

## BIKE SHARE PLANNING FOR SMALL &amp; MEDIUM SIZED COMMUNITIES

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Nearly every major city in the U.S. has implemented a bike share system or begun the process to fund and develop one. In the last two years, the trend has shifted toward small and medium sized cities who see the potential benefits of increasing access to bicycles, improving first/last mile connections, creating a visitor/tourism-friendly form of transportation, generating new activity and focus in their downtown, and offering a fun and practical way to increase levels physical activity. This paper explores trends in bike share implementation across the U.S. and present specific case studies of bike share in small- to mid-sized cities, exploring what works and what doesn't, lessons learned and industry surprises. Bike share systems in SC, UT, and TN will be included as case studies.

Initial planning and fundraising for Spartanburg, SC's bike share system began in 2008 and by 2011, Spartanburg (a city of just under 40,000) became one of the first bike share systems in the Southeast. Starting with two stations and ten bikes, Spartanburg has since grown to five stations and forty bikes with an equally strong increase in partners, sponsors, members and riders. Spartanburg's sister city Greenville, SC is just 30 minutes away and has a population of around 60,000. Their bike share system launched in 2013 with six stations and provides a regional complement to the Spartanburg and Charlotte (NC) B-cycle systems. Each system has tested numerous strategies to increase membership, usage, and sponsor contributions, including membership drives, rivalry ridership competitions (college vs college), bike share tricycle bikes, mileage competitions among members, a specialty-painted bike share bike, and more.

Salt Lake City, UT and Chattanooga, TN provide examples of cities with population under 200,000. Salt Lake City's GREENbike system increased its size by 34% in 2015 and experienced a 292% increase in ridership. The system is averaging 2.5 trips per bike per day for the season with some months averaging 3.3, putting the system on par with much larger programs like Boston's Hubway and DC's Capital Bikeshare. Chattanooga's Bicycle Transit System does not have the same density of stations that Salt Lake City has achieved and has experienced closer to 0.8 trips per bike per day (on par with other lower-density systems like Denver B-Cycle and Columbus CoGo bike share).

Through examination of the different governance models used by these systems, the variations in system footprint and station density, and the variety of outreach and promotional strategies used to foster a successful, fully-utilized bike share system, this paper provides a useful and practical insight into what works for bike share in small- and medium-sized cities in the U.S.