City of Saint Paul

Dockless Shared Bicycle FAQs

## What are dockless shared bicycles?

Shared bicycles are privately owned bicycles available to rent within the public Right-of-Way. The bikes are “dockless,” meaning that the bikes do not have to be stored in docking stations while not in use. The bicycles must meet all equipment requirements of Minnesota Statute 169.222. The fleet of shared bicycles will include traditional pedal bikes, as well as electric-assisted bicycles.

## How do shared bicycles benefit Saint Paul?

Bicycle sharing is part of a larger citywide effort to encourage safe, affordable, and sustainable ways for people to travel around Saint Paul. Residents and visitors to the city benefit from having multiple options to choose from when determining how to travel around the city. For many residents, riding a bicycle is an affordable alternative to driving, and may provide “last mile” connections for transit users. Even people who own their own bicycle appreciate the convenience of having a bicycle option available at any time. Bicycle sharing will include electric-assisted bicycles, which can help with some of Saint Paul’s hills.

## Who is Lime?

Saint Paul has selected Lime to provide dockless shared bicycle services for the City. Lime has partnered with many other cities across the United States to provide similar service and has a proven track record of reliability and responsible management of the public right-of-way. Lime also currently provides dockless bike sharing services to Edina and Golden Valley. Lime was selected to be Saint Paul’s provider of dockless bike sharing services after a formal Request for Proposal process. The City reviewed proposals from several companies. The City has entered into an agreement to provide bicycle sharing services for two years, with the option of extending the agreement an additional three years.

## How many shared bicycles are in Saint Paul?

Lime will determine the size of their fleet up to a maximum of 2,000 bicycles. If bicycle usage rates suggest a need for additional bicycles, the Public Works Director may increase the maximum number of bikes permitted.

## How do you rent a shared bicycle?

Users download the Lime app on their smartphone to locate and rent the bicycles. Users must create an account and enter into a rental agreement with Lime, including entering payment information into the app. There are in-app instructions to walk users through the rental process. Generally, users use a map-based interface within the app to locate an available bicycle, scan the QR code on the bicycle, and begin the ride. Following the ride, users again use the app to end the rental. Typically, the app prompts users to take and submit a photograph of the bicycle parked in a correct manner to end the agreement. Lime will be offering a cash and text message based system to access bikes for those without smartphones.

## How much does it cost to rent a shared bicycle?

Regular pedal bikes cost $1 per 30 minutes of use. Electric-assisted bicycles cost $1 to unlock, and $0.15 per minute for the duration of the ride. The rental rates are determined by Lime.

## Who can rent a shared bicycle?

The City allows Lime to establish the terms of the rental agreement with bicycle users. Lime requires users to be 18 years old, have a driver’s license, and have a debit/credit/prepaid payment card.

## When can the bicycles be rented?

The bicycle sharing system is operational 24 hours a day and are available to rent at any time. The City allows Lime to determine whether to operate year-round, or whether to vary the fleet size seasonally.

## Where can shared bicycles be parked?

Shared bicycles can be parked within the boulevard of the public right-of-way, which is generally the space between the sidewalk and the curb. Bicycles may be parked on paved or unpaved boulevards. Bicycles are not permitted to block the adjacent sidewalks or streets and must maintain a minimum of 5’ pedestrian walkway at all times. Bicycles cannot be parked in a way that blocks access to pedestrian ramps, fire hydrants, driveways, alleys, bus stops, doors, or other uses of the public right-of-way. Bikes must be upright when parked. Users are asked to use common sense and courtesy when parking the bicycles to keep sidewalks usable and safe for everyone.

## What should I do if a bicycle has been damaged or parked incorrectly?

Contact Lime directly to report a damaged or incorrectly parked bicycle. Each bicycle should display a phone number to call, as well as a visible unique ID number you can use to help Lime determine the location. Lime is required to address incorrectly parked bicycles within 2 hours of being notified of a problem. Except for extraordinary circumstances, city staff will not relocate bicycles.

The bicycles have locking mechanisms on the wheels that will not allow them to be used without being rented. If moved, they will emit an audible warning. It is the responsibility of Lime to ensure that the bicycles are parked correctly. However, if you encounter a bicycle that is parked in a problematic location, you may move the bicycle a short distance if you are willing and able to do so.

## What are the rules of the road for shared bicycles?

The rules of the road are the same for shared bicycles as they are for all other bicycles. Bicycle use is regulated by Minnesota State Statute 169.222. Bicycles and electric-assisted bicycles are allowed to operate on any street, and users should ride on the right-hand side of the street. People riding bicycles are required to follow the same general rules of the road as those driving.

## What is the Service Area?

Shared bicycle trips may start or stop anywhere within Saint Paul municipal boundaries. Lime is required to regularly ensure no residence is further than 0.5 miles from a bicycle. Lime is otherwise responsible for determining how to distribute the bicycles across the city.

## What is the financial arrangement between Lime and the City?

Lime must pay the City $20 per bicycle per year. The City uses the funds to manage the contract with Lime and cover program administration costs.

## What is the data sharing agreement between Lime and the City?

Lime uses the GPS unit in the bicycle and in the user’s phone to collect data about where and how the bicycles are used, and are required to share certain data with the City. Each month, the city will receive a report from Lime, including the number of trips taken, the trip lengths, and the routes taken. The City will use the data to better understand how and where people are using bicycles to travel throughout the city. Lime is required to request user permission to use their phone GPS for the purpose of recording trip data. The City also requires users Personally Identifiable Information data be protected. This information is not shared with the City or any other third parties without consent from the user.

## What about NiceRide?

NiceRide will be permitted to operate their dock-based bike sharing system in Saint Paul through the end of the 2018 season.