

August 15, 2017

To the City of Key West Commissioners and Mayor,

I am writing to urge you to decline to further pursue a bike share program in Key West per the RFP #003-17.

Key West has an existing, robust, bicycle rental market that is 100% owned and operated by local, small, business. This is a highly competitive field, with many newcomers every year. Pursuing a municipal supported bike share will have a negative impact on this important segment of the Key West economy.

Proponents argue that Bike Share is not the same thing as Bike Rental; and they say the Key West Bike Share program will be specifically tailored to not compete with the existing Bike Rental segment. But here are the facts:

- The top rated vendor calls for the installation of **200** bikes and **40** stations. The RFP states, “Stations should be located primarily within the public right-of-way, along public streets and sidewalks.”
- Key West and Stock Island has a combined population of approximately 30,000 residents.
- The Key West RFP is calling for 1 bike for every 150 people, when New York City has 1 bike per 1000 people.
- The proposed Key West BikeShare system would be introduced at a ***higher density than any existing system in the United States.***

All of the largest bike share operators advertise themselves to the tourist and rental segment:

- CitiBike NYC, “NYC’s Most Popular Bike Rental Program”
- Vélib' Paris, “Are you planning a trip to Paris? Thanks to Vélib’, you can visit the City of Light on a bike.”
- CitiBike Miami, “The Citi Bike program is Miami’s bike sharing and rental system.”

Those that responded to the RFP all acknowledged they will target the existing tourism and rental market:

- Top rated Zagster, “We think its about going from the Casa Marina to Blue Heaven without the headache of having to search for parking in Bahama Village”
- Second place Social Bicycles, “We understand the desire to protect the local bike rental market, however in our opinion, it is not possible to finance equipment and operations on sponsorship alone.”
- Third Place Gotcha Bicycles, “We believe that bike sharing should provide Key West citizens, students and tourists with a safe, healthy and sustainable mode of transportation.”

Proponents argue that Key West's bike rental market only serves people that want to *continuously* ride a bike throughout the day; and they say bike rentals aren't used for A to B transportation. Therefore, they argue a 30 minute cap on Bike Share usage will protect the existing industry.

- Top rated Zagster states, "folks go to rental shops for longer leisurely rides/all day excursions." Yet asks for a 1 hour cap on rides because, "most trips on the Island should take between 15 and 50 minutes."
- Zagster states, "sun-tanning at Fort Zach for five hours in the afternoon--that's what bike rental shops are for!"
- With 40 bike share stations across Key West and the highest bike per capita ratio in the nation, there will be no reason for any visitor to use the existing bike rental shops. There simply aren't any visitors continuously riding around Ft. Zach or South Roosevelt Blvd for hours on end.

Make no mistake about it, this will crush the existing bike rental businesses. The only respondents to the RFP came from New York, Massachusetts and South Carolina. These are large for profit corporations that seek to grow as much as possible and earn as much profit as possible.

The RFP states that all user and membership revenues will be turned over the city transportation fund. This also has the intention of protecting the existing market. However, with the city receiving the proceeds, we would have a situation where the city has a vested interest in directly competing with the private market.

And with the city receiving the usage fees, the potential vendor will be forced to rely on sponsorship dollars to fund the program. The top rated vendor, Zagster, hopes to source \$1,080,000 in funding to cover the first 3 years of the program. Their program costs \$1800 per bike per year.

"With guidance from the City of Key West, Zagster can source ample local business to fund the program in full"

Will the city help Zagster find these generous locals? Or will this turn into the selling of advertising to the highest national bidder, with ad placement right in the heart of our Historic city? Are we ready to turn over our sidewalks, parking spaces, and the time of our city staff for this purpose?

Thank you for your consideration,

Evan Haskell

3812 Flagler Ave.
Key West, FL 33040

“It’s not for touring or for a leisurely one-hour ride,” said Chris Hamilton,

Zagster Bike Sharing Proposal

Time	Cost
First 60 minutes of usage	\$3.00

Citi Bike: NYC's Most Popular Bike Rental Program | Citi Bike NYC

<https://www.citibikenyc.com/how-it-works> ▼

Bike share is ideal for short, one-way rides (getting from Point A to Point B) since you can take a bike out from any station and return it to any other in the network. You can also use it to take a longer ride – your first 30 minutes are included with a Day Pass and each additional...

[Meet the Bike](#) · [Get the App](#) · [Bike Rental NYC](#) · [Rules of the Road](#)

Vélib' Bike Rentals - Paris - Europe for Visitors

europeforvisitors.com/paris/articles/paris-bike-rentals.htm ▼

Now you can rent a bicycle cheaply from hundreds of automated kiosk stations throughout Paris. An

Citi Bike Miami

operated by DECOBIKE LLC

How to check out a bike / Como retirar una bici

- Touch top of screen to activate system and wait 2 seconds until it activates.
- Follow onscreen instructions.
- Toque la parte superior de la pantalla y espera 2 segundos para que el sistema se active.
- Siga las instrucciones que aparezcan en pantalla.



How to return a bike / Como retornar una bici

- Dock bike into any Citi Bike station.
- Green light will blink when bike is securely locked.
- Puedes anclarla en cualquier estación Citi Bike.
- La luz verde parpadeará dos veces cuando la bici ha sido retornada exitosamente.



Rental terms / Términos de alquiler

30min continuous time / tiempo continuo	\$4.00
1h continuous time / tiempo continuo	\$6.00
2h continuous time / tiempo continuo	\$10.00
4h continuous time / tiempo continuo	\$18.00
24h continuous time / tiempo continuo	\$24.00

Things you should know / Cosas que debes saber

- During your rental time you can dock and take out any bike from any station.
- Docking the bike into a Citi Bike station does not pause your rental time.
- The system will recognize your credit/debit card as your access pass during your rental time without any additional charges.
- Durante su periodo de alquiler usted puede retornar y sacar cualquier bici de cualquier estación.
- Anclar la bici a una estación Citi Bike no detiene tu tiempo de alquiler.
- El sistema reconocerá su tarjeta de crédito/débito como pase para obtener su bici sin costo adicional.

NYC Bike Share Vs Bike Shops

'Our rental business was destroyed,' says one bike shop manager

By [Ivan Pentchoukov](#), The Epoch Times | July 25, 2013 | Last Updated: July 25, 2013 8:25 pm



NEW YORK—Bicycle shops around the city are beginning to feel the impact of the bike share program as demand for rentals continues to drop.

More than 60,000 people signed up for annual memberships since the bicycle share launched on May 27, an average of nearly 900 people per day.

The bike share offers savings to riders who don't mind docking at 45-minute intervals (or 30-minute intervals for 1-day and 7-day pass holders.) If riders dock bikes before the time limit expires, a 24-hour Citi Bike pass costs less than an average 1-hour rental from a New York City bike rental shop, which the Epoch Times estimates at \$10.16 using data from Bike New York, a nonprofit.

But cost is not the only factor, since the bike share beats having to lug a bike, foldable or not, to the office or the apartment closet.

Bicycle rental stores closer to tourist hotspots, like Columbus Circle, have seen a significant drop in rental sales. Central Park Bicycle Shop used to rent out 400–500 bicycles on weekends and holidays.

That number has now dropped to 100–350 bicycles.

"We were affected enormously," Savas Sevil of Central Park Bicycle Shop said. "At the beginning we supported the program; Every big city has one."

Sevil said that since many of the bike share stations are next to tourist hotspots, the program appears to be geared for profits rather than to provide a public service. The bike share's daily and weekly passes, which are catered for tourists, are more expensive than in other big cities, both at face value and as a percentage of the cost of the annual membership.

Tourists who do not speak English are misled by the information on Citi Bike booths, Sevil added, leading to overtime fees. A three-hour ride on a Citi Bike for a tourist unaware of overtime fees would cost \$62.95 plus tax for a 1-day pass holder, compared to an average of \$22 at a New York City bike rental store.

"We welcome the competition, but the bike share is falsely advertising," Sevil said.

Sevil's business continues to do well with tourists going on rides in Central Park. The park doesn't have any docks inside and would result in overtime fees for bike share riders who ride past the 30-minute limit. But some explanation is required, Sevil said, since many tourists think that Citi Bikes are cheaper.

The drop in rental bikes was somewhat assuaged by an increase in helmet sales.

"In the first three weeks our helmet sales tripled," said Josh Temkin, manager at Ciel Bikes on the Upper East Side. "But then the sales dropped off. We are back to normal on our helmet sales."

But as of last weekend, the rental business is beginning to disappear, he added.

"Our rental business was destroyed," Temkin said. "We have about a dozen bikes and we rented them all out on weekends, but last week we rented just one or two."

Temkin said that it must have taken New Yorkers a while to catch on with the bike share program.

"Space is so tight in New York City," Temkin said. "People will do anything not to have to store their bikes in their closets."

Helmet sales increased at Landmark Vintage Bicycles on the Lower East Side as well.

"That gave us a little boost," said Tyler Crawford, adding that the increase was "noticeable."

Crawford said that there was a drop in business in June, but bad weather for most of the month is the most likely cause, rather than competition from the bike share program. As the weather improved last weekend, Landmark Vintage Bicycles rented out all of their 10 rental bicycles.

For John Keoshgerian of Zen Bikes the story is similar. Zen Bikes would rent out almost all of their 10 rentals every day before the bike share rolled out, but now rents out just one or two.

"It has absolutely affected us," said Keoshgerian.

Keoshgerian said there was an initial bump in helmet sales when the program rolled out. But the fact that the city decided against making helmets mandatory for bike share users was bad for business.

"They should have made it mandatory," Keoshgerian said, adding that he has seen just two bike share riders in helmets since the program launched.

The bike share slashed the bike rental business fourfold at nearby Chelsea Bikes. The shop used to rent out 30–50 bikes on an average day and up to 100 bikes on peak days. After bike share launched, the business dwindled to an average of five rentals a day.

"We sold more helmets, but we had to give a discount, because with Citi Bike you get a coupon,"

Victor Galvan, manager at Chelsea Bikes said.

To adjust for the drop in rentals Chelsea Bikes started to distribute coupons at local businesses, offering discounts, and comparing the rental prices at the shop to those of the bike share.

A Bummer for Some, a Boon for Others

While some stores suffer from a loss of rental business, others remain unaffected and see the program as a boon for the city's cycling industry.

"They are two completely different products," Chris Wogas, president of Bike and Roll, the largest bike rental company in the city, said. "Citi Bike is designed for shorter rides of 30 minutes or less. On our rentals, short rides cost less."

Wogas added that anything that brings more people to cycling in general is a good thing for the industry. Because of the bike share, more people are now riding who wouldn't normally do so, he said.

"Some people took a Citi Bike out for a couple of days and enjoyed it, so the next step is to go and look at a bike," Dave Bush, manager at Sid's Bikes in East Midtown, said. "Many people were under the impression that the bike share was bad for the business but it has been exactly the opposite."

Bush said that in addition to selling bicycles to people enthused by the bike share, the store sold substantially more helmets since the program launched. Rentals at Sid's have not been affected at all, Bush said.

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