



Answers to some frequently asked questions about B-cycle in Madison

1. What is bike sharing?

If you are familiar with car share programs, bike sharing is similar with the exception that bike riders can check a bike out from one station and return it to another, allowing the convenience of one-way trips. It is primarily intended for “last-mile” transportation (i.e., short trips that would otherwise be taken by car), but also reduces obesity, traffic congestion and pollution. The bikes are tracked, load balanced and well maintained through the use of RFID technology – inspected at least every 14 days. B-cycle’s bikes also have GPS, which not only allows riders to view/share their own routes on Google maps, but the routes can be aggregated to provide the most accurate bike route planning tool for cities to date.

2. Where is B-cycle in operation today?

B-cycle is in operation today in Denver, CO, Chicago, IL, and in Des Moines, IA. Additional locations that will come on line in 2011 are: San Antonio, TX, Broward County, FL, Kailua (Oahu), HI and Boulder, CO.

3. Who will own the equipment? Who will operate and maintain it?

B-cycle will own, operate and maintain the equipment and is covering the entire system installation cost. The city is not making any capital investment.

4. Who will use the program?

Based on our research and data review of other communities:

- a. Urbanites – short commutes and trips; replaces cars
- b. Suburbanites – last mile transportation
- c. Students – replaces car, moped, personal bike
- d. Tourists and business visitors – new, convenient way to experience Madison

5. How will station locations be decided?

Alders will be requested to submit a list of sites to consider and submit to a core team for site analysis. The core team is expected to include:

- City: Parks, TE, Zoning & Planning, Attorney, Real Estate, Engineering
- Community: BPMVC, Bike Fed, UW, DMI, GMCVB, etc.

This team will facilitate logistics/site visits Identify all stakeholders/processes for each individual site. Consensus, prioritization and committee approvals will follow. Finally, process reviews, submittals & approvals.

6. Why is Trek donating the system?

Trek is dedicated to promoting cycling in all forms. Trek is also dedicated to the development of Madison – they sponsor Madison organizations and events such as DMI and Ride The Drive. Finally, Trek co-founded B-cycle with Humana and Crispin, Porter + Bogusky because they see bike sharing as a simple answer to complex problems: traffic congestion, obesity, and dependency on oil. They want to learn more about bike sharing by operating their own system.

7. How movable are the stations?

It is easy for our technicians to move a station. Bolted stations are easily un-bolted, and the holes (ranging from 4 to 8, depending on the station size) are covered flush to surface level, leaving virtually no impact. Non-bolted stations are heavier, but just as easily moved, and leave no impact.

8. Will usage data be made available so that we can use it to site/re-site the stations?

Yes.

9. What happens if the system runs an operating deficit over \$100k?

Trek is donating system operation costs beyond the \$100K/yr from the City. Trek is not requesting any additional funding from the city.

10. What happens after the three years?

Neither party has an obligation after three years. However, B-cycle expects to continue system operations beyond year three without City support. Trek is making a significant commitment to the City of Madison and based on our research and



data review of other communities, we anticipate the system should pay for the annual cost of operation after the third year.

11. What will the rental costs be? Will there be a volume or membership plan? What about corporate plans?

The tentative pricing structure is below. Volume/corporate memberships will be offered, and pricing will vary based on volume.

Membership types:	Day pass	Weekly	Annual
Membership cost	\$ 10	\$ 30	\$ 65
Student cost	-	-	\$ 45
1st 30 minutes	\$ 1	-	-
2nd 30 minutes	\$ 2	\$ 2	\$ 2
3rd 30 minutes	\$ 3	\$ 3	\$ 3
Each subsequent 30 minutes	\$ 4	\$ 4	\$ 4

12. Who will sell the sponsorships and where does the money go?

B-cycle will sell the sponsorships and use the money to cover a portion of the equipment, installation and operating expenses. Any remaining profits after expenses will be shared equally with the city.

13. Has any other organization approached the city about a similar program?

The City and B-cycle were approached by an individual interested in the bike sharing concept for the Madison. We are not aware of any organization that has approached the city to offer a bike sharing program.

14. Who has liability if I crash or lose a bike? Who pays to repair/replace the bike?

In order to use the system, each user must sign a waiver assuming liability for their safety and the condition of the bike, as well as give a valid credit card. Fees to repair/replace lost, stolen or vandalized bikes will be charged to the user.

15. Will the stations replace existing bike parking?

Station sites have not been selected, but they will not replace existing bike racks.

16. Will the city be granting easements on public property or negotiating leases on private property.

Each location will be unique. Some locations will be on private property, where it will be the responsibility of B-cycle to coordinate and negotiate with the property owner. For stations on public property, B-cycle will seek easements and/or ground leases with the city as appropriate.

17. What role does the Parks Division have?

Madison Parks is facilitating the project on behalf of the City.

18. Do the stations operate year-round?

The system will likely be closed for the winter months, since the bikes are not modified for use in snow.

19. Are bike shops/rental dealers concerned about unfair competition?

Bike sharing does not compete with rentals in the same way that car sharing doesn't compete with car rental – by targeting short, local trips. Bike sharing actually increases bike awareness, which in turn generates more bike sales in the community. Demonstrating this is the fact that Trek has the largest dealer network in the nation, and is donating the Madison B-cycle system.

The B-cycle bikes are designed for durability, so they're more suited to short-distance transportation than, say, all-day recreational riding.



20. Will someone with only a debit card be able to use the system?

Yes, if the user has adequate funds.

21. Will there be staff or an office here in Madison?

Yes.

22. What is UW's participation/role?

We have begun discussions with UW and want to include them in the system.

23. What are the benefits of bike sharing

- Bike sharing - active public transportation
- Profit sharing
- Local jobs
- Recognition: premier cycling city status, League of American Bicyclists consideration
- Amenity for convention and leisure visitors

24. Do you have to return bikes to the same station?

No, unlike car sharing, you may return your bike to any station in the network. Bike sharing bikes are intended for frequent rides of short distances to and from different stations.

25. What about helmets?

While it is always advisable to wear a helmet when riding a bike, making helmets available in a bike-sharing system presents several obstacles.

First, there is the challenge of ensuring the helmets are hygienic.

Second, helmets are only safe when they are correctly sized and fit to the individual rider. Even helmets with a “universal” fit need to have the chin straps and rear retention strap properly adjusted to the rider.

Finally, an automated helmet-sharing system would have no means of ensuring each helmet is safe and undamaged. Helmets are designed for one use...that is, they are designed to protect the rider from a single crash, and cannot be trusted to fully protect the rider from subsequent crashes. Because helmets that have been exposed to impact often have no visible signs of damage, there would be no way to identify which helmets are safe, and which helmets need to be replaced.

26. How much does a B-cycle weigh?

Designed for durability and long life, the B-cycle weighs approximately 45 lbs.

27. Can I buy a single B-cycle bike?

B-cycles are only available for use through membership as a part of bike sharing system.

28. What happens if you get a flat tire?

B-cycle bike tires featured reinforced side walls and are filled with sealant that helps slow small punctures and leaks. This will allow you to reach your destination station where you can dock your bike.

If you should encounter a flat tire on a docked bike, a simple text, e-mail, or phone call to B-cycle will allow us to shut down that bike in its dock and get the tire repaired in short order.

29. What if the station is full when you want to return a bike?

B-cycle offers real-time data to alert maintenance crews when a station is becoming too full or too empty. Upon receiving such a notification, a crew will attend to the station and add or remove bicycles as necessary.

If you happen to encounter a station that is full, you may access either the station user screen or mobile app and quickly locate the nearest station with open docks. In addition, you will be provided with a 15 minute grace period in which to return your bike to a new location.



30. What about vandalism and theft?

Vandalism and theft are problems that cannot be entirely eliminated, but can be effectively minimized through thoughtful design and engineering. The B-cycle station utilizes special, graffiti-resistant paint and dual, independent bicycle locking mechanisms. The B-cycle itself is equipped with theft-resistant bolts, internal braking, internal shifting, internal cable routing, an adjustable, theft-proof seat post, and other features to discourage theft and vandalism.

B-cycle and bike sharing programs in the US have not seen significant levels of theft or vandalism (most large-scale US programs reported less than 1%).

31. What are the configurations of a B-cycle station?

B-cycle stations are configurable; they can be solar and/or A/C powered, bolted or non-bolted, single or double-sided, short or long, and can curve or bend around corners to meet the challenges of an urban environment.

32. How do I sign up for a membership?

There are two ways to sign up for a membership. Credit card registration for daily memberships can be quickly processed at the station. Online registration makes annual membership sign up quick and easy.