



Legislation Text

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Bike Share Program Update (B)

The City Commission provided one-time funding for FY16 for a bike share pilot program. Staff identified a vendor and anticipates a program launch by May 2016. **ESTIMATED PRESENTATION 10 MINUTES**

This item is one of several related to bicycles that was referred to the Recreation, Cultural Affairs and Public Works (RCAPW) Committee for review and consideration. Bike share, specifically, has been discussed in the January and February RCAPW meetings. A representative from Zagster, the vendor chosen for this pilot program, will make a presentation on how his company works.

The ultimate goal of public bike sharing is to expand and integrate cycling into transportation systems, so that it can more readily become a daily transportation mode (for commuting, personal trips, and recreation). The National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO) indicates that *“bike share systems complement existing transit, make one-way bike trips possible, and reduce barriers to riding such as bike ownership, storage, maintenance and concerns about theft”*. According to a 2012 report from the Mineta Transportation Institute, bike sharing benefits include: increased mobility; cost savings from modal shifts; lower implementation and operational costs when compared to other transportation demand management strategies such as shuttle services; reduced traffic congestion; reduced fuel use; potential for increased use of public transit and alternative modes (e.g., rail, buses, taxis, car sharing, ride sharing); increased health benefits; and greater environmental awareness.

Installation of a bike share program advances the City Commission’s Strategic Initiative 5.1 that seeks to promote an integrated, safe and accessible transportation system. The City Commission allocated funding for a pilot program implementation in FY16. Zagster was selected as the vendor to provide bike share services to Gainesville. The pilot program will allow for the establishment of two bike share stations with 16 bicycles for a one-year term. The stations will be placed in high visibility locations to increase awareness of the program and ensure the bikes are readily accessible to the general public; the proposed locations are at Downtown Plaza and along the 6th St Rail Trail near its intersection with SW 2nd Avenue.

According to NACTO successful bike share systems should have stations uniformly distributed, have a high density of stations within service areas (approximately 28 stations per square mile), and locate stations no more than 1,000 ft apart to increase convenience and system ridership, suggesting that *“ridership at a station ... increases exponentially the more stations there are in close proximity”*. In order to establish a successful bike share program, additional stations are needed beyond the initial implementation. Staff is coordinating with the vendor and local stakeholders, including the University of Florida, to identify opportunities for additional funding for system expansion to ensure that bike sharing is easily accessible and convenient at several points of interest, and to promote equitable use.

The City has control over the fee structure for usage of the bicycles, with options for one-year, one-month, or one-week memberships, and for hourly one-time rentals. It is recommended that some period of rental time

(such as the first half-hour) be provided free for riders, in order to encourage use of the system. Riders would then be charged an hourly rate for additional time over that period.

The City and Zagster will seek to expand the program through community partnerships in which entities can pay funds to the city, which could be used to expand the program with Zagster.

Funding for this project in the amount of \$34,000 is available in the Public Works FY2016 operating budget. Sample bike share fee structures are included in the backup.

The Recreation, Cultural Affairs and Public Works Committee recommends that the City Commission: 1) hear a presentation about the bike share system; 2) approve a fee structure range similar to the City of Lakeland, FL, which includes a period of free usage to a maximum of \$30 per day, and the provision for monthly and annual memberships; and 3) authorize the City Manager or designee to expand the system beyond the city-provided seed funding, through partnerships in the community.