



## BICYCLE SHARING IN SAN FRANCISCO

### Introduction to the Regional Bike Sharing System

In summer 2013, a regional bicycle share pilot program led by the Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD), in partnership with the San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency (SFMTA), launched along the San Francisco Peninsula in the cities of San Francisco, Mountain View, Palo Alto, Redwood City and San Jose. The regional pilot began with 700 bicycles at 70 stations with half of the equipment in San Francisco. The system is expanding to 1,000 bikes, with a total of 500 bikes in San Francisco in early 2014.

Funding for the regional pilot project is through a combination of local, regional and federal grants with major funding coming from a \$4.3 million grant from the Metropolitan Transportation Commission's Bay Area Climate Initiatives Program (BACI). Expansion of the San Francisco program past the 500-bike pilot level will be financed by title and station sponsors and additional grant opportunities.

### Location of Bike Sharing in San Francisco

In San Francisco, the pilot service area serves the employment- and transit-rich Downtown/SOMA corridor and the Valencia Street areas and includes the Financial District, Market Street and the Transbay and Caltrain terminals. This area is notably flat, has the densest bikeway network coverage in San Francisco and enjoys the highest levels of cycling, yet those who commute by transit from cities to the east and south encounter difficulties bringing a bicycle with them on Caltrain. Much of San Francisco's densely urbanized northeastern quadrant is similarly well-suited to bicycle sharing.

### What is the Schedule for the Pilot Project?

In February 2013, the BAAQMD executed a contract with Alta Bicycle Share, paving the way for the August 2013 launch and second phase scheduled for early 2014. After a full year of operations, the system will be evaluated.

### Expanding the System

In San Francisco, full introductory pilot rollout is 500 bikes and 50 stations. Once this is achieved and funding for expansion is secured, a full-scale 3,000-bike system could blanket northeastern San Francisco with bike sharing, extending into areas such as the Castro, Mission Bay, the inner Sunset and Marina districts and include connections to smaller satellite service areas in dense, bike-friendly development districts.

### Why Share Bikes?

First and foremost, *bike sharing promotes and markets bikes as transportation*, which results in numerous positive outcomes. Beyond that, bike sharing is:

- **Transit Complementary:** increases accessibility to transit, relieves overburdened transit and provides another alternative for short, quick trips.
- **Affordable:** the first 30 minutes of every trip is free and an annual pass costs less than \$100, payable in monthly installments.
- **Safe:** the crash rate among bike share users than is lower than cyclists at large.
- **Healthy:** increases clean, active transportation, tracking distance and calories burned.
- **Employment Generating:** Jobs are created for system deployment, operations, maintenance and management.

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## What is Bike Sharing?

### **The System**

Similar to car sharing, bicycle sharing is a term used to describe a membership-based system of short-term bicycle rental. Members can check a bicycle out from a network of automated bicycle stations, ride to their destination, and return the bicycle to a different station. Bicycle sharing is enjoying a global explosion in growth with the development of purpose-built bicycles and stations that employ high tech features like smartcards, solar power, and wireless internet and GPS technologies. In the US, cities such as New York, Chicago and Washington DC have large-scale systems.

### **The Stations**

Modern bike share stations are solar powered with battery backup and do not require any excavation. The stations are placed on a hard level surface and are not secured; they remain stationary from the weight of the station. The stations are modular, meaning they can have 15 to 60+ docks for storing bicycles. Modules are connected to achieve the desired number of docks at the station. Installation is quite simple and stations can be placed and broken down within an hour. Station modules are transported to the site using a truck with a crane or a small boom and then are erected on-site.

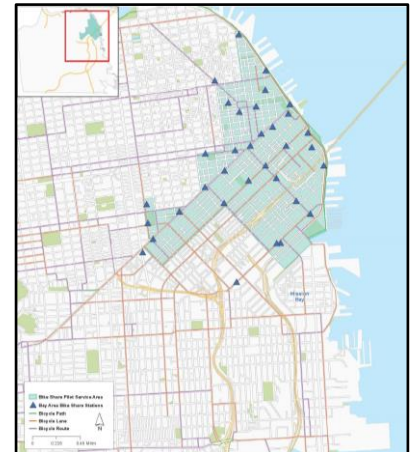
### **The Bikes**

The bikes are designed and built specifically for bike sharing purposes. They are commuter style bikes built to withstand constant, everyday use, featuring a front basket and up to 7 internal speeds.

Because the bikes can be returned to make one-way trips within the system, and some stations will inevitably be used more for departures and others as destinations, the distribution of bikes throughout the service area needs to be monitored and regularly rebalanced. As part of ongoing maintenance and operations, the system operator circulates between the stations daily with a truck or van and redistributes bikes as needed.

### **The Users**

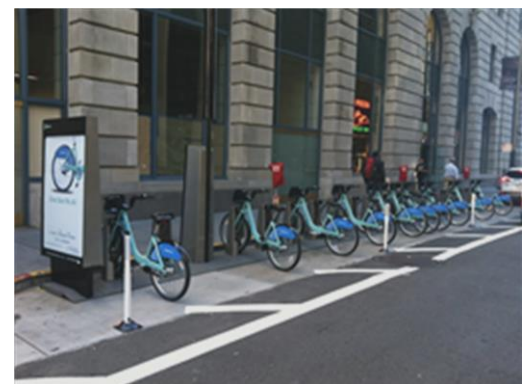
Bike sharing appeals to anyone who wants to make a short trip by bike. This project will promote bicycles as a stand-alone mode and as first- and last-mile transportation alternative for commuters and residents taking all forms of transit. Typically, bike sharing is available to the public on a membership basis. Anyone over 18 with a credit card who signs a waiver and pays a pre-determined fee can become a member. Membership duration is flexible and can be annual, monthly, weekly or even daily. The goal of the pricing structure is to be flexible, encouraging shorter duration trips by offering members the first 30 minutes free, while successive increments of time cost increasingly more money. This helps encourage quick turnover of the bikes and maximizes their use while at the same time reduces direct competition with bike rental companies.



*Initial 34 station locations for the pilot bike share system in San Francisco, CA*



*Bay Area Bike Share Bike*



*Bay Area Bike Share Station in San Francisco*