

# E-Scooters Behaving Badly: U.S. Cities Race To Keep Up With Small Vehicle Shares

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From San Francisco to Washington, D.C., e-scooters and dockless bikes have become the latest transportation trend to grip urban spaces — and local governments are struggling to keep up.

The concept is simple: Riders download an app, find and unlock a scooter or bike, and leave it when they're done. Many cost as little as \$1, and fans of the services tout them as faster, easier, and greener ways to get where they're going.

But some residents are angry about what they call bad behavior: riders weaving in and out of traffic without helmets; speeding down sidewalks and blocking the way for pedestrians and those with disabilities; and discarding bikes and scooters in inconvenient places. It's even inspired a hashtag: #ScootersBehavingBadly.

Cities have clashed with the rental companies on ways to approach regulation. San Francisco and Santa Monica both have issued cease-and-desist orders to a handful of firms until they can come up with solutions. In Austin, Texas, the company LimeBike deployed 200 scooters before it finished negotiating an agreement with the city.

Patrick Sisson, a reporter with the website Curbed, says local governments largely have been unprepared to regulate the new transportation technologies, and are having to play catch-up on creating new rules.

"It sort of follows the same blueprint we saw with Uber and Lyft, where tech companies are looking to provide transportation mobility solutions," Sisson says. "But they're asking for forgiveness after the fact instead of permission before the fact."

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## Interview Highlights

### On #ScootersBehavingBadly in California

It's what some have called "Scooter-geddon." In San Francisco especially, people have been complaining quite a bit about these scooters — that they're blocking the right of way. San Francisco has issued a lot of declarations and passed laws that are looking for permitting of the scooters. They're actually even asking scooter riders to take photos of where they park their scooters to make sure they're not blocking the right of way. In Santa Monica, the company Bird settled for \$300,000 with the city after being fined for safety violations and blocking the right of way....

This is also spreading to cities like Washington, D.C., and Austin where people are having the same complaints.

### On how e-scooters and dockless bikes provide solutions to other transportation issues



## Technology

### New Wave Of Electric 2-Wheelers Hits U.S. City Streets

The tech companies — they're on to something. I mean, there's a great desire for people to have car-free, last-mile transportation solutions [instead of walking from the train or bus]. I remember speaking to someone in Santa Monica city government that says, "You know, we really like the idea of having these around — it's just there's existing transportation infrastructure, there's safety issues. We just gotta make sure it's properly regulated."