



MEMO

Date: April 8, 2022
To: Parks Commission
From: Cindi Wight, Director
CC: Erin Moreau, Waterfront Superintendent and Harbormaster

Subject: Bike Share Hubs in Parks

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). On March 21, 2022 the City Council approved DPW to extend for up to two years an amendment to the agreement. The DPW memo to Council is at the bottom of this memo with the full details.

RELEVANT DETAILS FROM THE DPW MEMO

Bolt agreed to limit four bikes to the Waterfront location at the start of a day. In addition, the City requested signage at the Waterfront space in Year 1 direct users to local bike shops for longer rides and that the e-assist will not function on the Causeway. In Year 2, it is required they have the same signage but larger and have an in-app notification prior to using a bike on the waterfront.

LEASE

We will require Bolt to have a lease with BPRW to continue to have a rack in a City park. As it is a special use of a park, it requires Parks Commission approval. We are proposing to Bolt a 5% gross sales lease for any bike that starts from a Waterfront Park location, which is in line with other waterfront park leases where we provide only the land and no other assistance.

LOCAL SHOPS

We (Erin and Cindi) met with the local shops to see if there is any interest in a presence at the Waterfront. There were three ideas considered:

- 1) Improve the existing sign on the back of the electric panels at the end of College St to include the history of the Greenway and list local shops where you can rent a bike. We are open to that improvement and will work towards a design.



- 2) North Star Sports had an interest in free pop-up events, showcasing electric bikes, at Waterfront Park. We are in support of the concept and noted the process for a permit to host an event. We hope they do some!
- 3) Share potential locations where a trailer could get placed for rentals of bikes at the Waterfront. Erin sent the group a map with a couple of locations. We will continue to explore this option with interested shops.

Actions for Parks Commission

Approve the lease of space at a Waterfront Park for a bike rack for the bike-share program for 2022 and 2023 under the agreements approved by the Burlington City Council for a Waterfront Park location.



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Chapin Spencer
DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS

MEMORANDUM

TO: City Council

FROM: Chapin Spencer, Director, Public Works
Robert Goulding, Public Information Manager, Public Works
Nicole Losch, Senior Planner, Public Works

DATE: March 21, 2022

CC: Cindi Wight, Director, Parks, Recreation & Waterfront

RE: Amendment of E-Bikeshare Operating Agreement with Bolt Mobility to Extend Term

Background

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) (together, the Partners) executed a one year operation agreement with renewal options with Bolt Mobility (Bolt) 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 (which Burlington was not an original agreement partner to) and now the e-bikeshare network operated by Bolt (after merger and purchase of Gotcha; Burlington is an agreement partner to this).

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

Performance to Date

Areas of Opportunity: Overall, we are pleased that Bolt met the commitment of paying a livable wage, hiring a local employee, transitioning the bikeshare network to an electric fleet, expanding the number of hubs from 17 to 28 and providing good customer service. They have been candid with us about supply chain challenges in getting the fleet up to 200 bikes (averaging 99 available bikes) and early technical trouble with their speed restrictions.

Areas to Improve: We need the fleet to expand and the number of hubs to expand further into neighborhoods. While we do think bike share riders should have access to the waterfront, we do not want a Waterfront station to be the dominant station in this network – which it currently is. Neighborhood expansion and purpose driven (as opposed to recreational) trips are our priority. Additionally, we want to see more aggressive marketing, including of the equity plan and the development of an escalated pricing model (to further discourage recreational trips).

Stakeholder Feedback

Our partners in Winooski, South Burlington, Champlain College and the University of Vermont are interested in continuing this partnership and renewing the agreement with Bolt. They agree that the system needs to refine and grow, but like us, believe that Bolt has shown responsiveness to our issues, flexibility to our community needs and has been one of the only micromobility companies willing to hire locally with staff on the ground.

Local bike shops and an area vendor have expressed frustration with the system. While they express support of the goals of shared mobility, their assessment of the system to date is that it has been tourist-driven and has served to steer business away from local businesses. While more than 2000 starting trips have begun at a campus station, more than 2000 trips have also started at the waterfront station. Assuming the waterfront station (especially if roundtrip) is a proxy for tourist recreation than we also agree that this has been a major flaw of the system’s implementation.

Our Recommendation

Based on our analysis, our Partner’s support, Bolt’s willingness to introduce further restrictions to address local business concerns and a unanimous recommendation from the Transportation, Energy and Utilities Committee we would request an amendment permitting the operation agreement between Bolt and the Partners to be renewed for up to two additional years.

As Burlington has become more involved in the deployment of shared mobility between Partners, we have gotten partner agreement for more local business and community protections. See below for how this has evolved.

	Traditional Bikeshare	E-bikeshare Year 1	E-bikeshare Year 2 (proposed)
Burlington as Agreement Partner	NA	☑	☑
Speed Restrictions on Waterfront	NA	☑	☑
Livable Wage Guarantee	NA	☑	☑
Hubs	17	28	Minimum to expand 10 more hubs in BTV alone
Bikes	100	~100 deployed on average	200
Waterfront Rebalancing	NA	NA	Limited to 4 bikes to start each day during peak season

Waterfront education	NA	- Signage directing users to local bike-shops for long rides - Signage alerting that e-assist will not function on Causeway	-Same signage with larger requirement - In-app notification prior to using waterfront bike
Escalated Pricing	X	Requested	Required
Mitigating tourism issues		Moved most popular station	- Requiring a public meeting to determine if ridership thresholds have been met - Discounted employer-based membership options - While not agreement-related, BPRW will be meeting with local businesses to assess a waterfront lease option for their own rental needs

ATTACHMENTS:

1. First Amendment to Bolt Operation Agreement
2. Original Bolt Operation Agreement
3. Bolt End of Year Data Report
4. Public Comment
5. User Fees

Motions:

Actions for City Council:

1. To authorize the Director of Public Works to execute an amendment in substantial conformance with the attached amendment to the agreement between Bolt Mobility Corporation, the City of South Burlington, the City of Winooski, the University of Vermont, Champlain College, the Chittenden Area Transportation Management Association, the Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission, and the City of Burlington for e-bikeshare operation, to extend the original operating agreement by up to two years and add partner-specific performance conditions, subject to review and approval of the Burlington City Attorney’s Office.