



# City of Turku's instructions for operators of shared-use vehicles

City of Turku



# Table of contents

1 Foreword.....	3
2 Concepts.....	3
3 Prerequisites .....	4
4 Carbon neutrality .....	4
5 User guidance and safety .....	4
6 Vehicles and their maintenance.....	5
7 Parking.....	5
8 Operations and transfers.....	6
9 Feedback systems and cooperation .....	7
10 Collection, use and utilisation of data.....	8

## **City of Turku's instructions for operators of shared-use vehicles**

Report produced by: Regional public transport under the Urban Environment Division

Layout: City of Turku, Katariina Salokannel

Cover photo: Katariina Salokannel

Published on: November 2021

# 1 Foreword

The City of Turku is building its future in a situation in which the operating environment is changing at an accelerating rate. Climate change, urbanisation and digitalisation are examples of phenomena that affect the everyday lives of people all over the world. One of the goals of the Turku 2029 strategy is to make the everyday lives of people living in Turku smoother. This can be achieved by making mobility easier, for example.

The goal is that the use of all modes of transport is easy in Turku. The development of the city's transport focuses on pedestrians and cyclists, regional public transport, and the expanded use of new ecological and climate friendly technologies. Furthermore, the development of mobility plays a significant part in the climate policy. The greenhouse gas emissions of transport will be reduced at least in accordance with the Carbon neutral Turku 2029 plan. By using new and innovative modes of transport, Turku will take part in climate change mitigation.

Shared-use electric scooters and bikes are here to stay. In the future, the range may be expanded to various small electric vehicles. These small vehicles are regarded as bicycles in the Road Traffic Act, and the provision of vehicles for use in traffic constitutes a free private business activity.

The use of electric scooters and city bikes is a novel concept, and the City of Turku aims to provide companies that rent out these vehicles with instructions on good practices. The goal of these instructions is that new modes of urban transport are safe and well-functioning, and that they fit in naturally with other modes of transport.

## 2 Concepts

In these instructions,

*“operator”* means a service provider operating in the area of the City of Turku who is responsible for the provision of their service and related functions such as the collection and maintenance of vehicles, customer service and other service-related activities, regardless of whether the operator uses subcontractors. The operator will be responsible to the city for the activities required in these instructions and other agreed matters, even if the service or its part is actually provided by a party other than the operator;

*“vehicles”* mean shared-use vehicles that are publicly available through a smartphone app, ID card, password or other means of identification provided by the operator. Vehicles include electric scooters, regular and electric bikes, and various small electric vehicles. In addition, vehicles include electric personal transportation devices as defined by the Finnish

Transport and Communications Agency (Traficom), such as devices that assist walking, light electric vehicles, and electrically assisted or motorised bicycles;

“*service*” means a service provided by an operator, in which customers can pay for the use of a vehicle with any restrictions defined in the service; and

“*user*” means a customer who uses a service provided by an operator.

## 3 Prerequisites

The operator must comply with all acts, decrees and other official regulations valid in Finland and applicable to their service. In addition, the operator is obligated to comply with other standards, norms and operating policies valid in the City of Turku in their service.

The operator is responsible for the matters defined in these instructions, even if the operator purchases all services from local subcontractors. The operator is responsible for ensuring that the matters required by the city from them are fulfilled, regardless of who actually provides the service.

The operator is responsible for taking out the insurance required. The operator must notify users of the coverage and terms and conditions of their insurance. On request, the operator must provide the city with proof of their solvency and the insurance required for their activities.

## 4 Carbon neutrality

The operator undertakes to comply with the principles of sustainable development in the provision of their service. The operator is obligated to report their service emissions at least at an annual level on request. In addition, the operator must have a plan for reducing any emissions.

## 5 User guidance and safety

The operator must see to the safety of users and other people in every possible way. The operator must provide users with instructions on the use of vehicles and parking in accordance with instructions issued by the city. In addition to traffic rules, the operator must provide users with instructions on how to ensure the safety and comfort of other people on streets, bike lanes, pavements, pedestrian zones and all other public places. Instructions must be provided when a customer registers as a user, and regularly afterwards. The operator must also provide users with instructions on the use of a bicycle

helmet when using vehicles.

## 6 Vehicles and their maintenance

Vehicles must have a clearly indicated owner, and the operator must label the owner on each vehicle.

The operator must ensure that the vehicles they provide fulfil the requirements laid down in valid decrees and regulations. Key regulations include the Road Traffic Act and ISO standards (e.g. 4210:2015). As a rule, vehicles must always be operated on bike lanes when they are operated at a speed faster than walking pace. In this case, vehicle users must follow traffic rules set for cyclists. The maximum speed of electric and electrically assisted vehicles is 25 km/h, in which case they must be operated on bike lanes or roadways. The maximum power of an electrically assisted bike is 250 W, the assistance must switch off when the speed reaches 25 km/h, and the assistance can only work when pedalling. Electrically assisted vehicles travelling at a speed of more than 15 km/h must be equipped with a sound signalling device, front and rear lights, and reflectors.

To control the speed of vehicles, the operator must develop a technical solution which can limit the speed of electrically assisted or electric vehicles to a maximum of 10 km/h in areas presented in the map service. In addition, it must be ensured that speed limits are followed in the centre of Turku when using vehicles. In parts of the city centre, the speed limit is 20 km/h. Speed limits must be observed, regardless of the type of vehicle.

The operator is responsible for ensuring that their vehicles fulfil the aforementioned requirements.

Furthermore, the operator must ensure that their available vehicles are undamaged and safe. The operator must have a maintenance and service system in place to ensure that their available vehicles remain in a legal, safe and appropriate condition. The operator must have a sufficiently large staff to maintain the maintenance and service system. In addition, the operator must describe the arrangement of maintenance and the responsible party.

## 7 Parking

Vehicles must not be parked on a roadway, or on a market square, pavement or bike lane so that parking may disturb other people and traffic or present the risk of falling over or collision. The operator must aim to ensure that vehicles are parked in their designated places

or other parking areas whenever possible. Vehicles must be parked on a solid surface such as asphalt, cobblestones or concrete, not on grass, for example.

The city can define virtual parking areas (geofences) with the operator, to which the operator can deliver their vehicles. For the sake of traffic safety, the smooth flow of traffic, the accessibility of the city environment, and cleanliness, the city can, with the operator, also impose other restrictions such as areas not available for parking and areas with lower speeds. These areas will be indicated in the [city's map service](#). The city reserves the right to change any areas not available for parking and areas with lower speeds in its map service. However, the city must immediately notify the operator of any changes.

The operator must provide service users with information about areas not available for parking and areas with lower speeds. In addition, the operator must encourage users, by means of technical solutions or prices, to park in virtually defined parking areas. The operator must also aim to move incorrectly parked vehicles away from routes or locations where they present a hazard. The city requires the operator to arrange "parking patrols" to correctly park any vehicles left behind by users. The operator can arrange the patrols on their own or with other operators.

## 8 Operations and transfers

The operator must use maintenance equipment that clearly includes the operator's identification such as a logo. In addition, the maintenance equipment must indicate the contact details of the operator's customer service. Maintenance employees who transfer vehicles must wear clothes that match the operator's graphic design.

The operator must monitor the location of all their vehicles on a daily basis, and immediately transfer any vehicles that present a hazard or direct harm. The operator must appoint sufficient personnel resources, equipment and storage space for transferring vehicles.

Situations where vehicles need to be transferred include:

- Presenting a hazard, obstacle or harm for other traffic, rescue activities, parking or maintenance.
- Vehicles piling up in a specific area, breakage, abandoned vehicles, or vehicles ending up outside their operating area.

If the operator does not take the action required to transfer their vehicles, the city may transfer them if it deems that they present a hazard or direct harm.

Public areas are not intended for the long-term storage of vehicles. If required, the city will transfer any vehicles that have been unused for a long time and are considered

abandoned to interim storage. In this case, transfer and storage costs may be charged from the operator. The city's general policy on the transfer of abandoned vehicles will apply.

Shared-use vehicles cannot disturb the work of the city's maintenance employees. The operator must therefore pay special attention to the operation and transfer of their vehicles at a time of the year when streets are cleared of grit, fallen leaves or snow, for example. As the amount of maintenance required varies, especially in the winter, the operator must monitor the weather and ensure that their devices are always kept as neatly as possible. In addition, the parking of vehicles along bike lanes within the scope of enhanced winter maintenance must be avoided during the winter.

The operator can use "drops" in their activities. These are parking areas to which several vehicles are delivered at the same time and made available to users. These areas must be located so that they can be accessed using the operator's equipment by following the Road Traffic Act and good traffic practices. The operator must agree these parking areas with the city.

## 9 Feedback systems and cooperation

The operator must have straightforward customer service and communication channels (e.g. telephone service and mobile app), as well as sufficient resources for processing feedback. The feedback system must be connected to the app used to rent vehicles. Customers must be able to receive information about the safe use of vehicles from customer service systems, and to ask questions and present customer complaints in them. The operator must indicate their customer service's telephone number and other necessary contact details on each of their vehicles.

The operator must be able to serve users in Finnish. It is also recommended that customer service be provided in Swedish and English. Customer service must be available to users at least during the vehicle operating season. The operator must provide users with instructions on how to report any faults and other problems in vehicles directly to the operator. Furthermore, the operator must ensure that people other than service users can contact the operator. The operator must also provide contact details to which feedback sent to the city can be forwarded for processing.

Representatives of the operator and city must keep each other updated regarding the service, and any changes affecting it. Representatives will meet as required to maintain interaction and develop operations. Other significant parties may also participate in these meetings.

# 10 Collection, use and utilisation of data

New technologies are developing rapidly, offering unprecedented opportunities to improve the city's services. The City of Turku's goal is to be among the international leaders of the digital platform economy based on the use of data. As a result, the parties will share information to improve pedestrian, bicycle, and small vehicle traffic and its safety, and for the needs of traffic planning.

The operator will share anonymised travel data with the city. If possible, it is recommended that data also be openly accessible so that the city can use it in traffic planning, for example. Connections to the city's data systems must be possible through interfaces.

The City of Turku will publish a map view to display the real-time location of service providers' available vehicles. Location data should be based on Version 2.2 of the General Bikeshare Feed Specification (GBFS, <https://github.com/NABSA/gbfs/blob/v2.2/gbfs.md>), focusing especially on `free_bike_status` and `station_information`. Service providers undertake to provide the city with the URL of the interface through which data can be obtained in JSON format.