



SEARCH

- NEWS
- BUSINESS
- ENTERTAINMENT
- EVENTS
- FOOD & DRINK
- SPORTS
- VIEWPOINTS
- HOLIDAYS
- VIDEO
- ALL SECTIONS

Richmond moving forward with plans for bike-share program

Story Comments

Print Font Size:

Tweet 62 +1 5

Posted: Tuesday, December 16, 2014 10:30 pm

By GRAHAM MOOMAW Richmond Times-Dispatch



The Zotwheels Bike Share at the University of California Irvine.

The city of Richmond is getting the wheels turning on its plans for a bike-share program.

The city is considering a \$1.34 million agreement to use mostly federal funding to deploy an initial wave of 300 bikes to 30 docking stations throughout the city. Pending City Council approval, the system is expected to be in place by the time the UCI Road World Championships come to town next September.

On Tuesday, a proposed funding agreement between the city and the Virginia Department of Transportation was presented to the council's Land Use, Housing and Transportation Committee, which voted unanimously to forward it to the full council with a recommendation for approval.

Bike-sharing systems, which are being implemented in a growing number of cities worldwide, offer an alternative method of transportation by having bicycles available for pedestrians to check out and ride for a fee.

"This is one of the best ways to get people moving around the city by bike," Max Hepp-Buchanan, Bike Walk RVA director at Sports Backers, said Tuesday as he urged the council committee to support the measure.

"It definitely removes some of the barriers to entry, and in some cases can help drive forward the need for infrastructure."

Richmond has had a bike-share program in its plans for years, but the city is hoping to debut its system a few weeks before the international cycling event next September, when hundreds of thousands of bike enthusiasts are expected to visit the city.

Though the city has not finalized a fee structure, typical prices are around \$75 for an annual membership, a one-day pass could cost around \$6, and a three-day pass could cost about \$15, said Jakob Helmboldt, the city's bicycle, pedestrian and trail coordinator.

..... ADVERTISEMENT

..... ADVERTISEMENT

WHY, RICHMOND, WHY?!?



You ask, we answer. That's how it works. Give us more questions, or we'll ask our own!

Twitter

Email Phil Riggan

MOST POPULAR NEWS

Henrico woman, 75, strangles rabid raccoon at Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden

1 injured in 4-vehicle wreck that caused I-95 north traffic jam in Chesterfield

Ferguson police chief: 'This is really an ambush'

W&L suspends fraternity after Taser used in hazing incident

Richmond woman killed in I-64 pileup in New Kent

SELECT YOUR LOCATION

CHESTERFIELD

HANOVER

HENRICO

RICHMOND

CENTRAL VIRGINIA

SUBMIT YOUR NEWS

There would be no additional fees for trips of 30 minutes or less, but riders would be charged extra for longer trips, the goal being to encourage turnover and bike availability.

The docking stations would be located “throughout the densest residential and commercial areas of the city,” according to a city memo.

The setup phase is expected to cost \$1.34 million, of which about 80 percent (\$1.064 million) would be funded by the federal Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program.

That money is allocated in coordination with VDOT and the Richmond Regional Transportation Planning Organization. The remaining 20 percent (\$280,000) would come from the city.

The initial price tag covers the cost of implementing the system and operating it for the first year. In the two subsequent years, revenue from user fees, memberships, sponsorships and advertising space would potentially cover the system’s costs.

If the program proves successful, the city is tentatively planning to expand the system by adding 15 more stations and 150 bikes in both fiscal 2016 and fiscal 2017.

If the expansion takes place, the costs for those two years are projected at \$1.06 million and \$1.24 million, respectively.

If the system were not expanded in that period, the costs for the two subsequent years are projected at \$439,600 and \$487,200.

Officials are considering having a private-sector vendor run the program at the onset, which Helmboldt said could reduce the learning curve in getting the system working effectively.

The city is leaning toward New York-based startup Social Bicycles, which recently rolled out a bike-share program at the University of Virginia, according to Helmboldt.

Virginia Commonwealth University, which has given strong consideration to launching its own bike-share program, has also expressed interest in running the system, according to city officials.

Helmboldt said the city has not reached a specific agreement with VCU yet, but is hoping to collaborate with the university.

“It would make no sense to have two competing systems,” Helmboldt said.

Helmboldt said the city is planning to have a “fourth-generation” program, which he said would be more flexible and user-friendly because the electronic access systems travel with the bikes rather than staying fixed at the docking stations.

If a station were full and a rider had no place to return a bike, it could simply be attached to a nearby bike rack, he said.

Having more technology on the bike itself would also allow organizers to track the bikes and gather data about people who use them.

“We can see what streets people use, what areas they avoid,” Helmboldt said.

We're always interested in hearing about news in our community. Let us know what's going on!

[Submit news](#)

PUBLIC NOTICES



Richmond.com publishes important public notices that may affect the lives of Central Virginians. We fight for the public's right to know about government actions and information.

- Read important [public announcements](#) that may affect your neighborhood.
- Read notices about upcoming [trustee sales](#) around the region.
- Read information about local governments [seeking bids](#) on projects.

MEET THE NEWS TEAM

Paige Mudd
Managing Editor
[Email Paige](#)



John Hoke
Metro Editor
[Email John](#)



Wesley Hester
Deputy News Editor
[Email Wesley](#)



Reed Williams
Night News Editor
[Email Reed](#)



Michael Paul Williams
Metro Columnist
[Email Michael](#)



Michael Martz
Government Reporter
[Email Michael](#)



Graham Moomaw
Richmond City Hall Reporter
[Email Graham](#)



Brandon Shulleeta
Courts and Crime Reporter
[Email Brandon](#)



The funding agreement is scheduled to go to the full council next month. If the program moves forward as planned, he said, the council would have to take another vote next year approving a specific contract with a vendor.

gmoomaw@timesdispatch.com

(804) 649-6839

Twitter: @gmoomaw

Frank Green
Criminal Justice Reporter
Email Frank



Zachary Reid
K-12 Education Reporter
Email Zachary



..... ADVERTISEMENT

Tweet 62
+ 5
?

Discuss
Print

Posted in [City-of-richmond](#), [Richmond-2015](#) on *Tuesday, December 16, 2014 10:30 pm.*

Similar Stories

- Sources: Ballast Point is second California brewery with interest in Richmond
- Street closures listed for Richmond St. Patrick's Day events Saturday
- Council members seek more student access to Redskins facility
- Circus, protesters come to town
- Bedden encouraged by community support, working to keep momentum going

Most Read

- Henrico woman, 75, strangles rabid raccoon at Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden
- Half-price & cheap burger nights in Richmond
- The Richmond dining scene is on fire - and this is why
- Va. Tech student missing from cruise ship is Deep Run High grad
- Sweet Briar alums hire Richmond-based law team in effort to stop closure

13 comments

[Add a comment](#)



Don Juan Charles · Virginia Commonwealth University
\$280,000; Small change compared to our beer and baseball proposals. 'Bout time RVA!
Reply · Like · 3 · December 17, 2014 at 7:55am



Betsy Zacharias Gardner
Love the idea but hope they have gears for Richmond's hills!!!
Reply · Like · 2 · December 17, 2014 at 7:23am



Tricia Dunlap · Top Commenter
My son and I were in Toronto this summer for 5 days and used the bike share program there throughout our trip. It was an outstanding way to get around the city quickly and cheaply. It was also really FUN. If you haven't been on a bike since you were a kid, you don't know what you're missing. We rode bikes from our hotel to the Blue Jays game, arriving with huge smiles on our faces. We docked our bikes right at the entrance to the ball park and walked right in -- no need to park far away or pay \$\$ for parking. When the game was over, we biked to a nearby restaurant and then back to the hotel. Awesome. Bike shares are wonderful options and it's time for RVA to join other cities worldwide.
Reply · Like · January 2 at 10:34am



William Meredith · College of William & Mary
Wow Richmond 280 thousand for bikes???.really why is this city obsessed with bike trails and bikes....
Meanwhile we can't fix a pothole driving in the city is like driving on the moon and the public schools within the city continue to crumble. Great leadership Richmond glad to see our taxpayer dollars are being well spent
Reply · Like · December 17, 2014 at 1:08pm



Stuart Squier · Top Commenter · Richmond, Virginia
that's only about 0.4% of the public works budget of \$60,000,000. the city spends

SECTIONS

[Home](#)
[News](#)
[Business](#)
[Entertainment](#)
[Events Calendar](#)
[Food & Drink](#)
[Sports](#)
[Outdoors](#)
[Viewpoints/Opinion](#)
[All Sections](#)

SERVICES

[Advertise With Us](#)
[Contact Us](#)
[Email Newsletters](#)
[Subscription Services](#)
[Shop Our Products](#)
[Popmounts & Reprints](#)
[Want to use our content?](#)

ALL ACCESS

[Sign Up](#)
[Manage Subscription](#)
[E-Edition](#)
[Change Password](#)
[Report an Issue](#)

CONTACT US

Phone number: 804-649-6000
Address: 300 E. Franklin St.
Richmond, VA 23219

SOCIAL

SEARCH

Search in:

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> All | <input type="checkbox"/> Life |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Business | <input type="checkbox"/> News |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Classifieds | <input type="checkbox"/> Outdoors |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment | <input type="checkbox"/> Sports |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Events Calendar | <input type="checkbox"/> Travel |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Food+Drink | <input type="checkbox"/> Viewpoints/Opinion |