insurance requirements for companies interested in operating in Mountain View. One company, Google, participated in the PDD Pilot Program. They partnered with the Mountain View Public Library to operate a "Book Bot" PDD. The program allowed Library patrons to return Library materials via the PDDs, and the program ran for three months, from March 2019 through June 2019.

In March 2020, the COVID-19 global pandemic began, and businesses had to change their regular operations. The City Council directed staff to implement programs to support small businesses impacted by COVID-19. The PDD Pilot Program emerged as a method to support essential businesses and allow the public to stay at home. The City Council approved continuation of the PDD Pilot Program (Attachment 2—City Council Report, May 5, 2020) with Starship Technologies as a participating company.

In October 2022, staff began working on program augmentations and conducting additional best practice research. Today, there are no current operators of PDDs in Mountain View, but the Economic Development Team continues to field inquiries from other vendors interested in operating in Mountain View.

ANALYSIS

Based on best practice research from other communities along with recent interactions with companies interested in participating in the pilot program, staff is developing new program considerations to encourage economic development and keep pedestrians and other sidewalk users safe. The Downtown Committee and Bicycle/Pedestrian Advisory Committee are part of this discussion because the pilot program falls under the general functions of both advisory bodies. The suggested PDD Pilot Program augmentations are outlined in Table 1.

Table 1: Mountain View Current and Proposed PDD Pilot

	<u>Current Program</u>	<u>New Program Additions/Augmentations</u>
Company Requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No more than three PDD companies can participate. • No more than 10 devices operations at one time per company. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain a local presence beyond the device itself in Mountain View. • Provide priority for Mountain View based companies. • Company must always have a contact person available to respond to law enforcement.
Device Operations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gross weight of less than 100 pounds, excluding cargo. • Human handler with the PDD the first six months. • Contact information required (website address and contact information). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact information listed on each device for both the City and vendor. • Augment: for fully autonomous delivery robots, a human handler for the first six months. • Permitted on sidewalks and within crosswalks. • Consider allowance in bicycle lanes/traffic lane shoulders where the speed limit is 35 MPH or less. Size of devices permitted in bicycle lanes may exceed 100 pounds.

		<u>New Program</u> Additions/Augmentations
	<u>Current Program</u>	
Data Requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Documentation of incidents involving an injury to an individual/animal. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Add performance measures, including number of deliveries, miles traveled, time of day completed by each PDD, incidents involving interactions with the public, estimate of CO₂ emissions reduced from deliveries, and heat map of frequent routes. Provide a report every quarter and quarterly check-in with City staff. Document all public inquiries (spreadsheet summary). Provide feedback and assessment of any sidewalk infrastructure or traffic infrastructure that may pose safety or operational challenges for pedestrians and PDDs. (An example may be uplifting in a section of sidewalk.)
Safety Requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not unreasonably interfere with pedestrians or traffic. Yield to pedestrians, including people on stakes, skateboards, and bicyclists. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minimize stopping on a curb ramp or in front of pedestrian push buttons. Speed limits: Sidewalk speed limit max 10 MPH. Bike lane/shoulder speed limit maximum 20 MPH. Auditory and light warnings required. Plan to stay updated on road closures and construction, as well not interfering with emergency responders.
Additional Items		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Add clarifying language on what types of public rights-of-way PDDs are not allowed on, including public trails. Align with other City policies. Align with California Vehicle Code.

NEXT STEPS

After discussing the augmented pilot program with the Downtown Committee and Bicycle/Pedestrian Advisory Committee, staff will continue to work with the Public Works Department to ensure the pilot program provides the balance between economic development initiatives and pedestrian safety. Staff will return to the City Council for consideration in spring 2024.

JL/4/CDD

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- Attachments:
1. [City Council Report, February 27, 2018](#)
 2. [City Council Report, May 5, 2020](#)