

**MEDIA RELEASE**  
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**June 17, 2021**

**University of Washington's Urban Freight Lab (UFL) Collaborates with  
Seattle Department of Transportation, REEF, BrightDrop, Coaster Cycles,  
and AxleHire to Pioneer Shared Sustainable Last-Mile Neighborhood  
Delivery Hub**

- The project brings together multiple last-mile solutions innovators, with the support of the Seattle Department of Transportation, to evaluate sustainable last-mile delivery solutions.
- University of Washington's Urban Freight Lab, STAR Lab, AxleHire, Coaster Cycles, BrightDrop and REEF collaborate to test new solutions, more quickly, and more cost effectively.
- Seattle's Uptown neighborhood, already home to a number of last mile delivery innovations, is now home to a zero operating emissions, last-mile delivery pilot.
- The pilot will run through mid-summer and is designed to enhance urban last-mile goods and service delivery by improving access while reducing emissions.
- The project supports the City of Seattle's Transportation Electrification Blueprint by bringing zero operating emissions technology to last-mile delivery. It provides an opportunity for the City to learn about needed infrastructure and policy changes that will enable larger scale implementations needed to meet the City's climate goals.

JUNE 17, SEATTLE, WA - University of Washington's [Urban Freight Lab \(UFL\)](#) has launched and deployed one of the nation's first zero operating-emissions, last-mile delivery pilots in the Uptown neighborhood of Seattle, in collaboration with the [Seattle Department of Transportation](#) (SDOT) and tech and delivery companies including [AxleHire](#), [Coaster Cycles](#), [BrightDrop](#), and [REEF](#).

Using zero operating emissions technologies, the pilot, titled [Seattle Neighborhood Delivery Hub](#), allows innovative last-mile solutions providers to more quickly and efficiently test new vehicles, delivery models, and technologies - all in service of getting new eco-friendly solutions to market more quickly. These technologies are an important part of the City of Seattle's strategy to reduce climate emissions outlined in its [Transportation Electrification Blueprint](#), including the goal of transitioning 30 percent of goods delivery to zero emissions by 2030.

The neighborhood delivery hub houses:

- A neighborhood kitchen, bringing the local area quick and low-emissions access to some of their favorite delivery restaurants.
- A common-carrier parcel locker, providing neighbors secure and contactless package delivery from all major package carriers in an energy-efficient model, enabling neighbors to complete their own final mile.
- A cargo-bike delivery service enabling zero operating emissions last-mile goods transport by safe, neighborhood friendly vehicles.

The neighborhood delivery hub and associated transport modes are equipped with an array of sensors that provide detailed data regarding activity. Hub sensors are provided by the University of Washington's STAR Lab, a research facility for Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) theories and applications. This data will be analyzed by the Urban Freight Lab to evaluate energy reductions and provide feedback for all participants as they work to improve their products and operating models.

### **AxleHire**

AxleHire provides the technology that makes it possible to deliver the packages to the end customer.

"We've all come together as people who are passionate about more efficient and sustainable delivery methods in major metro areas," said Daniel Sokolovsky, founder of AxleHire. "In a world where logistics and supply chain are often part of the problem (i.e. global warming), we're excited to provide last-mile technology that is part of the solution."

### **BrightDrop:**

BrightDrop, a new business from General Motors, is contributing its propulsion-assisted electric pallets, [EP1s](#), to help optimize the movement of goods over short distances, such as from a delivery vehicle to a customer's door.

"BrightDrop is proud to work alongside these like-minded organizations at the neighborhood delivery hub to test the feasibility of a more sustainable last-mile perishable goods delivery service. We see this as an opportunity to encourage people to step into a place of imagination to consider the world of delivery and logistics not as it is, but how it could be sooner than later," said Bob Tiderington, senior manager for strategy and operations at BrightDrop. "At a time when less contact is more, BrightDrop's EP1 is designed to help reduce package touch points, costs and physical strain on the labor force."

## **The Seattle Department of Transportation**

The Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT) is working to create more sustainable options for people, goods and services to move around our city. One of the ways SDOT supports this pilot is by authorizing the commercial use of public streets, curb space and sidewalks.

Seattle is in a unique position to lead the nation in electrifying the transportation sector with goals outlined in the City's [Transportation Electrification Blueprint](#), including that 30 percent of goods will be delivered by zero-emissions vehicles by 2030.

“Over 60 percent of Seattle’s greenhouse gas emissions comes from transportation, so we must change how we move around in order to meet our commitment to become carbon neutral by 2050,” said Sam Zimbabwe, director, Seattle Department of Transportation. “Rethinking how we deliver goods is a critical part of this, so we are excited to partner with University of Washington’s Urban Freight Lab and the private sector to find innovative solutions to meet our aggressive targets towards a more sustainable future.”

## **Coaster Cycles**

Leveraging quick-response manufacturing, Coaster Cycles developed an innovative Electric Cargo Trike (ECT) to accommodate the BrightDrop EP1.

“Coaster Cycles exists to be a vital part of the city of tomorrow,” said Ben Morris, founder and CEO of Coaster Cycles. “It’s easy to ignore what exists between the mouse-click and the package on our doorstep and the true cost of convenience. There is real effort behind making this a better experience and, more importantly, a sustainable and responsible one.”

## **REEF:**

REEF is providing the hub’s real estate, as well as operating a neighborhood kitchen onsite. The kitchen will prepare online food orders for delivery, without front-of-house operations, reducing overhead costs for restaurateurs and providing fast and inexpensive delivery options for customers.

“REEF is proud to be part of a project that connects neighborhoods and advances our mission of creating walkable 15-minute cities,” said Bill Sleeth, head of Physical Product at REEF. “The development of last

mile logistics centers will reduce congestion, pollution and traffic, while allowing people to focus on the things they love to do, rather than things they need to do.”

### **Urban Freight Lab:**

UFL serves as a catalyst, facilitator, and evaluator, bringing both private and public sector partners together for this experimental effort.

“In partnership with our members, and the City of Seattle, the Urban Freight Lab is excited to help catalyze a transition to zero-emissions last-mile delivery,” said Anne Goodchild, founding director, Supply Chain Transportation & Logistics Center (which houses the Urban Freight Lab) and professor, Civil and Environmental Engineering, University of Washington. “We anticipate the pilot will reduce traffic in the Uptown neighborhood, provide access to safe and convenient goods and services, and allow our partners to test novel, zero-emissions delivery solutions.”

### **In short, how does this pilot work?**

In an effort to reduce roadway congestion and sidewalk obstructions, REEF provides a fully off-street staging location where goods can be transferred from delivery vans to cargo bikes. Goods are loaded into BrightDrop’s EP1 units and the electric pallets are secured onto Coaster Cycles’ Electric Cargo Trike. Using AxleHire’s last-mile delivery technology, the driver makes customer deliveries using the fastest, most efficient routes possible. REEF’s ghost kitchen takes orders for food delivery that might otherwise have been fulfilled by restaurants farther away from the delivery area and fulfills them in the neighborhood. The common carrier parcel locker, developed by ParcelPending and hosted by the UFL, provides delivery density for carriers (they visit one location instead of multiple addresses), and neighbors can walk to the site at their convenience to pick up packages, completing their own last mile. The combination of activities allows each operator to provide clean, neighborhood scale services cost effectively.

### **About AxleHire:**

AxleHire combines innovative technology and superior logistics to deliver cost-effective, reliable same- and next-day delivery services to industry leaders such as HelloFresh, Deliverr, Freshly, Milkbar, and others. AxleHire was purpose-built to support companies whose businesses rely on trusted and consistent delivery services to get their customers what they need when they need it. AxleHire has

multiple locations in cities across the U.S, enabling high-volume shippers to cater to the needs and growing expectations of their customers.

For more information about AxleHire, please visit [axlehire.com](http://axlehire.com).

#### **About BrightDrop**

BrightDrop is building a smarter way to deliver goods and services. Its ecosystem of electric first-to-last-mile products, software and services are designed to help businesses deliver goods and services more efficiently, while improving overall sustainability. For more information, visit [gobrightdrop.com](http://gobrightdrop.com).

#### **About Coaster Cycles:**

Coaster Cycles is the leading Electric Cargo Trike (ECT) manufacturer for last mile delivery and micro-fulfillment. Founded in 2005 by Ben Morris, Coaster's roots as an operator make them a trusted partner by transportation industry leaders. Every Coaster ECT is designed and built in Montana, USA. For more information about Coaster Cycles including the new Venture, Parcel and Freighter, visit [www.coastercycles.com](http://www.coastercycles.com)

#### **About REEF:**

REEF's mission is to connect the world to your block. We transform underutilized urban spaces into neighborhood hubs that connect people to locally curated goods, services, and experiences. With an ecosystem of 4,500 locations and a team of 15,000 people, REEF is the largest operator of mobility, logistics hubs, and neighborhood kitchens in the United States. Together we are leveraging the power of proximity to keep our communities moving forward in a sustainable and thoughtful way. For more information, visit [reeftechnology.com](http://reeftechnology.com).

#### **About Seattle Department of Transportation:**

SDOT's mission is to make Seattle a thriving, equitable community powered by dependable transportation that provides safe and affordable access to places and opportunities. One of SDOT's goals is to address the climate crisis and improve environmental health for future generations through a sustainable, resilient transportation system. For more information, visit [www.seattle.gov/transportation](http://www.seattle.gov/transportation).

#### **About UFL:**

The Urban Freight Lab is a cross-sector structured partnership of academic researchers, public sector agencies, and private sector firms — shippers, retailers, tech providers, property owners, and manufacturers — working collaboratively to identify complex urban freight management problems and design solutions that will provide wide-ranging benefits for cities, residents, and businesses. More:

<http://depts.washington.edu/sctlctr/urban-freight-lab-0>

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