



# Agenda Report

**MEETING DATE:** Tuesday, June 22, 2021

**TO:** City Council

**FROM:** PUBLIC WORKS & UTILITIES DIRECTOR PALMISANO  
Maria Esther Rodriguez, Assistant Director of Public Works

**SUBJECT:** RESOLUTION TO JOIN IN ISSUING A REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL  
FOR A SANTA CRUZ COUNTY BIKE SHARE SYSTEM

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## **STATEMENT OF ISSUES:**

Bike share systems can be an effective tool to provide active transportation for residents, employees and tourists in our community and to replace short car trips within our county. A regional bike share system in Santa Cruz County would allow for bicycle mobility across jurisdictional boundaries and a seamless user experience.

## **RECOMMENDED ACTION:**

Resolution authorizing the City Manager to join in issuing a Request for Proposal (RFP) for a no-cost County-wide bike share system with a single vendor.

## **DISCUSSION:**

### **BACKGROUND**

In May 2018, the City of Santa Cruz officially launched the first public bike share system in Santa Cruz County. This system with JUMP operated for two years, at which time JUMP merged with Lime and the program ended in the City of Santa Cruz. Since that time, staff from the County of Santa Cruz, Cities of Santa Cruz, Capitola, Watsonville, and Scotts Valley, University of California Santa Cruz (UCSC), and Cabrillo College have been working collaboratively to determine a path forward for a County-wide bike share system. Such a system in Santa Cruz County would allow for bicycle mobility across jurisdictional boundaries and a seamless user experience.

Over the past few years, bike share systems have been launched in cities of all sizes around the world. Notable examples in the United States include Citibike in New York City, Biketown in Portland, and Bay Area Bike Share in the Bay Area. Bike share has gone through many iterations in the United States, from the original dock-based systems, to fully dockless and hybrid systems, venture capital backed, sponsorship based, and fully owned and operated. Each of these models offer different opportunities and constraints.

## CHANGES IN SHARED MOBILITY SYSTEMS

In order to explore the viability of a regional shared mobility system in Santa Cruz County, staff from the County, each of the four cities, UCSC and Cabrillo met to discuss what goals each of the jurisdictions had to achieve improved mobility and better bike access. Because the industry has undergone significant changes over the past few years, staff had many questions about the viability and parameters of a program. It was agreed that a County-wide Request for Information (RFI) would be released with broad parameters to seek additional information from vendors on what a viable regional system could look like prior to any Request for Proposals (RFP).

In April, the jurisdictions jointly released an RFI. The purpose of the RFI was to evaluate the range of viable options that vendors would propose for the region, to assess which elements of those systems were desirable by the jurisdictions, assess any changes to the state of the industry over the past few years, and evaluate the impacts of COVID on shared mobility. This process allowed the jurisdictions to agree upon a set of shared values and standards for a scope of work to be included in an RFP. Nine responses to the RFI were received and evaluated by the regional working group. From this, a set of shared values based on realistic opportunities was developed that met the shared goals and vision of the jurisdictions based on existing policy and experience.

## COUNTYWIDE BIKE SHARE SYSTEM

The regional working group reached consensus that all jurisdictions were interested in having a bike share system, but there was no consensus on just bikes or including scooters or other vehicle types. For that reason, the staff recommends Watsonville join a County-wide RFP for a bike only system. Any jurisdictions interested in pursuing a system that includes scooters or other vehicles types may be undertaken as a separate contract or permit. Additionally, based upon past experience and interviews with peer agencies, the working group reached consensus that a single bike vendor was the preferable approach to operating a regional bike share system for both the ease of user experience between the jurisdictions and the vendor.

From the consensus of the County-wide working group, staff recommends joining in issuing a RFP to select a single County-wide bike service provider. Key components of the RFP include:

- a bike only system,
- a single vendor,
- a hybrid docked/dockless system,
- fully third party owned and operated,
- no cost to the jurisdiction, and
- having a local operations team located within Santa Cruz County.

Additionally, the RFP will identify revenue sources, including a one-time upfront fee to cover administration of the program and staff time, and right of way fees to use public property for stations and other related use.

The RFP will also seek information on levels of service, including minimum quantities of bikes in each jurisdiction that may be supplemented and expanded as driven by demand.

Additional points will be available for proposing vendors to suggest value-adds, which may include such terms as additional bikes and stations, revenue-sharing, or other community benefit. The selected vendor will be able to implement, operate, and maintain a no-cost to the City bike share system, and have demonstrated superior municipal experience, excellent customer service, and strong references. A no-cost to the City, 100% vendor-financed system allows the City to receive the benefit of bike share without any of the financial obligations or financial risk. This no-cost to City system is the most efficient way to deliver the service.

Upon approval of all jurisdictions, the County-wide working group plans to complete the RFP in July, release in August, and individual jurisdictions could sign individual contracts in September. The contract is anticipated to be between the vendor and each of the jurisdictions but include the same terms and conditions. The Watsonville vendor contract will return to the Council for approval. After contract award, various approvals will be required to secure the use of public right of way to host stations, racks, corrals, and geofenced bike share zones.

**STRATEGIC PLAN:**

Approval of the proposed resolution is consistent with the City Council's goals of:

03-Infrastructure & Environment

04-Economic Development

05-Community Engagement & Well-Being

**FINANCIAL IMPACT:**

This project does not result in an impact to the General Fund. This project does require staff time. Potential revenue from the program may offset this staff time.

**ALTERNATIVE ACTION:**

The City Council may choose not to issue a Request for Proposal for a Regional Santa Cruz Bike Share System.

**ATTACHMENTS AND/OR REFERENCES (If any):**

None.