

Starting a Bikeshare Program in Your Community

511NYRideshare

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Why bikeshare?

Bikesharing improves mobility by providing an active and sustainable alternative to driving alone, helping extend the benefits of bicycling to entire communities. Further, bikeshare complements public transportation by helping travelers get to and from bus and commuter rail stations. Bikeshare can also reduce congestion and parking demand by replacing short driving trips.

What's in this guide?

This guide explains key considerations for starting a bikeshare program, including a six step implementation framework. The reverse side includes additional questions for communities to ask when planning for a bikeshare program and examples of technical assistance that the **511NY Rideshare** Team can provide to help communities reap the benefits of bikeshare.

Framework for Launching a Bikeshare Program in Your Community:

- Step 1:** Integrate bikeshare into community goals, policies, & plans
- Step 2:** Assess whether current infrastructure would support bikeshare
- Step 3:** Financial planning & vendor assessment, including on-site demo
- Step 4:** Sign an agreement with selected vendor
- Step 5:** Partner with **511NY Rideshare** to set launch date-coordinate with Earth Day, Car Free Day or other Campaigns
- Step 6:** Ongoing operations: data collection for analysis, management and maintenance, and enforcement

Contact your **511NY Rideshare** representative for technical assistance to support your community's bikeshare program.

Getting started.

Communities should consider some of the following issues when thinking about starting a bikeshare program:

Safety First. Program vendors can establish areas where users are directed to ride or park vehicles to help avoid pedestrian conflicts. Additionally, information about the bikeshare program should be included in outreach events to the public and employers to educate users about steps for safe use, including example steps such as the following:



Wear Helmets

Host helmet distribution events or offer discounts for helmet purchases.



Ride Safely

Ride in bike lanes where available and avoid riding on sidewalks except as authorized by local law or ordinance. Be respectful of other travelers.



Park Smart

Return to bikeshare stations or designated areas or out of the path of other travelers. Avoid blocking sidewalks, access ramps, and bus stops.



Obey Rules

Follow all street signs, signals and markings, and obey local traffic laws.

Fixed or Free-Floating? Some bikeshare programs feature fixed pick-up and drop-off locations while others offer riders the flexibility to pick-up and drop-off the bicycles anywhere within a specified area. Those programs that feature fixed stations may be more expensive due to the cost of installing new racks or docking stations, however, it is easier for communities to manage vehicle locations and parking of these types of systems; vandalism risks may also be lower with bikeshare programs that feature fixed locations. Dockless or "free-floating" programs are attractive for their flexibility to riders and scalability to respond to program demands.

Rules of the Road. New York State amended sections of the New York Vehicle and Traffic Law (VTL) to permit electric scooters (e-scooters) and bicycles with electric assist (e-bikes) on some streets and highways in New York State. Check with legal staff in your jurisdictions for further guidance regarding local regulations that impact.

Starting a Bikeshare Program

Questions to Consider and Examples of How 511NY Rideshare Team Can Help

	Questions to Consider	Example of 511NY Rideshare Technical Assistance
GOALS	How do micromobility vehicles fit into your community's goals for transportation? What is your community looking to achieve by introducing bikeshare?	Provide information about bikeshare programs, directed at key stakeholders, to support integrating bikeshare program into long-term plans and policies.
ASSESS FEASIBILITY	Is a bikeshare program a good fit for your community? What laws or regulations would affect the bikeshare program or vehicle operations?	Provide information about New York State laws and regulations that might impact your community's bikeshare program.
INFRASTRUCTURE	Where would the bikeshare operate? Where would docking stations be located (in case of fixed system)? Where are bikes allowed to operate? Who owns the roads in your jurisdiction and what rules must be followed?	Identify sites for bike share stations (fixed system) and service areas that encourage multimodal trips, such as transit stations, city centers, large employers, or other destinations.
BUSINESS MODEL	Structure of the bikeshare program: public-private partnership or private operation?	Provide information about business models for bikeshare programs and anticipated costs and benefits of different structures of bikeshare programs.
FUNDING	What financial resources are available to support capital or operational costs for publicly-funded programs? How much will your bikeshare program charge users?	Provide information about fare structures for users and fee structures for vendors for bikeshare programs in other communities.
SAFETY	Do users understand where and how to operate bikeshare vehicles? Does your vendor offer helmets upon request or offer discounts?	Coordinate safety training sessions before bikeshare program launches and host helmet distribution events in conjunction with 511NY Rideshare events.
ACCESS	How will people rent or check out vehicles? Can users take vehicles beyond your community? What are the minimum and maximum bike rental periods?	Provide information about service area design from peer programs including examples of intergovernmental cooperation and best practices concerning terms and methods of bikeshare rental.
EQUITY	Do you have vehicles for people with different abilities? Will the program offer a discounted rate to low-income individuals, public benefit recipients, or otherwise qualified individuals? What is required to rent or check out vehicles? Do users need a smartphone or payment card?	Provide information about bikeshare program equity in other communities and examples of regulations to ensure access, such as requirements in vendor agreement to offer digital kiosks and cash reloadable payment cards for unbanked users or users without smartphones. Provide information on vehicle distribution requirements so that low-income and historically marginalized communities have access to vehicles.
VENDOR	What is the procurement process for your community? What is the contract agreement?	Provide information about bikeshare agreements and examples of bikeshare RFPs and contracts.
MAINTENANCE	Who is responsible for vehicle maintenance?	Provide information about and examples of maintenance clauses in bikeshare contracts.
EDUCATION	How will people know about the benefits of bikeshare use and how to operate vehicles safely?	Host education events with the public and targeted groups, such as employers, in conjunction with 511NY Rideshare events.

511NY Rideshare can help support planning and implementation for bikeshare. Reach out to your 511NY Rideshare representative for any questions or technical assistance requests. For more information, contact: 866-NY-COMMUTE | info@511NYRideshare.org