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I'm writing today to express NEWaukee's support for an additional study on the use of electric scooters in Milwaukee. I know firsthand the positive impact scooters can have on small businesses, the climate, and our neighborhoods because I was an avid user in 2019.

In 2019, I took fewer car trips, visited more small businesses, and got to connect to more of the downtown neighborhood than usual.

Where didn't I see this incredible impact? In the neighborhoods where I live. That is because the scooters were limited to mostly downtown use. By not expanding this pilot to the communities, we send a clear message that Milwaukee doesn't want transportation to be equitable.

Milwaukee, unfortunately, is a sprawling city. That means most people have houses that are more than a 15-minute walk to services. While scooters are an excellent option downtown, increased mobility in our neighborhoods is critically essential for connecting people to jobs, health care, schools, social life, and civic engagement.

As urbanists, our fundamental understanding should be to increase mobility in our neighborhoods to reduce violence, create jobs, and improve health. While scooters are just technological devices, they represent greater accessibility and increased mobility for people of color to move more freely throughout our beautiful city.

We are right to have a safety concern when it comes to transportation. The demand for scooters and bikes should be a call to increase pedestrian infrastructure.

Instead of looking at the minimal incidents scooters have caused, let's redirect our attention to the automobile. People are dying or being injured daily in automobile accidents, yet we don't have any outrage to stop people from driving in neighborhoods. We aren't changing laws or adopting a pedestrian-first approach to our city. There is no task force to remove cars from our streets. Why is there outrage around scooters?

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2,762 scooter uses per day vs. 100 total negative concerns during the 2019 study about scooters, most concerns stemming from them being new. New things always produce adverse effects because it takes time to integrate technology into our daily lives.

After looking deep into the data, it's mind-boggling that we would want to pause any studies or discontinue the expansion of dockless electric scooters. We need more data, research, and knowledge in micro-mobility transportation to increase equity vs. decreasing access.

Milwaukee needs a pedestrian-first vision for the city. We need to prioritize micro-mobility over the automobile. We have a very long way to go. Additional research, open data, and case studies around increased economic growth due to scooter use should be welcomed and not turned down.

It is our sincere hope that these factors will be taken into consideration as you move forward. I welcome your feedback, and I look forward to working together to promote the city's diverse transit options, including electric scooters. If you'd like to discuss this further, I am always available for a call.

A Milwaukee Advocate

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CoFounder and Chief Idea Officer

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