



Strategies for Engaging Community

Developing Better Relationships Through Bike Share



The Better Bike Share Partnership is a collaboration funded by The JPB Foundation to build equitable and replicable bike share systems. The partners include The City of Philadelphia, Bicycle Coalition of Greater Philadelphia, the National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO) and the PeopleForBikes Foundation.

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The core promise of bike share is increased mobility and freedom, helping people to get more easily to the places they want to go. To meet this promise, and to make sure that bike share's benefits are equitably offered to people of all incomes, races, and demographics, **public engagement must be at the fore of bike share advocacy, planning, implementation, and operations.** Cities, advocates, community groups, and operators must work together to engage with their communities—repeatedly, strategically, honestly, and openly—to ensure that bike share provides a reliable, accessible mobility option that is as vibrant as the communities it serves.

Creating an equitable bike share system is not just one action. Rather, equitable bike share is built from a collection of policy choices and funding decisions: system design, membership options, marketing, and operational practices. Making the right choices requires practitioners to actively look for opportunities to connect with people. As a result, cities, advocates, and operators must invest in engagement, hiring people who can connect in communities in respectful and meaningful ways. Engagement work should take many forms to reach people in ways that are clear, convenient, and accessible to them.

Finally, the role of cities and bike share planners is to gather information about the public's transportation needs and desires, and to synthesize it, teasing out patterns and themes that resonate both for individuals and for the public as a whole. No engagement process will reach everyone, but cities, advocates, and operators must be cognizant at all times of the impact of systematic race-, ethnicity-, income-, and gender-based disenfranchisement on public decision making. To combat these historic inequities, planners must strive to “oversample” in key communities to ensure that everyone's needs are truly met.

Strategies for Engaging Community is a tool to guide cities, community and civic groups, advocates, and bike share operators in developing programming to actualize community-oriented mobility goals. It identifies key goals for engagement, strategies that can be employed to meet those goals, and examples of specific actions or programs that cities, advocates, and operators can undertake. Many programs or actions can support multiple goals and strategies. This document reflects the leading practices and strategies as compiled by cities, community groups, advocates, and operators across the U.S. and Canada.

Goals

Strategies

1 Increase Access to Mobility

Reduce Financial Barriers to Use

Reduce Physical Barriers to Use

2 Get More People Biking

Create Opportunities for In-Person Interaction

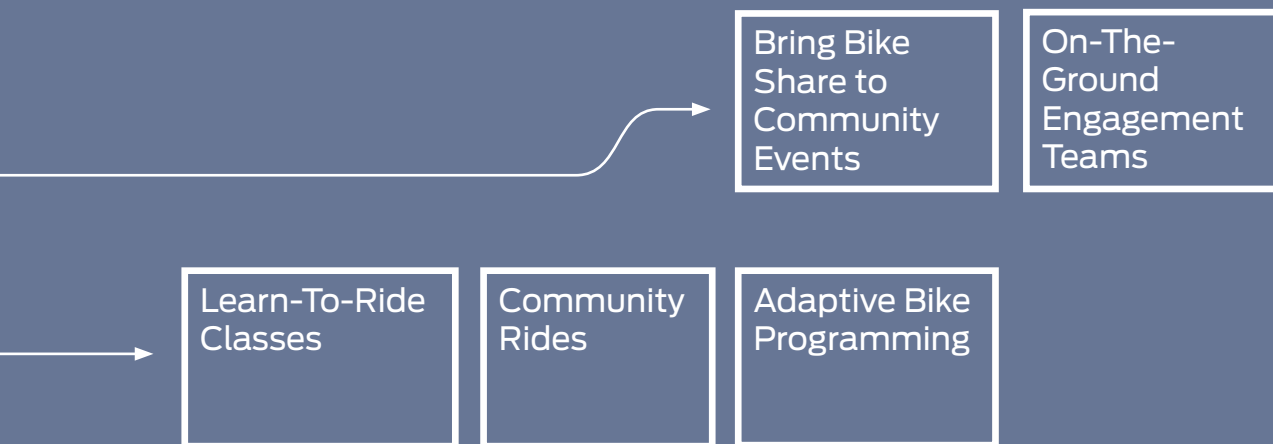
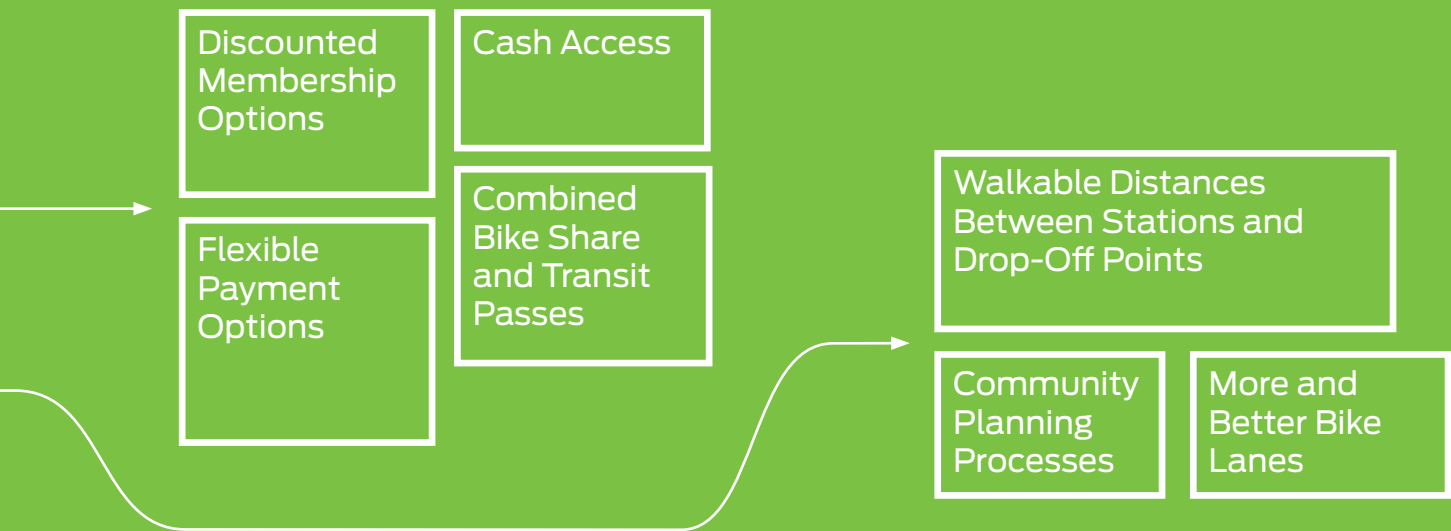
Teach and Empower New & Existing Riders

3 Increase Awareness and Support for Bike Share

Build Partnerships with Local Organizations

Create Multifaceted Marketing Campaigns

Examples & Actions





1 Increase Access to Mobility

Social and economic health and opportunity—for both cities and individuals—is directly tied to mobility. As such, ensuring access to mobility services is a core goal for cities. For too many people, opportunities for personal economic growth are limited by difficulties getting to the places they need to go. An expensive ticket or a membership that must be paid up-front can break the bank. A long, unreliable bus trip can make getting or keeping a job harder, and reduces the time someone has to take classes, care for their family, exercise, study, or relax. Streets that lack places for people biking and walking safely can turn a simple, short trip, into a scary or even deadly situation.

Increasingly, Americans making less than \$20,000 a year often live in isolated neighborhoods that are underserved by traditional mass transit and lack basic street safety infrastructure like sidewalks and bike lanes. Low-income Americans are twice as likely as the rest of the population to rely on bikes for basic transportation needs such as getting to work and school.¹ As cities and advocates look to bike share to provide meaningful, reliable transportation options in urban areas, addressing inequitable access is key.

This section explores a variety of actions cities, operators, and advocates can take to increase and improve access to bike share. In particular, it provides examples of strategies and actions that US cities have used to:

Reduce financial barriers to bike share use

Reduce physical barriers to bike share use

Reduce financial barriers to bike share

Discounted Membership Options

To ensure equitable access for lower-income households, bike share systems across the country are prioritizing access to subsidized membership passes. Cities and operators use a wide array of qualification metrics to determine eligibility for discount programs, including income thresholds, residence in affordable housing, use of transitional housing or shelter services, and receipt of state/federal assistance benefits. Reducing the financial burden of bike share costs is a powerful way to make bike share an option for the widest possible segment of the population.

Action	Description	Discount Qualification	Examples
Discounted membership option tied to state benefit programs	Typically \$5/month membership	SNAP, TANF, WIC, various state benefit programs for health care, insurance and cash assistance	Indego (Philadelphia, PA) MoGo (Detroit, MI) Blue Bikes (Boston Area, MA) BIKETOWN for All (Portland, OR)
Discounted membership option tied to public housing authority residence, or services from transitional housing or shelters	Typically \$5/month membership	Residence in public housing, use of authority or transitional housing or shelter services	Citi Bike (New York City, NY and Jersey City, NJ) Greenbike SLC (Salt Lake City, UT) Blue Bikes (Boston Area, MA)



Best Practices

Benefits

Challenges

<ul style="list-style-type: none">> Make the sign up/ verification process as easy as possible> Maintain high standards for customer privacy (esp. when using ID numbers for benefits programs for verification)		<ul style="list-style-type: none">> Requires ongoing coordination between operator and government> Need to develop policy for how ID number is verified to protect customer privacy
<ul style="list-style-type: none">> Coordinate with social service providers to host on-site workshops and offer on-the-spot sign-up and eligibility> Provide free helmets other bike swag as incentives	<ul style="list-style-type: none">> Significantly reduces membership price> City/operator does not have to independently verify income	<ul style="list-style-type: none">> Public housing authority residence may not be the best proxy for income> Public housing authority residents may skew particularly old or young, populations that are typically unwilling or not allowed to use bike share

Flexible Payment Options

Membership plans that allow for flexible installment payments tend to see higher use and better annual retention rates than large lump-sum annual dues. Research suggests that lower income people may be less likely to commit to long-term contracts or memberships, even when the per-use rate is better, because of concerns about ability to pay and fears of wasting money if they end up not using the full service.² Providing the option of scheduled short-term payments is a strategy widely used by transportation systems of all modes to decrease trepidation and increase sign-ups.

Action	Description	Examples
Monthly payment	Monthly membership pass	CoGo (Columbus, OH)
Weekly payment	Weekly membership option	Explore Bike Share (Memphis, TN)
Prepaid bank of bike share use minutes	User can buy prepaid minutes to use for unlimited rides of any duration, over any time period—days, weeks or months	Biki (Honolulu, HI)
Pay-as-you-go	Trips are charged only when customers check out a bike, at a per minute or established rate	SoBi Hamilton (Hamilton, ON) BublR Bikes (Milwaukee, WI) Healthy Ride (Pittsburgh, PA)

Additional Resources

Can Monthly Passes Improve Bike Share Equity? (NACTO/BBSP)

Best Practices	Benefits	Challenges
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Pricing for monthly memberships should be as close as possible to annual lump sum membership costs (no more than 20% difference to offset processing/overhead costs) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Allows those who might not be willing or able to commit to a year to have another option 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Monthly payments may pose additional overhead costs to the operator
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Account should be charged at the end of the ride > Provide a non-smartphone bike access option 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Does not require a long term commitment > Good option for occasional users

Cash Access

In addition to discounted memberships, bike share systems across the country have created mechanisms to accept cash payments as a method of leveling access for unbanked and underbanked users. In many places, the presence of the cash option makes people feel comfortable trying bike share for the first time in a low-risk, no-commitment fashion.

Action	Description	Examples
Pay-Near-Me	Users sign up for cash membership online and receive a barcode that they can either print out or load onto their mobile phone. They then visit a participating 7-Eleven or Family Dollar where the cashier scans the barcode and accepts the cash payment	Indego and PayNearMe (Philadelphia, PA) MoGo and PayNearMe (Detroit, MI) Pace and PayNearMe

Indego PASSES HOW IT WORKS MAP BLOG EXPLORE PHILLY BUY A PASS LOG IN

Cash Payment

Indego is a bike share system that fits your life. That means flexibility in how you use it, and how you pay for it too.

Indego has partnered with PayNearMe to allow users to purchase monthly passes using cash at retail locations. Making a payment is simple, and there are no extra charges.

Here's how it works:

1. Sign up for an [Indego30 Pass](#) or an [Access Pass](#) online, and select the cash option. You'll get a barcode that you can print or send to your phone.
2. Go to the nearest 7-Eleven, CVS, Family Dollar, or Ace Cash Express, show the cashier the barcode, and make a payment in cash (you can find locations near you [here](#)).
3. Your Indego Key will come in the mail in a week, and you can start riding! Your 30-day pass becomes active the first time you get a bike.
4. We'll remind you to make a new payment at the end of your 30 days. To keep your pass active, pay your next month's fee and any usage charges at 7-Eleven, CVS, Family Dollar, or Ace Cash Express.

Pricing and usage costs are the same whether you use a credit/debit card or pay in cash. For more information, go to our [pricing page](#).

Additional Resources

Pay-Near-Me (Company Website)

Best Practices

- > Partner with commercial or public locations that have a wide ranging hours of operations and are easily accessible by public transit

Benefits

- > Alleviates need to have a credit or debit card (or willingness to use one) for access

Challenges

- > Cash-payment option requires in-person registration

Combined Bikeshare and Transit Passes

In many cities, people frequently combine bike share trips with trips on transit. For example, in Chicago, 36% of Divvy users report using bike share to get to transit often, and 75% report making bike share-to-transit trips occasionally.³ The degree of coordination varies from city to city, from parallel but separate RFID chips embedded in one access card, to systems that acknowledge each other's customers, to fully integrated fare payment. Connecting bike share and transit payment systems, and making sure that people don't have to "pay twice" for one trip is an important strategy for increasing mobility access.

Action	Description	Examples
Integrate bike share and transit payment systems	Bike share membership and transit access are linked allowing users to pay for both services using one card. Full fare integration is common in Europe (London, Paris etc.) and parts of Canada	Bixi (Montreal, Canada) Los Angeles Metro (Los Angeles, CA) (pending) Divvy (Chicago, IL) (pending)
Free time limited use for regional transit users	A "whitelist" in the bike share database links the transit system fare card with the bike share system to provide bus riders with 15 minutes of free bike share use	Healthy Ride (Pittsburgh, PA)
Dual-purpose bike share/transit card	Two different RFID chips (one for transit, the other for bike share) are embedded in the same card	Buslr Pass, BublR Bike Share (Milwaukee, WI)
Bundled memberships	People can buy a bundled membership to multiple transit options, including bike share. In Portland, the bundled membership provides an 85% discount and includes bike share and two transit services	"Transportation Wallet" (Portland, OR)

Additional Resources

Linking Bike Share & Transit (NACTO/BBSP Webinar)

Integrating Bike Share & Transit (lunch conversation hosted by Transit Center)



The TAP card combines bike share and transit. Los Angeles, CA

Best Practices

Benefits

Challenges

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Focus on making transfers and payments as easy as possible for users > Announce bike share station locations on transit services > Cross-promote bike share and transit to bring in new riders to both services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Matches membership options to the way many people use bike share > Promotes bike share to an expanded pool of potential riders > Bike share to transit connections are easier because one card serves two purposes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Requires coordination between operator, city, and local/regional transit system > Free/discounted rides for the wider population of transit users could require additional funding > Back-end software coordination between transit and bike share side
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Embedding RFID can be done in low-tech ways. In Milwaukee, the bike share RFID is a sticker added to the existing transit card 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Potential loss of revenue, particularly in the short term > Riders must have transit card to take advantage
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Target outreach via employers (In Portland, employees are encouraged to opt-out of their parking permits in exchange for Transportation Wallet packages) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Reduced price for a full suite of transportation options 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Automating verification eligibility, transit fare and card integration > Access to Portland's Transit Wallet is limited to residents and employees in designated zones where the city is looking to address congestion and parking issues

Reduce physical barriers to bike share use

Walkable Distances Between Stations and Drop-Off Points

A person’s willingness to use bike share is highly dependent on the distance they have to walk to find a bike and the likelihood that bikes will be available when and where they want them. Research indicates that the furthest the average person is willing to walk to find a bike is less than ¼ mile.⁴ In addition, increasing the number of bikes and/or stations in a given area increases the reliability of bike share—people are more likely to be able to find a bike—further increasing use and solidifying bike share’s place in the transportation and mobility landscape. As such, ensuring a high density of bikes and/or bike share stations in all neighborhoods, regardless of neighborhood income or demographics, is key to successful, equitable, accessible bike share.

Action	Description	Examples
Minimum station densities	A minimum station density for expansion and development network plans	Divvy Bikes - (Chicago, IL) Citi Bike (New York, NY)
Minimum availability requirements	Require at least 20% of available dockless bikes to be maintained/ located in neighborhoods/census tracts designated as high priority for equitable access	St. Louis, MO San Francisco, CA Durham, NC
Transit-focused rebalancing	Permitted operators are required to park and rebalance vehicles daily, at transit and bus stops	Denver, CO

Additional Resources

Walkable Station Spacing is Key to Successful, Equitable Bike Share (NACTO/BBSP)

Best Practices	Benefits	Challenges
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Aim for a system station density of 28/sq mi in all neighborhoods to ensure that people are never more than a 5 minute walk from a bike > Create a large scale planning process to facilitate station placement at a network level 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > A denser system allows for greater ease in finding and dropping off bikes and encourages ridership > Having more stations overall reduces the need to have the “perfect” station location 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > May require increased capital investment > Requires a robust planning process to balance community and network needs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Include clear language for requirements in permit application/rules > Include a map of designated priority neighborhoods > Require a detailed plan for rebalancing from applicant operators 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Ensures equitable access to bikes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Bike locations and redistribution must be monitored and enforced

Community Planning Processes

Planning for bike share is an integral tool for engaging communities and building public interest and support for cycling. The planning process marries transportation network issues that impact people at a city-wide level with local knowledge in order to make sure that bikes are available, accessible, and conveniently located. Planners must ensure that the process is clear and the public understands how decisions will be made about system coverage and station and/or bike placement.

Cities must also ensure that the process is accessible. A recent study from Boston University found that the people who attend public planning and zoning meetings are not socio-economically representative of their communities.⁸ They tend to skew older than the population as a whole, are more likely to be male, and typically own their homes as opposed to renting. In order to accurately understand community needs and desires, it is incumbent on local governments to create public feedback and input processes that recognize these inequities and actively work to bring in people who are typically under-represented in formal public processes e.g. people of color, lower-income residents, renters, non-drivers etc.

For the past ten years, cities have used the bike share station siting process as a foundational opportunity to engage people and assess community needs and mobility goals. In the absence of station siting decisions, robust public engagement becomes all the more important, because traditional public processes for ensuring that the public interest is taken into account are often significantly condensed.

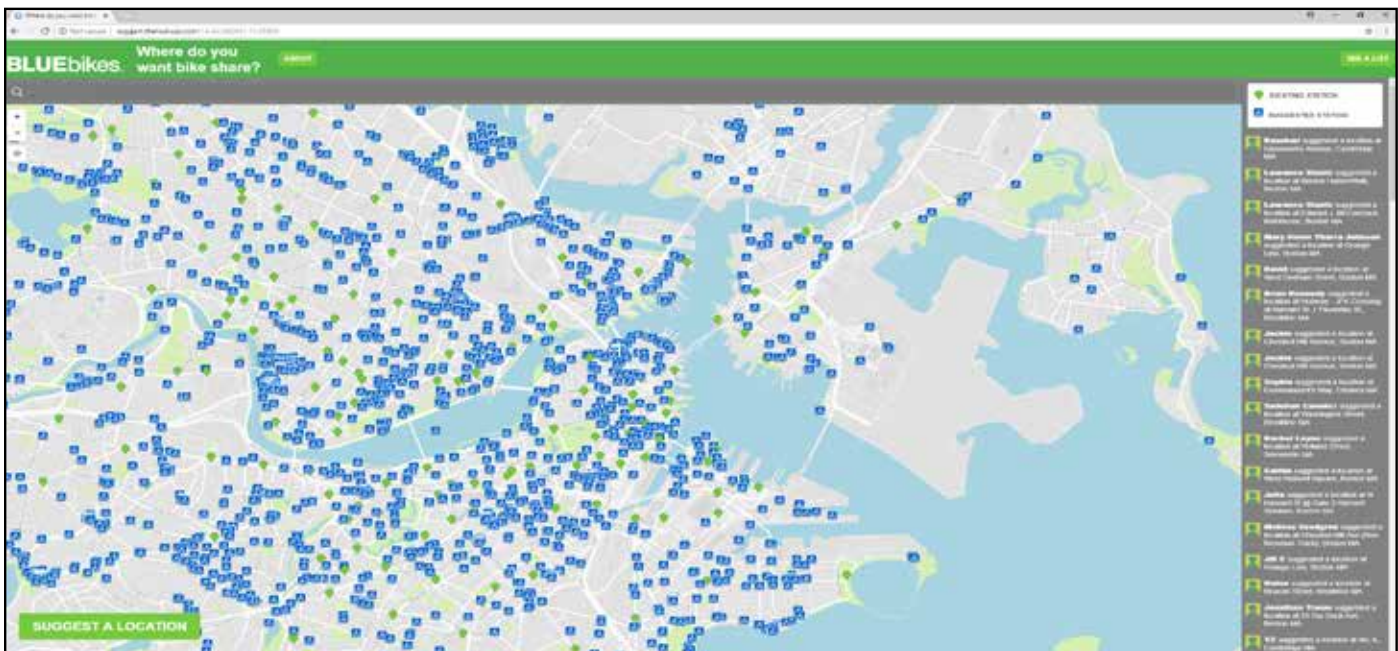
Resources

[NYC DOT Bike Share Web Portal \(NYC DOT\)](#)

[Measuring Our Partnership With Indego Bike Share \(Barnes Foundation\)](#)



Bike Share Planning Workshop - New York City DOT



BlueBikes' "Suggest a Location" Public Station Sitting Website - Greater Boston Area, MA

(continued...) **Community Planning Processes**

Action	Description	Examples
<p>Large scale planning process</p>	<p>Prioritizing public input is crucial to the success of bike share.</p>	<p>New York City, NY Austin, TX Memphis, TN Philadelphia, PA</p>
<p>Targeted public siting workshops</p>	<p>Public siting workshops consist of holding public, interactive activities to help plan or design potential station locations.</p>	<p>New Haven, CT</p>
<p>Suggest-a-station maps</p>	<p>Residents know their community best. Use an online portal to allow the public to suggest station or drop-off point locations.</p>	<p>San Francisco Bay Area, CA New York City, NY Divvy (Chicago, IL) Blue Bikes (Boston Area, MA)</p>



Best Practices

Benefits

Challenges

- > Engage your community in the visioning process as early as possible to ensure that station siting reflects both local and city-wide priorities and needs for access.
- > Bring the process to the people by providing a variety of ways for people to provide input and ask questions (in-person, online, formal meeting, workshop, pop-up, tabling, social media etc)
- > Hold events in locations that are easily accessible to community members.
- > Hold events at a variety of times of day and days of the week.

- > Requires planning and communications resources

- > Ensures that bike share system will be accessible from common destinations and origins.
- > Community process promotes ownership of system.
- > Provides a relatively informal method for locals to give input.

- > May not capture a true cross-section of the community due to self-selection bias. Information gathered from in-person events should be evaluated with other sources

- > The map should include current station/drop-off point locations

- > May not capture a true cross-section of the community due to self-selection bias. Information gathered online should be evaluated with other sources

More and Better Bike Lanes

Unsafe streets and fear of getting hit by a car are the main reasons that people don't ride bikes. This fear is particularly real in communities of color. An analysis from the League of American Bicyclists found that Black and Hispanic cyclists had a fatality rate 30% and 23% higher than white cyclists,⁵ respectively, and similar racial/ethnic safety gaps are found for pedestrians. In order to meaningfully reduce physical barriers to bike share use, cities must provide safe spaces for people to ride that take them to the places that they want to go. Research indicates that about 60% of the population in U.S. cities would be interested and willing to ride a bike if safe, comfortable, protected bike lanes were available.⁶ Advocates and operators play a key role, providing on-the-ground information about important routes, destinations, and unsafe conditions, and helping to focus civic attention on citywide and neighborhood transportation needs.

Action	Description	Examples
<p>Use bike share stations as bike lane buffers</p>	<p>Bike share station placement can augment bike lane design in powerful ways and can encourage people to ride.</p>	<p>Arlington, VA New York City Vancouver, Canada</p>
<p>Use bike share as a reason to build lanes</p>	<p>Cyclists overwhelmingly prefer safe places to ride. Use the momentum of increased visibility of bike share to spur reasoning for new infrastructure.</p>	

Additional Resources

Equitable Bike Share Means Building Better Places For People to Ride (NACTO/BBSP)

Designing For All Ages & Abilities: Contextual Guidance for High-Comfort Bicycle Facilities (NACTO)

NACTO Bike Share Station Siting Guide (NACTO/BBSP)

Best Practices

Benefits

Challenges

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Typically, the payment kiosk should be oriented to face the curb so that users can access the kiosk from the sidewalk. > The station should be angled so that riders back the bike out into the travel lane and are facing in the direction of traffic 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Bike share station placement can augment bike lane design in powerful ways and can encourage people to ride 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > May require coordination with and permissions from with multiple city agencies
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Temporary protected bike lanes using low-cost materials is a good interim step > Use ridership numbers to support increased bike counts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Safer places to ride mean more riders which builds more support for bike share 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Requires coordination with multiple city agencies which may extend the timeline for implementation



Indego - Philadelphia, PA

2 Get More People Biking

A key engagement challenge is reaching the people who aren't already tuned in. For bike share and other mobility plans and services, this group often includes people and demographic groups who historically have been systematically disenfranchised from political decision-making, people who don't or can't bike, and people who don't know how to ride a bike. A common engagement fallacy made by planners and advocates alike is that the people who aren't paying attention don't care. But the reality is often quite different—people want to be engaged and consulted but are focused on other, equally important issues in their own lives, and don't have the time or resources to proactively participate.

As a result, a core responsibility of public engagement efforts is to make it as easy as possible for people to participate. This means that cities, advocates, and operators should focus on providing frequent opportunities for people to ask questions and share their thoughts and employ a wide variety of methods—in-person, online, formal meetings, demonstrations, pop-up events—that give different people multiple opportunities to engage in ways that are comfortable, easy, and don't require extra work on their part.

This section explores a variety of actions cities, operators, and advocates can take to get more people riding by focusing on strategies to:

Teach and empower new and existing riders

Create opportunities for in-person interaction and engagement

Teach and Empower New and Existing Riders

Learn-To-Ride Classes

New riders often feel more comfortable riding once they've had a chance to ask questions and try riding in a controlled, safe setting. Cities, advocates, and operators should partner with organizations that provide free learn-to-ride classes to get folks more comfortable with biking through hands-on educational instruction. As with engagement more generally, the most powerful opportunities are the ones that bring bikes to people where they are—in school, at church, at work—in ways that make it easy to “give it a try.”

Action	Description	Examples
Learn-to-ride classes	Provide people with hands-on instruction to help master the basics of cycling and learn about bike share	The Bicycle Coalition of Greater Philadelphia Louisville Bicycle Club New Rider Clinic BikePGH and Healthy Ride



Best Practices	Benefits	Challenges
<ul style="list-style-type: none">> Partner with local recreational centers, parks, and public space programming> Staff events with ambassadors and local representatives> Offer bilingual classes> Provide the bikes for people to use in classes and on test rides> Provide giveaways like helmets, lights, and other swag> Promote classes through a diverse array of marketing channels, news outlets, and community and social networks> Piggyback on existing classes and programs to include bike/bike-share education as a teaching tool> Whenever possible, make classes free	<ul style="list-style-type: none">> Expands the pool of potential riders> Gives people a chance to experience biking and bike share and ask questions in an informal setting> Providing free classes is an easy way to involve other organizations as many community groups are often looking for activities at little-to-no cost/least hassle	<ul style="list-style-type: none">> Requires ongoing coordination to set up and fund

Community Rides

Community rides play a special, dual role in bike share engagement, simultaneously providing newer, less comfortable riders with hands-on experience riding and wayfinding in an urban setting, and offering communities a chance to see themselves and their neighbors on a bike. Most cycling imagery underrepresents the reality of U.S. urban cycling, omitting pictures of people of color, parents with children, seniors, and women. In this context, simply seeing people of color on bikes can be a powerful experience. For example, in a survey conducted by Bedford Stuyvesant Restoration Project, 35% of respondents in the majority Black-Caribbean neighborhood reported that they would be more likely to use Citi Bike if they saw “people like me” riding.⁷

The organization of community rides varies from city to city. In some cities, community rides are organized by existing neighborhood bike groups. In others, rides are developed by non-bike-focused organizations that can bring in a different group of neighbors. For example, in New York city, the community-based organization Bedford-Stuyvesant Restoration Project organizes a ride series and solicits a different neighborhood figure to host each ride and bring in their unique, personal constituencies. Past ride hosts include local elected officials, ride groups like Black Girls Do Bike, other community organizations, and neighborhood celebrities.

Resources

[Charlotte is redefining outreach through bike share \(BBSP Blog\)](#)

[Black Girls Do Bike \(Website\)](#)



A community bike ride hosted by Slow Roll Chicago

Sole to Soul
West Side Glow Ride
 SEPT. 30TH
 6:30 - 10:00PM

CLT B Made Possible By

charlottebicycle.com

LIGHT IT UP!
AWARD FOR THE BEST DECORATED BIKE

Register and Decorate: 6:30-7:30pm
 Ride: 7:30-8:30pm
 Cookout: 8:30-10pm

MUSIC BY: DJ SMITTY

Latibah Collard Green Museum
 next to Mosaic Village
 1635 W. Trade St.
 Charlotte, NC 28208

Flyer for a community ride hosted by Charlotte B-Cycle

(continued...) **Community Rides**

Action	Description	Examples
Community rides	Community rides are pre-planned, easy-going group bike rides, often with a theme or objective	Charlotte BCycle Sole to Soul West Side Glow Ride Detroit, MI Pedal to Porch Slow Roll Chicago Bedford-Stuyvesant Restoration Plaza Community Bike Rides



Best Practices	Benefits	Challenges
<ul style="list-style-type: none">> Use bike share bikes as much as possible and bring info flyers and giveaways for participants and curious bystanders> Ride to community assets like parks, grocery stores, and cultural venues> Rides should be no longer than an hour> Focus on the fun and health aspects of bicycling> Typically rides should be scheduled for weekends or weeknights> Take advantage of school breaks and holidays for youth-focused rides> Ask local leaders or elected officials to host rides as guest leaders who can encourage their personal constituencies to participate> Explain the map! Pick ride destinations that are places that people want/need to go so that newer, less experienced riders can “test” the route by bike before doing it on their own	<ul style="list-style-type: none">> Can help tap into existing base of involved local residents> Can build partnerships for future collaborations	<ul style="list-style-type: none">> Can take time to establish strong enough relationships to hold events together

Adaptive Bike Programming

Increasingly, cities, operators, and advocates are thinking through ways to provide cycling and bike share opportunities to people with disabilities. Typically, such programs provide adaptive bikes—bikes that are modified to suit the needs of an individual rider. Providing cycling options for riders of all abilities is important in creating an equitable transportation network.

Strategy	Description	Examples
<p>Provide adaptive bikes through coordination with local bike shops</p>	<p>Adaptive bikes, trikes, and other shared-use equipment is made available via participating local bike shops. Bike shop staff can ensure that adaptive bikes are correctly fit to riders and maintained</p>	<p>Believe It Bikes (San Antonio, TX)</p> <p>Adaptive BIKETOWN (Portland, OR)</p>
<p>Add adaptive bikes into bike share fleet</p>	<p>Adaptive bikes, trikes, and other shared-use equipment are incorporated into the bike share fleet</p>	<p>Adaptive MoGo (Detroit, MI)</p> <p>mBike (College Park, MD)</p> <p>Westminster, CO</p>



MoGo Adaptive Cycles - Detroit, MI



Best Practices

Benefits

Challenges

<ul style="list-style-type: none">> Partner with local bike shops to offer on-site bike fitting, as well as mobility device, and service animal storage> Develop partnerships with community groups and advocates that serve people with disabilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">> Expands access to bicycling and bike network facilities> Builds partnerships within the disability community> Amplifies the voice of people with disabilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">> There is a higher cost associated with adaptive cycles> Often, disabilities are unique to individuals, making it hard to develop a one-size-fits-all cycles for shared-use purposes. Additional staffing or fitting is often required.> When integrating adaptive bikes into a bike share fleet, operators may face challenges in ensuring the availability of adaptive bike when riders need them> Adaptive bikes may require more maintenance than standard shared-use bikes
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Create Opportunities for In-Person Interaction

Participation in Community Events

Special events are a great way for city staff, advocates, and operators connect with their communities. One oft-overlooked aspect of outreach is reaching people where they are, instead of having them come to you. Events, especially events that are not explicitly bike-related, are an excellent way to reach a wider cross-section of the population and provide them with a low-pressure, comfortable space to ask questions and give feedback.

Resources

Sample participant survey (Bicycle Coalition of Greater Philadelphia) (BBSP Resources)

Bike share intercept survey toolkit (National Association of City Transportation Officials and Better Bike Share Partnership) (NACTO/BBSP)

Bike share and event marketing (Better Bike Share Partnership) Part I (BBSP Resources)



Explore Memphis Community Rides - Memphis, TN



(Top Right) Showing off the #RelayAtl hashtag at a streetfair. Atlanta, GA



Pop Up Demonstration in Austin, TX
 Photo courtesy of the Housing Authority of the City of Austin



Pop Up Demonstration in Times Square,
 New York City. Photo: Jim Henderson

(continued...) **Participation in Community Events**

Action	Description	Examples
<p>Open streets</p>	<p>Designated streets are closed to vehicular traffic and made accessible to pedestrians and people on bikes only</p>	<p>Minneapolis, MN</p> <p>Atlanta Streets Alive (Atlanta, GA)</p> <p>Open Streets PGH (Pittsburgh, PA)</p> <p>CycLOUvias (Louisville, KY)</p>
<p>Pop-up bike share</p>	<p>Short-term (e.g. a few hours), interactive events at strategic locations where the public can take a bike for a spin, ask questions, and provide feedback.</p>	<p>Explore Bike Share (Memphis, TN)</p> <p>Citi Bike (New York, NY)</p>
<p>Table at fairs and festivals</p>	<p>Presence, typically with bike or other eye-catching materials, at existing public events, fairs, and festivals</p>	<p>SWell Cycle (San Antonio, TX)</p> <p>Restoration Rocks Music Festival + Citi Bike NYC</p>
<p>Coordinate events with BID's, elected officials and other key stakeholders</p>	<p>Elected officials and key stakeholders like civic groups, business, business improvement districts, and cultural institutions, are invited to participate in or host bike share events, planning workshops, press announcements etc.</p>	<p>Rolling Town Hall Fort Worth BCycle (Fort Worth, TX)</p> <p>Mayor's Bike Ride (Santa Monica, CA)</p>



Best Practices	Benefits	Challenges
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Piggyback outreach onto existing events that attract demographic groups that might otherwise be missed > Bring bikes for test rides > Staff events with outgoing and engaging people > Hand out attractive program materials and other giveaways > Outdoor events such as street festivals and parades provide opportunities for related outreach like helmet fittings and giveaways > Deploy a street team of bike share representatives to connect with customers at bike share stations > Engage new riders by showing them how bike share works and help initiate their first ride > Partner with elected officials and key stakeholders to sponsor and promote events 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Large events draw a variety of community members and can encourage new riders > Seeing is believing—people are more receptive to bike share when they’ve seen it, tried it, and had an opportunity to ask questions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Requires a lot of coordination between various city agencies event host/coordinator > Transporting bikes may be difficult in the event of limited resources > Cities, advocates, and/or operators must provide staff or volunteers for events
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Events that are not bike-related (e.g. concerts, food festivals, job fairs, etc) are good opportunities to reach people who may not already bike. > Tell the press and combine with social media efforts (e.g. custom hashtags) to maximize event exposure and awareness even for people who didn’t attend > Take photos 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Elected officials and other key stakeholders can bring a crowd > Involving elected officials and other stakeholders in events can help build and solidify key relationships and support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Elected officials often have busy schedules, requiring increased coordination for event planning

On-The-Ground Engagement Teams

Cities, advocates, and operators report that, often, the most powerful engagement results come from hiring locals who know and are known in their communities. Increasingly, street teams and ambassadors—paid teams that consist mainly of local residents—are at the core of on-the-ground bike share engagement. The strength in ambassador programs is the existing relationships with members of the community, resulting in the lessened likelihood of being ignored as an “outsider” and a stronger, deeper understanding of community needs and desires.



Youth ambassadors from West Town Bikes - Chicago, IL

Action	Description	Examples
<p>Bike share ambassador programs</p>	<p>Teams of paid, local residents who create and staff events, rides, and program and can support other education, and awareness initiatives</p>	<p>Atlanta Bike Share Champions (Atlanta, GA)</p> <p>Chicago West Town Trail Ambassadors (Chicago, IL)</p> <p>Indego Ambassadors (Philadelphia, PA)</p>
<p>Community engagement teams</p>	<p>Teams of paid community engagement staff who can provide on-the-ground direct outreach support and can more generally be a resource for all mobility related projects</p>	<p>NYC Department of Transportation Street Ambassadors (New York City, NY)</p>

Additional Resources

Indego Ambassador Toolkit (BBSP Resources)

Indego Ambassador Sample Job Description (Indego Bikeshare)

Atlanta Bike Champions Training Guide (BBSP Resources)

Multicultural Communities for Mobility (Website)

Public Engagement That Counts (NACTO/BBSP Webinar)

Best Practices

Benefits

Challenges

- > Pay all staff
- > Hire local residents
- > Create internal metrics to ensure that bike share ambassadors reflect community demographics (e.g. languages spoken, race/ethnicity etc)
- > Provide free bike share membership for ambassadors
- > Provide development opportunities that will help ambassadors meet their professional goals

- > Provides job opportunities and supports local economies
- > Provides group of people who can plan and staff events

- > Requires a hiring process.
- > Requires staff member to oversee ambassador work and events.



Citi Bike ambassadors at a "Bike Bonanza" give-away event - New York, NY

3 Increase Awareness and Support For Bike Share

Building public support for bike share requires intentional, inclusive, strategic local partnerships and communications that connect bike share use to community interests and needs. In addition to providing an accessible, reliable, and convenient mobility option, the strongest bike share systems are part of the fabric of their communities, integrated into local services and visually, culturally, and linguistically representative of the people they serve. In building public awareness and support, cities, operators, and advocates must think holistically and creatively in both messaging and programs.

This section explores a variety of actions cities, operators, and advocates can take to build support for bike share systems by focusing on strategies to:

Build partnerships with local organizations

Create multifaceted marketing campaigns

Build Partnerships with Local Organizations

Mutually Beneficial Programming

Bike share is at its best when it acts not only as a transportation service, but also as an essential community resource. Around the U.S., cities, operators, and advocates are making connections between the mobility benefits provided by bike share and other essential community services such as jobs and job access, education and access to healthy foods, digital literacy, and arts and culture. Through strategic, mutually beneficial programmatic partnerships, bike share systems are connecting communities in more ways than one.

Action	Description	Examples
Partner on initiatives and programming	Cities and/or operators partner with community-based organizations to promote and support the organization's mission through the use of bike share	<p>Nice Ride Neighborhood + Nice Ride Minnesota</p> <p>Citi Bike + Bedford Stuyvesant Restoration Project</p> <p>Divvy + WestTown Bikes (Chicago, IL)</p>
Create corporate membership & engagement programs	Operators and advocates work with companies to provide bike share access as an employment benefit. Bike share benefits include: more reliable transportation for employees, reduced employee parking needs, lower healthcare costs, healthier and more productive employees	<p>Interfaith Hospital + Citi Bike (New York City, NY)</p> <p>Blue Bikes (New Orleans, LA)</p> <p>Barnes Foundation + Indego (Philadelphia, PA)</p>
Use bike share as a teaching tool	Cities or operators partner with skills-based workforce development programs to use bike share as tool to support the organization's mission	<p>Indego Digital Skills and Bicycle Thrills Class</p> <p>BublR Bikes + Pete's Fruit Market (Milwaukee, WI)</p>
Provide bike share memberships to people participating in workforce development programs	Cities or operators partner with workforce development programs to provide free or discounted bike share membership to help program participants get to training, interviews, and jobs	<p>Indego & PowerCorps PHL (Philadelphia, PA)</p>

Additional Resources

Bringing equitable bike share to Bed-Stuy (Bedford Stuyvesant Restoration Corporation et al.)

Bike Sharing in Bed-Stuy: How We Helped Get It In Gear (Center for New York City Affairs)

Best Practices	Benefits	Challenges
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Where possible, support local partners financially by co-applying for grants or providing direct funding for bike share related programming > Hold regular check-in meetings to build trust and ensure that projects remain on track > Be clear and transparent about goals and metrics 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Promotes cross-organizational collaboration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Requires time to build relationships
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Provide incentives, discounts or promotions for membership 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Provides potential to link to much-needed jobs within the community > Taps into an existing pool of potential riders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Community-based organizations need funding to conduct programming
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Promotes cross-organizational collaboration 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Create cohorts among program participants and provide programming (e.g. group rides, how-to-use bike share, competitions) to encourage bike share use 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Turns bike share into a community asset through linking to much-needed employment opportunities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Requires coordination of multiple stakeholders

Jobs and Job Pipelines

Bike share presents opportunities to cultivate a diverse and inclusive workplace and support local labor economies. By partnering with employment-based organizations for hiring, many bike share systems have intentionally developed bike share to be a source of employment in the neighborhoods the system serves. From youth training to workforce development programming that focuses on women in trade industries, houseless people, formerly incarcerated people, and veterans, bike share jobs can open doors to long-term community investment and economic as well as social mobility.

Action	Description	Examples
<p>Youth mechanic workforce programs</p>	<p>Bike share operators partner with youth bike mechanics programs to develop specialized training and provide opportunities for bike share jobs.</p>	<p>Citi Bike NYC + Recycle-A-Bicycle</p> <p>Bublr Bikes (Milwaukee, WI)</p>
<p>Adult workforce programs</p>	<p>Bike share systems partner and hire from workforce development agencies targeting teens, houseless people, formerly incarcerated people, veterans etc., to develop specialized training and opportunities for a job pipeline for bike share.</p>	<p>Biketown + Oregon Tradeswomen (Portland, OR)</p> <p>Citi Bike JC + Jersey City Employment & Training Program + Constructing Hope (Jersey City, NJ)</p>



Additional Resources

Bike Share Equity (Presentation by Dani Simons at NACTO Designing Cities Conference 2016)

How Hidden Bias Can Stop You From Getting A Job (Wen, Tiffanie; BBC News, 7 August 2018)

Recycle-A-Bicycle (New York, NY)

Best Practices	Benefits	Challenges
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Offer free bike share memberships for staff and discounts for family and friends 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Provides youth with job skills, professional training, and connections to employment 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Hire local and utilize diverse job listing services and networks > Offer free bike share memberships for staff and discounts for family and friends > Consult local MWBE databases when planning events > Require living wage and benefits guarantees > Develop contractual requirements for staffing > Develop off-season staff placement programs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Provides people with job skills, professional training, and connections to employment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Many bike share jobs are seasonal, especially rebalancing and outreach

Left: A Recycle-A-Bicycle trained youth mechanic at Citi Bike HQ - New York, NY

Right: Maintaining BIKETOWN cycles in Portland, OR

Create Multifaceted Marketing Campaigns

Inclusive, Multilingual Ads & Outlets

Ads and marketing are a time tested tool for extending the reach of an engagement platform. To support equitable bike share systems, cities, operators, and advocates must develop marketing campaigns that are strategic and inclusive in images, language, and message, and multifaceted in outlet mode—combining traditional and social media—to reach the widest possible audience. For example, in focus groups of Philadelphia residents in the lead-up to the launch of the Indego Bike Share system, respondents were explicit that ads should include “people who looked like them” in order for bike share to be appealing.

Action	Description	Examples
Inclusive imagery	Visuals used in bike share include people of color, women and other historically underrepresented riders	Faces of Indego Campaign (Philadelphia, PA)
Multilingual ad campaigns	All bike share system related materials, outreach efforts, customer services, and mobile/web application platforms are provided in multiple languages.	Blue Bikes (Boston Area, MA) LA Metro Bike Share (Los Angeles, CA)
Instagram takeovers & other social media	An Instagram Takeover allows a an employee, community influencer or user to post directly to the bike share system’s official Instagram account for a predetermined length of time. It can be just one night or an entire weekend.	Indego (Philadelphia, PA) Instagram Takeover

Additional Resources

Bike Sharing in Low-Income Communities: An analysis of Focus Group Findings (Temple University, Fall 2014)

Bike share and event marketing (Better Bike Share Partnership) Part II (BBSP Resources)

Best Practices	Benefits	Challenges
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > In order to address historic underrepresentation, it may be beneficial to overrepresent women and people of color in ad imagery > Focus on non-”sport” cyclists 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Ads and marketing campaigns reach a wider audience 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Have native/fluent speakers review translated materials or local/colloquial terminology > Promote in local ethnic/ culturally relevant publications 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Ads and marketing campaigns reach a wider audience 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Cross-promote with other organizations to expand audience. > Share photos taken during rides and events > Prioritize inclusive images > Develop a hashtag to be used for your posts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Can revitalize social media feeds, provide new perspectives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Need to have a clear understanding with the influencer as to what can and cannot be posted to the account

(continued...) Inclusive, Multilingual Ads & Outlets

Action	Description	Examples
<p>Promotional videos</p>	<p>Use the power of traditional marketing to support innovative outreach efforts. Promotional materials should showcase the diversity of neighborhoods, people and activities that accurately reflect the communities in which bike share serves.</p>	<p>Indego (Philadelphia, PA)</p> <p>People for Mobility Justice</p>
<p>Radio ads</p>	<p>Radio ads are a great way to creatively promote bike share to a wide audience</p>	<p>Indego (Philadelphia, PA)</p>



Inclusive, multilingual ads, flyers, and websites. From left to right: Boston, Boston, Los Angeles, New York, Philadelphia

Best Practices	Benefits	Challenges
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Capture the diversity of riders and neighborhoods in all promotional materials > Feature community partners in materials 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > The more local residents see themselves in the promotional materials, the more likely they are to feel that bike share is for them 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Want to avoid intruding on the privacy of individuals (always ask when taking photos). > Can be difficult to find representative groups for marketing materials
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Should be targeted to station audience > Ad should have a theme (season, payments, etc) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Maximizes audience reach 	



Incentives to Ride

As operators and advocates around the world have found, sometimes you have to get creative to get people to try bikes. Developing incentives, competitions, and games can help encourage ridership, especially in colder months or for less common trips. When integrated into marketing campaigns, ride incentives can help get more people riding.

Action	Description	Examples
Unicorn bikes	Specially designed or decorated bike share bikes are released into the system network, supported by campaigns and prize-promotions that encourage users to find the special ride	Divvy's Candy Cane Bike (Chicago, IL) Bixi (Montreal QC, CA)
Bike Angels	Riders earn rewards for rebalancing bikes to improve availability for other riders	Citi Bike NYC Bike Angels (New York, NY)
Winter campaigns	Operators host ridership contests, service days, and indoor engagement activities that can build a buzz throughout winter	Nice Ride Minnesota Spring Relaunch Bike Thaw Philadelphia's Day of Service Divvy Winter Competition Capital Bikeshare Winter Warriors (Washington DC)





Best Practices	Benefits	Challenges
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Surround the release of a unicorn bike with promotion > Make it a competition, and provide prizes for winners 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > A low-cost initiative > Decorated bikes are quickly associated with fun! 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Promotion may require additional advertising resources and coordination
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Make the sign up as easy as possible > Points and rewards should be clearly defined and heavily advertised 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Users feel more invested in the bike share system > Can help save money on operations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Backend development requires coordination with the bike share operator
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Identify people, events and organizations whose mission aligns with bike share to help with cross-promotion > Provide tips for riders on how to keep warm in the colder months > Prizes always help > Create awards for more than just the most miles (e.g. Capital Bikeshare has a prize for the “most stylish winter ensemble”) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Creates media buzz and encourages ridership in low months 	

Left: The “Roxbury” bike celebrating Black women who made significant contributions to Roxbury. Boston, MA.

Right: A “BikeToBarnes” unicorn bike in Philadelphia, PA

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Atlanta Streets Alive event - Atlanta, GA



A community ride on Relay bikes - Atlanta, GA

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