



Bikestation Long Beach



Pedestrian and Bicycle
Information Center

Problem

People face many real and perceived barriers to bicycling, including fear of bicycle theft, concern for personal safety, and lack of knowledge and information about bicycling in general. If a bicyclist's trip involves changing modes to bus, train, or walking — what happens to the bike at the point of transition?

Background

In the early 1990s a proactive citizen of Long Beach, CA researched how cities in Europe and Japan achieved high levels of bicycle and transit ridership despite these barriers. His most compelling discovery was the public cycling or bike-transit center, a model that he brought back to Long Beach and convinced the city and other agencies to embrace. The concept promoted alternative transportation choices by using bike parking and other services to help people connect to transit and downtown areas.

Solution

A bike-transit center's services remove many barriers to bicycling. Moreover, a bike-transit center can become a symbol of a city's commitment to bicycling as well as a functional piece of public art that elevates the status of bicycling by incorporating striking architecture and design.

Long Beach built the first bike-transit center, named Bikestation, in North America in 1996. A new, state-of-the-art facility was built to replace the original in 2006. Bikestation Long Beach provides (or will provide by the end of phase two of construction in 2008) the following services and amenities:

- Secure, indoor 24/7 bike parking
- Valet bike parking during staffed hours
- Bicycle repairs, rental and retail
- Tools and repair stands to use free of charge
- Café
- Educational classes on bike maintenance, routes, rights and responsibilities, and more
- Bicycling and transit information
- Bicycle registration
- Access to transit for multi-modal trips
- Bicycle and electric car sharing (demonstrated in Long Beach and Seattle)
- Shower and bathroom
- Bike tours



Bikestation Long Beach — Long Beach, CA

Results

The Bikestation organization now has six facilities in Long Beach, Santa Barbara, Palo Alto, San Francisco, Berkeley, and Seattle. The centers may be operated by public/private partnerships or directly by Bikestation. Each facility is unique, with services and amenities tailored to the local community's needs and resources. The non-profit Bikestation organization serves as an information-clearinghouse and support system to those responsible for day-to-day functions in each city.

In addition, Bikestation consults on many of the bike-transit center facilities and plans in North America. Bike centers are complex projects, involving issues of inter-agency cooperation, political support, and funding. Bikestation helps with feasibility studies, operations and systems planning, design/build issues, and other services.

Bikestation's user surveys consistently show that 30 percent of users previously drove their cars alone to their destinations and would still be doing so if the Bikestation weren't available. More than 60 percent of Bikestation users who were already cycling ride their bikes more frequently. In 2006, Bikestation parked over 50,000 bikes and kept over 300,000 pounds of carbon dioxide and other pollutants from the air.

Costs

Because the new Bikestation Long Beach adapted and reused existing structures, costs for phase one were kept to about \$450,000. Construction funds came from the state's bicycle transportation account; the Long Beach Redevelopment Agency provided matching funds. The facility's operating costs are \$130,000 annually. The City of Long Beach contributes \$48,000 per year; fees for Bikestation services (rentals, retail, repair, and parking) cover the balance. To encourage use, membership rates for 24/7 bike parking cost users \$1/day, \$12/month, or \$96/year.



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For more information, please visit the Pedestrian and Bicycle Information Center Web site at www.walkinginfo.org.

