

City of  
Bellevue



# Transportation Commission Study Session

**DATE:** December 5, 2018

**TO:** Chair Wu and Members of the Transportation Commission

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**SUBJECT:** Bike Share Pilot – Staff Report

## DIRECTION REQUESTED

Action

Discussion

Information

## Background

Background information about Bellevue’s bike share pilot, including its timeline, purpose, and community input during the planning process, can be found on the City’s [bike share webpage](#) and in the [Pilot Permit Framework document](#). This pilot is part of the [Pedestrian & Bicycle Implementation Initiative](#), which Council commenced in 2015. The Transportation Commission helped shape the goals and strategies for the pilot at meetings in January and March of 2018, and City Council was briefed in March 2018. The pilot launched on July 31, 2018 in coordination with the Downtown Demonstration Bikeway Opening Celebration.

## Permit

The bike share pilot is regulated by a Type D right-of-way use permit. [Permit Special Conditions](#) were shared with multiple private bike share companies in summer 2018. Lime was the only company to apply, meet the criteria, pay the fees for, and obtain a permit in July. They are the only operator permitted during the one-year pilot.

## Parking Areas

City staff and street crews have installed bike hubs, or preferred parking areas, at locations around the city to help manage where bikes are parked by users and redeployed by Lime. These white painted boxes aim to provide a subtle yet visible cue to bike share users as a low-cost alternative to docking equipment used by station-based systems. The areas have been paired with H-frame placards at some locations to increase awareness of the location and reinforce the message to users to “park inside the lines.”

As of December 1, fifty-one bike hubs have been installed across Bellevue. Fifteen locations were available in Downtown on the day the system launched; eleven have since been added in Downtown. In September, five hubs were installed in Crossroads and eight hubs were installed in Factoria. In October, two hubs were installed in BelRed, four at or near bus stops served by frequent transit network routes (e.g. Routes 245, 271), and six were installed at various points of interest, including the Lake Hills Library, Northwest Arts Center, Enatai Neighborhood Park, and Eastgate Park-and-Ride.

**Preliminary Data**

The Transportation Department currently receives bike share data from two sources: from Lime via an administrator dashboard and from monthly reports provided by the University of Washington Transportation Data Collaborative (UW TDC) and Washington State Transportation Center (TRAC). All data is derived from GPS units affixed to each Lime bicycle, which the company shares with UW TDC under a nondisclosure agreement to support oversight, performance evaluation, and planning. Data is provided to UW TDC and TRAC consistent with Attachment F – Data Requirements in the Permit Special Conditions. Reports by TRAC to the City are provided based on an established list of queries to which all three parties—the City, UW, and Lime—have agreed.

Between July 31 and November 30, more than 5,800 users took more than 28,000 bike share trips in Bellevue. They have cumulatively logged more than 14,000 miles.

Bike Share Trips in Bellevue

	Min per Day	Max per Day	Daily Average	Daily Median	Month Total
August*	51	449	221	218	7,079
September	158	381	271	267	8,142
October	107	375	245	255	7,591
November	49	533	202	188	6,046
<b>Total</b>					<b>28,858</b>

\* Includes July 31 launch day

Lime had an average of about 200 bikes in Bellevue during August, about 300 in September, 360 in October, and 400 in November. Staff has been told to expect the fleet size to decrease slightly during the winter months to account for lower ridership in inclement weather. Approximately half of the fleet was located in Downtown during every month, about 20% within a quarter-mile of frequent transit network stops, and 13-19% in areas outside of defined activity centers.

Evaluation is a critical aspect of the pilot. A detailed assessment addressing a variety of issues is anticipated in spring 2019, including where bikes are ridden and parked, what routes are used most commonly, how available and accessible bikes are to residents and jobs on an average day, whether bike hubs are being utilized, how long bikes sit idle, and more. The details of this assessment are still being finalized and subject to agreement by the City, UW, and Lime.

## Customer Service

The Transportation Department has been contacted thirty-seven times by members of the public asking questions, reporting issues, or expressing concerns about the bike share pilot. Most of those communications have come via email. Nine individuals have used the functionality added to the MyBellevue app to report instances of improperly parked bike share bicycles. Staff forwarded those reports to Lime operations staff, who have responded promptly to address the issues.

## Community Feedback

At the City's direction, consistent with permit condition EV-14, Lime distributed a survey to its customers to gain insight into what users like, why they use it, and what could improve their experience. Lime users were notified by email and an in-app message and received two ride credits for participating. The survey was available from November 14–18. The following provides a brief summary of responses; complete results will be included in the full evaluation report in spring 2019.

- 131 users started and 111 completed the survey, of which 110 currently use Lime bikes.
- 72% own a helmet, 50% wear it while using bike share at least sometimes, but only 29% always or often wear it while using bike share. Only two respondents had received a free helmet from Lime.
- Of current users, 40% use bike share 3-5 times per week, 31% use bike share 1-2 per week, and 17% use bike share 10 or more times per week.
- Users are more likely to decide to use bike share impromptu upon seeing a bike nearby (36%) than to plan the trip ahead (18%), while the rest are equally likely to do either.
- Users' favorite things about Bellevue's bike share pilot are...
  - it's easier or faster to get where they need to go (37%)
  - it's more fun to move around Bellevue now (22%)
  - the electric bike (13%)
- The things users most dislike about Bellevue's bike share pilot are...
  - there are too few bikes nearby when they need one (31%)
  - it is too expensive to use (20%)
  - there are no helmets to rent with the bike (13%)
- 64% of users have seen bike hubs, and 78% know how to use them whether or not they have seen them.

Replies to City posts about bike share on social media pages have been mixed, ranging from enthusiastic support to strong opposition for the pilot. The following are some examples of comments from the public:

- "The new @limebike s in Bellevue are the biggest improvement in transportation quality I've seen in the area. A fortunately placed one just meant I could take an earlier bus and saved me 15 minutes. @BvueTrans please allow them to increase number of bikes 10-fold. Not a typo."
- "I'll tell you what I \*don't\* like about it: these ugly green bikes littering up various aspects of our beautiful city. If I left my bike randomly around sidewalks,

private yards, hanging from trees, in the street, or even parked considerably out of the way, the bike would be hauled away. And if I were caught dumping my bike around I would get a fine.”

An online questionnaire is planned for spring 2019, which will be open to all members of the community and widely publicized, to formally obtain insight into public perception about Bellevue’s bike share pilot among residents, workers, and others.

### **Safety**

To date there have been no collisions reported using bike share in Bellevue. Still, safety-related education and encouragement remains important to the City and Lime. Various strategies are being employed to encourage people to wear a helmet while using bike share. Lime gave out free helmets to people who attended the launch event in Downtown on July 31. Lime launched the [Respect The Ride campaign](#) in November, they are offering free helmets to people who sign the pledge, and they handed out bike safety equipment at events on Bellevue College campus last month. This campaign reinforces on-bike and in-app reminders that all users should wear a helmet while riding at all times.

### **Next Steps**

In 2019, staff will undertake a community engagement process to determine where bike hubs should be located in residential neighborhoods. Installations are anticipated to take place in the spring.

Staff will continue working with the UW TDC and TRAC to complete a robust evaluation of data from the first six months of the bike share pilot.

At the April 11, 2019 Transportation Commission meeting, staff will provide Commission a status update of the bike share pilot and share results from the six-month evaluation. In June 2019, staff will provide the Commission a final evaluation report, briefing, and seek recommendations for a potential path forward for bike share as a mobility option in Bellevue.