

The News-Gazette, Champaign-Urbana, Ill.

Opinion

Just Askin' | Veo bikes or scooters?



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March 20, 2023 · 2 min read



Mar. 20—Looks like Veo's fleet is back on the streets. Which gets more use: electric scooters or bikes?

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The University of Illinois Facilities and Services collects thorough data on the local use of bike-share company Veo's electric-powered vehicles.

According to data collected from August to December 2022, riders in Champaign-Urbana and on campus split evenly between the electric bikes and Cosmo-e scooters. But riders logged more than 90 percent of total miles (135,431 vs. 14,011) on the scooters in that time period.

Veo notified users earlier this week that their bikes and scooters are "back on the streets" of Champaign-Urbana after a winter hiatus. The full fleet of 750 vehicles is expected to be up and running by mid-April.

The company takes its wheels out of circulation in the area's "deep winter months," from December to March.

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"Our ridership significantly decreases when it's cold outside, and in addition, it's not great for the bikes to be out in the extreme elements of winter," said Shea Belahi, operations manager for Veo. "Champaign, Urbana and UIUC areas are all shut down at that time."

In the last five months of 2022, riders booted up a Veo 129,847 times, totaling 1 million minutes cruising around Champaign-Urbana.

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Both rides cost \$1 to unlock. Bikes cost an additional 20 cents per minute; scooters cost 30 cents per minute.

Veo's teal-and-black electric rides first appeared in C-U in spring 2019. Users can access them by downloading the app and scanning a QR code on a vehicle. The app shows GPS locations of each of its vehicles.

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