

#960082

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submitted 3/6/2000

Bike Shop/Information Center *at the Old Depot*

One suggestion for a use of the Old Depot is for a bike shop or information center. There are several variations for a bike shop, and an information center could be part of one of the bike shop designs.

BIKE RENTAL: A small bike shop that rents bikes to tourists and local citizens is a possibility. Since bike rental may attract tourists who are interested in outdoor activities, an information center for ecco-tourism (biking, hiking, birdwatching, canoeing) might be combined with a bike rental shop. Some vendors might also want to rent in-line skates (Rollerblades) along with bikes.

A prerequisite to bike or skate rentals would be connecting this area to the Gainesville Hawthorne Trail.

EARN-A-BIKE FOR KIDS: Many cities have Earn-a-Bike programs for low income or at-risk kids. This is a program in which kids work for 10-25 hours at the bike shop to earn a bike of their choice. This program teaches kids mechanical skills, work skills and enables poor children a chance to get a nice bike.

INFORMATION CENTER: Depending on the interest and knowledge of the bike shop personnel, the bike shop could also function as an ecco-tourism information center. Tourists interested in hiking, biking, bird-watching, fishing, canoeing or other outdoor activities could get information at a central location, next to the bus station.

YELLOW BIKE PROGRAM: The City is starting a Community Bike (Yellow Bike) program. The center for repairing and distributing the "yellow bikes" could be housed in the Old Depot. One possibility for this program would be for the Bike Rental Shop to repair and distribute the "yellow bikes" in exchange for free or reduced rent.

COMMUNITY BIKE PROGRAM: Another bike shop variation would be a shop that repaired bikes to distribute to low income children at Christmas, and to low income adults as part of vocational rehabilitation.

TRAIL PATROL HEADQUARTERS: A bike shop could be the headquarters for the civilian Trail Patrol, a bike patrol similar to the Citizens on Patrol.

A small bike shop would need 400 to 1000 square feet of space, depending on what functions it will perform. A rental shop would store its bikes inside at night, and display them outside on the loading deck or grass during the day. Bike storage can be a critical factor for a small bike shop.

A "yellow bike" program could store its bikes outside.