



CITYSTREETS

is known as a forward-thinking, NYC based organization focused on improving the urban environment by exposing transportation policy flaws, their cultural impact on cities, and bringing much needed attention to pedestrian safety issues. At Citystreets we have spent approximately 500 hours riding a Segway in NYC—mostly on sidewalks—in all weather and at all times of the day and evening. Citystreets has also carried out qualitative research over a 6 month period with residents of NYC. Our knowledge about Segway use is not based on opinion but on fact and experience of use and the results of research with NYC voters.

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Fact Sheet

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Perceptions are based on the aggregate of common mis-conceptions by policy analysts and Good Government Groups that have commented on Segway regulation. It's worth noting that many of these positions are written by people who have never been on a Segway.

BILL

<http://assembly.state.ny.us/leg/?bn=S00579&sh=t>

RELEVANT ARTICLES

<http://citystreets.org/segway.html>

<http://citystreets.org/nysun042004.pdf>

FACT SHEET ON BILL S.579-C

PERCEPTION

1. Segways are scooters or similar to scooters.

2. Segways are dangerously fast.

3. Segways are environmentally harmful. Segways will make New York's air dirtier. Segways do not displace more polluting forms of transportation.

4. Segway use would discourage walking.

5. Segways on Sidewalks are similar to bicycles on sidewalks.

6. Segways are incompatible with pedestrian traffic. Segways cannot be operated safely in a dense urban environment. Segways would make our sidewalks dangerous.

7. Segways have safety problems that cause riders to fall.

8. Segways would be particularly dangerous for the elderly and the disabled, the infirm, blind and children.

9. New York's pedestrians will be used as guinea pigs by the Segway Corporation.

REALITY

1. Segways have unique operating characteristics and are not scooters. Unlike motorized scooters Segways use neither brakes nor throttles for propulsion and braking. Specifically a Segway has no mechanical braking system (no brake pedal or lever) and no mechanical propulsion system (no gas pedal or throttle). A Segway can be ridden in reverse and has a turning radius of zero. Gas powered, electric and human powered scooters do not operate like this.

2. Speed. There has been much said about the speed of a Segway so let us clear the air on this. Segway operates at a human speed, which is why there is no speedometer. Its top speed in human terms is a run-6 minute mile. In vehicle terms its top speed is about 10 m.p.h.. However, this misses a much bigger point. The genius of this machine and what further separates it from every vehicle previously invented, is the fact that it is fully operational at 0 m.p.h.. Turn a cars steering wheel when it is stopped, nothing happens. Scooters and bicycle fall over but a Segway is on, more like awake actually, and moves with you in a calm safe and intuitive manner.

3. Segways are electrically powered, which means there is no tailpipe and zero emissions (this also means they can be ridden indoors). If you converted the energy they use to gasoline, Segways get the equivalent of 450 miles per gallon. The Segways effective range is 10 miles. The EPA estimates that 91% of all travel is by a single individual, in an automobile, traveling less than 5 miles, mainly in urban centers. This means if integrated into NYC Segway has the potential to mitigate millions of auto trips everyday.

4. While our real world experience shows that due to the extended distance of travel Segways often mitigate taxi and other auto trips. On its face this statement is illogical as elevators, escalators, and all public and private transportation also discourage walking and our city couldn't function without these assistive walking devices.

5. Riding a segway on a sidewalk is not similar to riding a bicycle on a sidewalk and thus not comparable.

6. A segway is very pedestrian like in its behavior. So much so, that the opposite argument—that Segways ARE pedestrian like—is more accurate. We have ridden a Segway on streets, pathways, sidewalks, crowded sidewalks, and in street fairs, all without any problems. As Segways take up so much less space than automobiles, Segways can be a new tool for planners enabling them to design even denser and more efficient environments for humans to live in—making the ideal use of Segways a dense urban environment.

7. There have been over 150,000 hours of Segway use in NYC without one injury or death. Our experience with the machine has shown it to be rugged, dependable, predictable and safe. We have not experienced any safety problems that cause riders to fall.

8. During our qualitative research we have allowed more than 50 people over the age of 70 years old try a Segway. The oldest was 91 and many of these people have been in their 80's. Segways can benefit our older residents more than any other demographic. Additionally, the Segway has many unexplored medical applications and can be extremely helpful to amputees, people with MS and CP, people recovering from injuries (breaks and strains) or other mobility issues that make it hard to walk for people who are otherwise able to stand.

9. Our real world experience has taught us that New Yorkers are almost unanimously in favor of Segways.