

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS  
AT URBANA-CHAMPAIGN

Facilities & Services

Sustainability and Transportation  
Physical Plant Service Building  
1501 South Oak Street  
Champaign, IL 61820



November 30, 2012

Sean Sullivan  
Student Sustainability Committee  
Transportation Working Group

RE: SSC Bike Sharing Feasibility Study

Dear Sean,

Thank you for leading the SSC Transportation Working Group this year. We are very excited about everything that our campus can address when we work together. The attached file is our completed Bicycle Sharing Feasibility Study. This was requested in Spring 2011, by Mike Lyon and Michael Hites from University Administration, and SSC asked that our office (Transportation Demand Management) direct the project and hire the student intern, Grace Kenney, under Morgan's supervision.

Grace initially volunteered with our office in February 2009 for a freshman class project to create a Request for Proposals (RFP) for bike sharing. Over the following two years, she continued to volunteer with bike parking projects and general bicycle related inquiries and needs. During that time, she also met with community transportation stakeholders to open a dialog about bicycle sharing. As anticipated, Grace dedicated herself to this study whole heartedly and has collected an amazing amount of detailed and helpful information and resources.

At the beginning of the Feasibility Study, Grace met with the transportation primary contacts in Urbana-Champaign, and formed a Steering Committee to provide input and feedback for the study. During the course of this SSC study, Grace researched and assessed alternative suppliers/vendors. The report includes a review of six system options with descriptions, contacts, related costs, and pros and cons. She assessed the viability of a public bike sharing kiosk system on this campus and in this community. The report includes details about the history of bike sharing in this community, weather, facilities, and socioeconomic data. Grace also met regularly with bicycling system experts in this community, and the report includes a summary of the issues and concerns associated with bicycle sharing systems.

Through discussions with the Steering Committee and internal UI staff, we developed a tiered implementation solution which we believe will address some of the immediate pressure for bike sharing on this campus and allow the bicycling system in this community to mature to the point where a public bike sharing program will be successful. The plan is to address bike-sharing with the following three-tiered approach:

1. Bikes available for employees – The small existing program at Kinesiology and Community Health should be replicated at departments throughout campus. The program needs to be approved by Legal Counsel, Risk Management, Purchasing, and interested Colleges. Then it should be promoted to departments, to encourage them to invest in bicycles for their employees and provide them with a simple support system for maintenance and tracking.

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS  
AT URBANA-CHAMPAIGN

Facilities & Services

Sustainability and Transportation  
Physical Plant Service Building  
1501 South Oak Street  
Champaign, IL 61820



2. Bikes available for short-term rentals – As an interim solution until the campus can handle a large-scale bike sharing program, the small existing program at Campus Recreation should be expanded with support from the Student Sustainability Committee. They should increase the number of bicycles available, make the program self-sufficient financially, and market the program to visitors, conference attendees, faculty, staff, and students. A similar program could be investigated for the Illini Union.
3. Bike solutions for students and the public – Before this campus is ready to pursue a public bike sharing system, we must first address the issues regarding degraded infrastructure and the need for more bike safety education. Once these issues have been resolved, the campus should renew consideration of several options for bike sharing, such as bicycle libraries, kiosk systems, and GPS-enabled community bikes.

Bike sharing is an exciting program to offer, but a standard public bike sharing system with kiosks and swipe cards requires a more mature bicycling culture and infrastructure than currently is available at our campus. It is very important that we bring public bike sharing to campus when it can and will be highly successful. For that to happen, the existing issues described in the report need to be addressed first. In the meantime, we would like to move forward with steps one and two this year.

We have been working through the legal, risk management and procurement issues around departmental bike sharing to get the appropriate approvals to move forward in promoting this program in the spring. We have also been discussing the potential expansion of the existing bike rental program with Campus Recreation and potential partnerships with the Campus Bicycle Shop to support these two programs. There are also a number of early stages underway to address the myriad of issues on campus regarding bicycle infrastructure and education.

Thank you for the strong support of bicycling at the University of Illinois. Please let us know if you would like to meet to discuss this study or our next steps.

Sincerely,

*Amelia J. Neptune*

Amelia J. Neptune  
Sustainability Specialist  
Facilities & Services

c: Morgan Johnston  
Stephanie Lage  
Mckenzie Beverage  
Marika Nell  
Mike Lyon  
Michael Hites  
Grace Kenney