

SCOOTERS: ENVIRONMENTALLY FRIENDLY FORM OF TRANSPORTATION OR ELDERLY BOWLING?

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It's been the talk of the town, Bird Scooters! They are an environmentally friendly form of transportation that are available in a few cities around the world. There has been talk of these scooters coming into Newton and we are wondering if it would be worth it.

The company Bird released electric scooters to the public in the city of Brookline a few months ago in order to encourage people to drive less. However, people are concerned about the safety of these scooters and are questioning if they will really encourage people to drive less.

The scooters were supposed to be an environmentally friendly alternative form of transportation; however, there are a few downsides to the scooters. "I like the idea, but I have heard that they cause a lot of danger," said Deanna Hoffman, Bigelow Middle School Teacher and Green Team Advisor. "For example, people riding scooters and crashing into elderly. This makes me think that even though they may help the environment in terms of climate change, they may be dangerous."

These scooters seem to be catching the attention of the public, but maybe not in a positive way. According to an article by *CNN Wire* published on May 15th, 2019, Bird decided to launch their scooters into the city of San Francisco without the city's approval and later had to remove them when the city started taking action against them. The company received a negative review from San Francisco that criticized them for improper use of helmets, enough accessibility and irresponsible parking.

While these scooters have potential of being effective products, there is still much work to be done. Bird scooters can be an alternative form of transportation and will help with carbon emissions in cities. Although there are some safety concerns around Bird scooters, they could be beneficial to the city of Newton with changes and developments that could make them safer to use around others. The company should work on improving their parking system and ensuring the absolute safety of riders, pedestrians and drivers before implementing their products into more cities.

If you still have any questions or want to share your opinion on this topic, contact Ruthanne Fuller at rfuller@newtonma.gov or the Newton City Council at citycouncil@newtonma.gov.