



# CITY OF SANTA BARBARA

## DOWNTOWN PARKING COMMITTEE AGENDA REPORT

**DATE:** February 13, 2020

**TO:** Downtown Parking Committee Members

**FROM:** Robert J. Dayton, Transportation Planning and Parking Manager, Public Works Department

**SUBJECT:** Update On The Bicycle Share Pilot Program

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### **RECOMMENDATION:**

That the Committee receive an update on the implementation process and next steps for the Bicycle Share Pilot Program.

### **DISCUSSION:**

On April 30, 2019, Santa Barbara City Council adopted amendments to Chapter 10.53 of the Santa Barbara Municipal Code, the Shared Mobility Ordinance, and directed staff to move forward with a Bicycle Share Pilot Program (Program), which allows a permitted operator to provide self-service rental bikes within the City for a maximum of three years. To implement Council's direction, the City released a Request For Applications in May 2019, "Implementing a Bicycle Share Pilot Program of the Shared Mobility Ordinance", and received three applications from qualified bicycle share vendors. After significant application review and operational testing of the different bikes, staff is moving forward with BCycle as the sole bikeshare pilot program operator for the City of Santa Barbara. Staff returned to City Council on December 17 with an Update on the Bicycle Share Pilot Program, and is currently in the process of issuing of a Bike Share Operator Permit for BCycle to operate in the City of Santa Barbara.

### Background

The Council adopted amendments to the Shared Mobility Ordinance allow the City to develop specific regulations for all permitted shared mobility operators, such as bicycles, electric scooters, or the next emerging mobility technology. The original ordinance, Chapter 10.53, was initially drafted as an urgency ordinance to prevent the unannounced and unpermitted launch of shared electric scooters in the City of Santa Barbara. Due to rapid changes in the shared mobility field, it became necessary to craft an adaptable ordinance that could govern both current forms of transportation, and whatever new mobility trend might emerge in the future.

### Scooter Share

A key number of issues have been identified through staff research and community outreach regarding the safe operation of shared scooters in Santa Barbara. For

example, a recent study conducted by the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA), found that shared scooter users have a high propensity to experience solo crashes, and seventy percent (70%) of those accidents resulted in a head injury or bone fracture(s). In light of this research, and based on Council's direction, staff amended Chapter 10.53 to establish a permitting program with regulations for shared scooter operators that address these safety concerns, such as requiring technology that will prevent shared scooters from operating on sidewalks. Shared scooter operators will not be permitted until sufficient regulations can address these safety concerns.

### Bike Share

The Bikeshare Request For Applications closed on June 30, 2019, with a total of three applicants for the bikeshare pilot program operator. The three applications offered a good representation of the field of shared mobility with presentations of docked, dockless, and hybrid bikeshare options.

Transportation Planning formed a bikeshare selection committee (selection committee), which was comprised of representatives from UCSB, the City of Goleta, and the Santa Barbara County Association of Governments (SBCAG). The selection committee conducted operator interviews and test-rode provided demo bicycles. Additional City staff of different biking abilities, from novice to seasoned riders, also demoed the bicycles. Out of the three different applications received, one company, and their vision for bikeshare in Santa Barbara, has risen to the top. BCycle is an established company with ten plus years of demonstrated bikeshare implementation and management experience, and is backed by the bike and business expertise of their parent company, Trek Bicycle Corporation.

BCycle offers the proven consistency of a docked system and incorporates an all-electric, pedal-assist bike platform. Their proposal would bring 250 pedal-assist e-bikes, initially located in the Downtown and Waterfront areas, with the flexibility to expand into other neighborhoods as the program gains traction with the community. Because BCycle is a docked system, locations for the docks will need to be identified, studied, and approved by the Historic Landmarks Commission or the Architectural Board of Review and will require a Public Works Encroachment Permit to be located within City right of way. BCycle has provided the City with a sample timeline for their launch, which is approximately 6 months from signing of permit. While a dockless system may offer a quicker initial launch timeline, the Transportation Planning team believe that the tradeoff of a consistent, orderly bikeshare system that eliminates accessibility issues and unsightly sidewalk clutter is worth the wait. After the three year pilot period and the information and data developed from the operation of the Program, City staff and the Transportation and Circulation Committee will evaluate the Program effectiveness to determine whether further amendments are needed to implement a more permanent program.

### **BUDGET/FINANCIAL INFORMATION:**

Operation and docking infrastructure would be the responsibility of BCycle. The City will incur costs associated with the implementation of the Program for staff time involved with Program management. Operator fees set by the City are intended to offset these costs. At the end of any shared mobility pilot program period, the fees and required City resources will be evaluated.

**SUSTAINABILITY IMPACT:**

As mentioned in the Circulation Element, an effective bike share program can increase personal mobility, potentially reduce air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions, reduce parking demand, and decrease the overall cost of transportation to individuals. It may help in the City's sustainability goals of emissions and traffic congestion reductions.