

BIKE SHARE AND EQUITY: Tools for planners

By TIM FRISBIE

OVER THE LAST FEW YEARS, bike sharing has become one of the fastest growing forms of shared mobility, with systems launching or expanding in cities of all sizes. Local governments can use a number of strategies to make bike share an efficient and cost-effective way to increase transportation options in disadvantaged communities.

A suite of tools from the Shared-Use Mobility Center can help planners and others get practical information about bike share policies, best practices, and impacts. (Get the toolkit after completing a free registration: sharedusemobilitycenter.org/tools.)

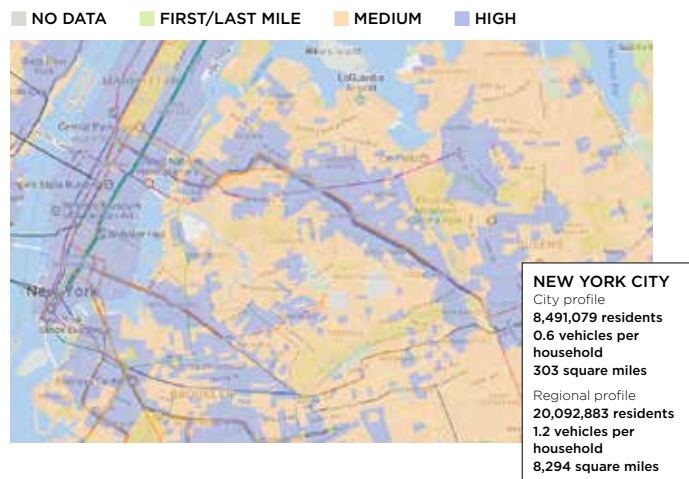
SUMC, a national nonprofit working to extend the benefits of shared mobility for all, developed the tools with a focus on helping to craft policies and programs that support the growth of mobility options in communities where more choices are needed. SUMC's toolkit has three components: a shared-mobility policy database, a benefits calculator, and a mapping and opportunity analysis tool. The first two tools are especially applicable to helping address equity issues.

MAPPING & OPPORTUNITY ANALYSIS TOOL. This pinpoints shared-mobility infrastructure and service areas in more than 50 North American cities. The tool incorporates demographic and transit quality data to determine which shared modes the market can best support. A Market Analysis Tool allows fine-grained exploration of market and demographic conditions at the neighborhood or station-area level. Land-use, employment, and a variety of socioeconomic data are incorporated into the tool.

SUMC's shared mobility opportunity model, available as a layer in the mapping tool, can help identify which communities currently have limited access to shared mobility but have the underlying characteristics to support it.

POLICY DATABASE. The database contains nearly 800 state and local policies, plans, regulations, and RFPs related to urban mobility, as well as best practices, case studies, and analyses that can help craft an effective approach to bike sharing and other shared transportation services. Planners can use this comprehensive repository as a resource to learn about equity-centered approaches from across the country.

SHARED MOBILITY OPPORTUNITY LEVEL OF NEW YORK CITY



EQUITY CASE STUDIES

CHICAGO

PROGRAM:
DIVVY FOR EVERYONE

LAUNCHED:
JULY 2015

Divvy, run by Chicago's Department of Transportation, partnered with the Better Bike Share Partnership to introduce an equity program designed to increase access to the city's bike share system. Divvy for Everyone provides a one-time \$5 annual membership, in-person enrollment at LISC Financial Opportunity Centers, and a cash option for usage fees in addition to other features designed to benefit low-income users.

PORTLAND, OREGON

PROGRAM:
BIKETOWN FOR ALL

LAUNCHED:
OCTOBER 2016

BIKETOWN has partnered with the Community Cycling Center, the Portland Bureau of Transportation, Motivate, and the Better Bike Share Partnership to provide bike share access to participating affordable housing communities as well as social service agencies and nonprofits. Low-income users affiliated with one of these organizations can sign up for a monthly membership for \$3 per month. A cash option is available for users without credit or debit cards. The program provides safety education and free helmets to all program participants.

MILWAUKEE

PROGRAM:
BUBLR BIKES
(multiple initiatives)

LAUNCHED:
JULY 2016

Bubl'r Bikes has several equity initiatives. It partnered with the local Boys and Girls Club and local nonprofit DreamBikes to create a bike mechanic certification program that provides local youth a 24-week course that includes not just bike repair training, but also paid stints working in a DreamBikes shop and as a mechanic for Bubl'r's fleet. Bubl'r also used a \$64,000 grant from the Better Bike Share Partnership to work with the city's housing authority to identify barriers to residents' use of bike share, provide discounted annual passes, create a cash payment option, and install stations at housing authority buildings.

THE TWIN CITIES, MINNESOTA

PROGRAM:
NICE RIDE NEIGHBORHOOD

LAUNCHED:
2014

In an effort to extend its equity initiative beyond reduced fares, the Twin Cities' Nice Ride system developed a strategy to create new cyclists in neighborhoods where cycling was not a traditional mobility option for adults. Nice Ride Neighborhood partners with local community organizations to provide participants with free bikes to use during the season (May–October) and conduct training in urban cycling safety. The program also offers opportunities throughout the year to participate in group rides and interact with the wider bicycling community.

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