



## MEMO

Date: February 1, 2022  
To: Parks Commission  
From: Cindi Wight, Director  
CC: Erin Moreau, Waterfront Superintendent and Harbormaster  
  
Subject: Bike Share Hubs in Parks

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### OVERVIEW

On May 5, 2021 Burlington, South Burlington, Winooski, the University of Vermont (UVM), Champlain College, the Chittenden Area Transportation Management Association (CATMA) and the Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission (CCRPC) executed a one year contract with renewal options with Bolt Mobility to bring a fleet of electric bicycles to the region at no cost to the parties. This came after 3 years of a traditional (non-motorized) bikeshare network operated by Gotcha and then Bolt (after merger and purchase).

The goals of this system include:

- Providing convenient, alternative transportation choice to residents and commuters to reduce vehicle miles traveled
- Growing the number of bike users and bike commuters in the region
- Creating an equitable system that allows anyone fair access to an e-bike

A brief timeline of how this partnership came to be is shown below:

- 2017: After extensive community engagement, Burlington City Council approves the City's first walk bike masterplan - planBTV Walk Bike. This Plan calls for the establishment of a bikeshare network.
- 2018: CATMA issues an RFP on behalf of the regional partners. A limited pool of businesses applied with Gotcha selected to establish the network.
- 2018-2020: Gotcha operates traditional bikeshare network and parties negotiate the transition to an electric fleet
- 2019: Burlington City Council approves DPW to enter into a one year contract with the possibility for renewals
- 2020-2021: Covid delays contract finalization and e-bike transition. Gotcha is sold to Bolt and is heavily impacted by supply chain challenges
- 2020: CCRPC releases an RFP to determine if other bikeshare vendors are interested in the Chittenden County market. Limited applications are received and the regional partners conduct some interviews. Other vendors don't seem like as good of a fit, are less flexible and do not commit to hiring a local employee to manage the system.



→ 2021: Supply chain challenges relax and Bolt commits to an electric fleet for 2021 at no cost to regional partners.

### **RELEVANT DATA** (from Bolt report)

Average # of deployed bikes – 99

Total number of rides – 8,851

Top hub locations: Penny Lane, Ben & Jerry's, UVM Library

- Penny Lane rides (Waterfront Park)
  - Start hub – 2,217 and end hub – 1,674
- 645 Pine rides
  - Start hub – 239 and end hub 183

### **CURRENT STATUS**

DPW and the City Council Transportation, Energy and Utilities Committee (TEUC) are reviewing the Bolt report, receiving feedback from community members and stakeholders to determine if they will extend the Bolt contract for another 1-2 years. The committee will vote at the February meeting.

If they do renew the contract, we need to determine if we will sign a lease with BOLT for a location in our parks for the bike racks. In 2019, the Commission voted to allow an encumbrance of the racks in up to seven parks. Gotcha placed a rack at the bottom of College Street in 2019 and 2020. In 2021, based on feedback from local bike shops the waterfront location changed from the bottom of College Street in Waterfront Park to near Penny Lane but still in Waterfront Park. Bolt added a rack to 645 Pine Street, which falls under BPRW as a "Public Building." No racks were placed in other parks.

### **ENCUMBRANCE VS LEASE**

We used the term "encumbered" in 2019 and charged per square foot similar to DPW and the use of the public right of ways. Based on attorney feedback, the more appropriate term for BPRW would be a lease. Our recommendation is to base the lease on a percent of gross sales similar to other commercial options we have in our parks (concessions, Spirit of Ethan Allen). We recommend 5% of gross sales, which aligns with other Waterfront Park commercial enterprises that provide their own infrastructure. The percent of gross sales would be only for rides starting from the location.

### **OTHER WATERFRONT BIKE RENTAL OPTIONS**

Local shops see the Penny Lane site as a real threat to their businesses. While recognizing that the primary use of the Penny Lane location is most likely tourist traffic, it does provide a waterfront hub for students coming down from UVM and residents utilizing the Greenway corridor from hubs at Cambrian Rise and the New North End.

BPRW staff offered to meet with local (Burlington) shops to see if there is interest in a waterfront location for local rental shops and we have several shops interested in meeting. Based on commercial use of our parks, we would come back to the Commission for approval of any potential opportunity.