



**GREAT PLAINS  
INSTITUTE**

Better Energy.  
Better World.



# Twin Cities Bikeshare Equity Study

---

2025

# Contents

About the Great Plains Institute .....	3
Acknowledgments .....	3
Executive Summary .....	4
Section I: Bikeshare in the Twin Cities .....	5
Nice Ride Minnesota (2010–2023) .....	5
Privately contracted operators (2023–present).....	6
Section II: Benefits of Bikeshare and the State of the Industry.....	8
Reducing emissions.....	8
Improving the transportation network.....	9
Demographic disparities in bikeshare .....	10
Section III: Local Context and the Role of Bikeshare .....	13
Unique challenges require tailored solutions .....	13
The role of bikeshare .....	14
Section IV: Strategies and Real-World Examples .....	17
Pricing and payment .....	17
Spatial equity.....	19
Public transit integration.....	21
Internal operations, staffing, and planning.....	24
Vehicle types .....	28
Education .....	31
Community engagement.....	34
Community programming.....	37
Section V: Conclusion .....	40

## About the Great Plains Institute

A nonpartisan, nonprofit organization, the Great Plains Institute (GPI) accelerates the transition to net-zero carbon emissions for the benefit of people, the economy, and the environment. Working across the US, we combine a unique consensus-building approach, expert knowledge, research and analysis, and local action to find and implement lasting solutions. Our work strengthens communities and provides greater economic opportunity through the creation of higher-paying jobs, expansion of the nation's industrial base, and greater domestic energy independence while eliminating carbon emissions. Learn more: [www.betterenergy.org](http://www.betterenergy.org).

## Acknowledgments

GPI is grateful to the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency for supporting this work through its Local Climate Action Grant program. We are also grateful to the local stakeholders and bikeshare operators who participated in this report and contributed their time and expertise. Their input helped ensure that this project highlighted the appropriate local context and incorporated best practices from successful bikeshare programs around the country. Contributors include the following:

- Laura Bolger, former executive director, Bublr Bikes
- Carly Ellefsen, communications manager, Our Streets
- Dillon Fried, mobility and curbside access manager, City of Minneapolis
- Max Gonzalez, public works project manager, City of Minneapolis
- Cole Hiniker, multimodal transportation planning, senior manager, Metropolitan Council of the Twin Cities
- Meredith Klekotka, shared mobility program manager, Metro Transit
- Waffiyah Murray, Indego program manager, City of Philadelphia
- Erin Potts, director of marketing and outreach, POGO
- Juan Luis Rivera-Reyes, coalition organizer, The Alliance
- Elissa Schufman, director of strategic partnerships, Move Minnesota
- Russ Stark, former chief resilience officer, City of Saint Paul
- Anthony Taylor, founder, Melanin in Motion and Slow Roll MSP
- Michael Wojcik, executive director, Bicycle Alliance of Minnesota

# Executive Summary

In the United States, the Twin Cities have served as a microcosm of the bikeshare industry, which has grown and evolved since the early 2010s. That growth has been tied to questions about who is truly benefiting from the bikeshare boom and how operators and cities can work to ensure that the promise of accessible and affordable active transportation is available to everyone.

This report provides a brief overview of the evolution of bikeshare in the Twin Cities, from early grassroots efforts to the rise and fall of Nice Ride Minnesota, and the subsequent transition to privately operated dockless systems. It then delves into the benefits of bikeshare and how the industry is currently falling short in ensuring that these benefits are equitably distributed to everyone in our communities. Finally, this report identifies key local transportation challenges and highlights proven strategies for advancing equitable bikeshare in the Twin Cities and nationwide.

The study uses three primary research approaches: interviews with local stakeholders, a national review of equity-focused bikeshare strategies, and in-depth conversations with bikeshare operators in three US cities that have made equity a core priority.

Together, these methods enabled the project team to pinpoint the programmatic and system-level elements—such as pricing and payment structures, vehicle deployment patterns, transit integration, vehicle types, and the ways agencies and operators embed equity within their internal practices—that shape who ultimately benefits from bikeshare.

The report then uses real-world examples from across North America that demonstrate how bikeshare systems are actively working to embed equity into these essential components.

Looking ahead, the Twin Cities Bikeshare Equity Study is intended as a practical resource to help decision makers proactively approach contracts, regulations, program design, and operations in ways that deliver equitable outcomes. It offers a shared framework and common language for centering equity in bikeshare, helping local partners set clear expectations, identify promising strategies, and track whether future systems deliver on their potential to reduce car dependence and expand access to opportunity for all residents.

## Section I: Bikeshare in the Twin Cities

Bikeshare is still a relatively new industry in the United States, but the Twin Cities have been a pioneer in the space for decades. In the 1990s, a group of bicycle enthusiasts launched the Yellow Bike Coalition in Saint Paul.<sup>1</sup> While the model, which used standard bicycles painted yellow and dispersed throughout the city, proved unsustainable over time, the interest in a community asset that allowed more people to traverse their neighborhoods in an affordable and sustainable way was evident.

Fast forward to 2010, and the next generation of bikeshare was ready to take off in the region. Nice Ride Minnesota (Nice Ride), a nonprofit-run, station-based system supported by Minneapolis Mayor R.T. Rybak, launched at a time when organized and monetized bikeshare was still a new concept in the United States. Nice Ride quickly became a model system that cities around the country worked to emulate.

Lyft, the ridesharing company that had recently expanded into bikeshare, took over operations of Nice Ride in 2019 after purchasing Motivate, the company that previously ran the system. Lyft continued to operate the system until 2023, when Nice Ride lost its main fiscal sponsor, Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Minnesota. Due to funding challenges, the age of the bikes and docking stations, and the need for significant capital investments to update the system, the board of directors voted to wind down the system.

In the wake of Nice Ride's departure, privately owned companies have entered into contracts with the Cities of Minneapolis and Saint Paul to provide dockless bikeshare service, a system where bikes are free-floating and not required to be checked in or out of designated stations.

### Nice Ride Minnesota (2010–2023)

For most of its existence, Nice Ride operated as a docked system, with riders checking out a bike at a physical station and returning it to any other physical station in the system. While a docked system offered reliability for riders, the high cost of station installation and maintenance made growing the system expensive, requiring the organization to balance necessary ridership numbers with its goal of providing an accessible transportation option to every neighborhood.

To support this goal, Nice Ride went through multiple iterations of programs designed to provide more equitable service throughout its operational geography.

### Community Partners program

Starting in 2011, just a year after the first Nice Ride bikes were deployed, the organization launched the Community Partners Program with support from the Target Corporation. This program provided discounted and free annual memberships to social service providers, including the American Indian Health Board, the Northside Residents Redevelopment Council, and La Clinica, allowing them to distribute them to those most likely to benefit.<sup>2</sup> Each rider also received an orientation and tips for safe urban riding from Nice Ride staff.

---

<sup>1</sup> Alex Schieferdecker, "[Pedal Talk The Fall and Rise of Bikes and Bike Sharing In the Twin Cities](#)," *Cities in the 21st Century* 3, no. 1 (2013).

<sup>2</sup> Emily Wade, "[Nice Rides for All Neighborhoods: Equity Efforts in Minnesota's Bike Share](#)," Better Bike Share Partnership, February 5, 2015.

## Nice Ride Neighborhood program

Due to the high cost of system expansion, Nice Ride recognized the need to increase access to cycling for people who did not live near a Nice Ride station, especially in disadvantaged areas. To achieve this, the nonprofit collaborated with local community organizations to launch the Nice Ride Neighborhood Program in 2014.<sup>3</sup>

The Nice Ride Neighborhood Program provided participants with a rental bike to use as their own personal bike from May to October, with no need to return it to a Nice Ride station. Participants also received a helmet, bike lock, and bike lights, and were required to attend an orientation session and group rides throughout the season.

Upon completion, participants received a \$200 voucher to a local bike shop to purchase their own bike. At any time, participants could take their bikes into participating local bike shops for repairs or adjustments.

Beyond providing more access to bikes, Nice Ride found that the program's group events helped change the perception of active transportation in the participating communities. This allowed Nice Ride to build stronger relationships in those neighborhoods, which were vital to the organization's goal of equitable growth.

The program received positive feedback from participants, who appreciated both the ability to travel to more places and the community-building aspect of having people out and about riding the distinctive orange bikes. One participant shared that it fostered a sense of community: "If you see someone else with an orange bicycle, you already know you have something in common."

According to an analysis by the University of Minnesota's Robert J. Jones Urban Research and Outreach Engagement Center, participants shifted from thinking of bicycling as "not for me" to considering it beneficial for everyone.<sup>4</sup>

## Nice Ride for All program

After Lyft took over Nice Ride's operations in 2019, the system introduced Nice Ride for All, an equity program that more closely resembles the industry standard seen nationwide today.<sup>5</sup> The program provided \$5 annual memberships to any resident who qualified for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) or the Transit Assistance Program (TAP). The program also extended to students at the University of Minnesota who received financial aid.

## Privately contracted operators (2023–present)

After Nice Ride's departure in 2023, the Cities of Minneapolis and Saint Paul decided to contract directly with for-profit bike- and scooter-sharing companies. This change resulted in a shift from the traditional docked system to a dockless operation, where customers could rent a bike or scooter through the company's app and park them anywhere in the approved geographic area at the completion of their ride. Riders were charged a fee to unlock the vehicle and a per-minute fee during use. As of 2025, both cities had license agreements with two private operators, Lime and Spin.

---

<sup>3</sup> Urban Research Outreach-Engagement Center (UROC) & Minnesota Evaluation Studies Institute (MESI), [Nice Ride Neighborhood Program: Final Evaluation Report](#) (UROC & MESI, December 2014).

<sup>4</sup> UROC and MESI, [Nice Ride Neighborhood Program: Final Evaluation Report](#).

<sup>5</sup> Danish Raza, "[Nice Ride Launches Discount Bike-Sharing Memberships for Lower-Income Residents](#)," *Star Tribune*, May 15, 2019.

A dockless system allows vehicles to be more easily disbursed through various parts of the service area. Equitable deployment of the fleet was a value held by the original Nice Ride board and management, and the Twin Cities made sure to continue this work by requiring private, dockless contractors to deploy a certain portion of vehicles in target areas.

For example, in Saint Paul, vendors must deploy at least 30 percent of their total vehicle fleet within Areas of Concentrated Poverty where 50 percent or more of the residents are people of color (ACP50).<sup>6</sup> Although ACP50 is no longer in use, the city continues to utilize the boundaries in its agreements with vendors. Minneapolis has a similar distribution requirement.

For both cities, automatic discounts are applied to any ride that begins in a designated equity area.<sup>7</sup>

Additionally, each vendor is required to offer a more comprehensive discount program, which comes in the form of Lime and Spin access, that offers discounted rides to qualified lower-income residents regardless of where the trip begins.<sup>8</sup>



---

<sup>6</sup> City of Saint Paul, [2024 Shared Micromobility Report](#) (City of Saint Paul, April 2025).

<sup>7</sup> Frederick Melo, “[St. Paul, Minn., to Embrace Electric Bike-Sharing](#),” *GovTech*, August 3, 2023.

<sup>8</sup> “[Low-cost Mobility Programs](#),” City of Minneapolis, last updated January 21, 2026.

## Section II: Benefits of Bikeshare and the State of the Industry

Bikeshare is a vital part of life for thousands of people in communities across the country. In 2024, combined ridership between docked bikeshare systems and dockless bikes in the United States surpassed 84 million trips, with 68.5 million of those originating from docked stations, marking an all-time high.<sup>9</sup>

Whether for commuting to work, running errands, or taking leisurely rides, bikeshare has been embraced as a vital component of multimodal transportation systems.

This impact has become even more pronounced since the introduction of electric bikes (e-bikes) to many systems, which has proven to be a game-changer for riders and operators alike.

For example, when the City of Madison, Wisconsin, fully swapped its traditional bikeshare system for an electric one, the system saw a 64 percent increase in users while selling over 43,000 passes, more than in the previous two years combined. Thirty-seven percent of riders reported using their personal cars less often because of their bikeshare ridership.<sup>10</sup>

E-bikes have also shown the ability to attract a wider range of riders. In Philadelphia, the introduction of e-bikes led to a higher increase in ridership in disadvantaged areas compared to the rest of the system, while the average e-bike trip duration and distance were also higher in these areas.<sup>11</sup>

In New York City, New York, CitiBike saw a significant increase in the diversity of riders after introducing e-bikes, with 61 percent of total riders identifying as people from underrepresented groups, while also finding a strong preference for e-bikes among low-income users.<sup>12</sup> Additionally, introducing e-bikes allowed riders with different physical abilities to use the system, including older adults and others who may have had difficulty using traditional bikeshare bikes.

This continued growth in bikeshare use has the potential to support healthier, more sustainable communities in several important ways.

### Reducing emissions

Reducing vehicle miles traveled (VMT) is a goal of the City of Minneapolis. In its Transportation Action Plan, the city states that even with the mass adoption of electric cars, automobile passenger miles would have to be reduced by 38 percent to reach its goal of reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 80 percent by 2050.<sup>13</sup>

Reducing VMT is a vital strategy to reduce emissions from transportation sources because, according to the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency, most air pollutants of concern today originate from on- and off-road vehicles, including cars and trucks.<sup>14</sup> Moreover, the City of Minneapolis notes that cars and trucks are the city's largest contributors to air pollution.<sup>15</sup>

Bikeshare can help reduce VMT in the system service area, allowing for more trips to be made outside of personal vehicles, thereby reducing tailpipe emissions and the need for auto-centric infrastructure investments, especially as the population and risk of increased transportation emissions grow in the future. Evidence from multiple cities demonstrates these benefits.

---

<sup>9</sup> North American Bikeshare & Scootershare Association (NABSA), [2024 Shared Micromobility State of the Industry Report](#) (NABSA, August 2025).

<sup>10</sup> Chris Hubbuch, "[Madison Sees Spike in Bike Share Program with E-Bikes](#)," *Governing*, March 16, 2020.

<sup>11</sup> Kiran Herbert, "[The Equity Implications of Electric Bike Share](#)," Better Bike Share Partnership, March 22, 2023.

<sup>12</sup> Herbert, "[The Equity Implications of Electric Bike Share](#)."

<sup>13</sup> "[Transportation Action Plan: Climate](#)," City of Minneapolis, accessed January 5, 2026.

<sup>14</sup> Minnesota Department of Health, "[Traffic](#)," accessed January 28, 2026.

<sup>15</sup> "[Green Fleet Vehicles](#)," City of Minneapolis, accessed January 28, 2026.

A 2025 study found that, in Boston, Massachusetts, between 2017 and 2024, the presence of the Blue Bikes bikeshare system resulted in a reduction of carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) and nitrogen oxides (NO<sub>x</sub>) emissions.<sup>16</sup> Similarly, a study from Simon Fraser University in British Columbia found that the public bikeshare system in Vancouver, British Columbia, could reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by as much as 4 percent.<sup>17</sup> Finally, a study from 2022 researching the impacts of bikeshare in New York City stated that “the deployment of bikeshare is associated with a 3% reduction in black carbon and 13% reduction in nitric oxide concentrations, both pollutants associated with road traffic.”<sup>18</sup>

## Improving the transportation network

Bikeshare can support a more efficient and sustainable transportation system in several ways, from replacing vehicle trips to helping people better connect with transit and reducing traffic congestion.

According to the United States Bureau of Transportation Statistics, in 2021, more than half of all trips made in the country were less than three miles, with 28 percent of total trips being less than one mile.<sup>19</sup> In 2024, the average trip distance using a traditional pedal bike was 1.5 miles and jumped to 1.9 miles for e-bikes, suggesting that an accessible bikeshare system can be a legitimate car replacement for a significant portion of daily trips.<sup>20</sup>

While bikeshare can make it easier to choose an alternative vehicle for short, daily trips, it can also facilitate reaching further destinations by serving as a first- or last-mile connection to transit.

Research conducted by the North American Bikeshare & Scootershare Association (NABSA) found that, in 2024, 74 percent of bikeshare and scootershare riders used shared micromobility to connect to transit. Twenty-two percent reported using it weekly to connect to transit.<sup>21</sup> Overall, NABSA found that 18 percent of all shared micromobility trips were taken to connect with transit.

The relationship between shared micromobility and transit can be particularly powerful when the systems are designed to work together, both physically and digitally, as explored in the Transit Connections section of this report.

Finally, the presence of bikeshare can benefit every traveler, whether they are on a bike, walking, or in their car, by reducing congestion on roadways. A 2021 study developed by researchers from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology focused on the impact of bikeshare in Metro Boston found that “a new bikeshare station reduces vehicle ownership per household by 2.2%, vehicle miles traveled per person by 3.3%, and per-capita vehicular GHG emissions by 2.9%.”<sup>22</sup>

---

16 Mengzhen Ding, Shaohua Zhang, Lemei Li, Yishuang Wu, Qiyao Yang, and Jun Cai, “[Environmental Benefits Evaluation of a Bike-Sharing System in the Boston Area: A Longitudinal Study](#),” *Urban Science* 9, no. 5 (2025): 159.

17 “[SFU Researchers Reveal How Bike Sharing Could Shape Future Emission Reduction Policies](#),” Simon Fraser University Faculty of Applied Sciences, March 17, 2025.

18 Vincent Thorne, [Cycling Towards Cleaner Cities? Evidence from New York City’s Bike Share Program](#) (Vincent Thorne, November 2022).

19 “[FOTW #1230, March 21, 2022: More than Half of all Daily Trips Were Less than Three Miles in 2021](#),” US Department of Energy, March 21, 2022.

20 NABSA, [2024 Shared Micromobility State of the Industry Report](#).

21 NABSA, [2024 Shared Micromobility State of the Industry Report](#).

22 Rounaq Basu and Joseph Ferreira, “[Planning Car-Lite Neighborhoods: Does Bikesharing Reduce Auto-Dependence?](#)” *Transportation Research Part D: Transport and Environment*, Volume 92 (March 2021).

A 2016 Resources for the Future study on a bikeshare program in Washington, DC, discovered that “the availability of a bikeshare reduces traffic congestion upwards of 4% within a neighborhood.”<sup>23</sup> This impact may be even higher, given that Capital Bikeshare in Washington, DC, topped 6 million rides in 2024, a 36.9 percent year-over-year increase.<sup>24</sup>

## Demographic disparities in bikeshare

While more riders than ever are using bikeshare, and the demographics of those riders have begun to diversify slightly in recent years, the core ridership remains predominantly young white men.<sup>25</sup> This section examines the disparities in the bikeshare user base and discusses the reasons why this pattern persists.

### Gender

The 2024 annual report produced by NABSA found that women were underrepresented by 12 percentage points, accounting for approximately 38 percent of bikeshare trips.<sup>26</sup>

Several factors may contribute to a lower rate of bikeshare participation among women. For example, multiple studies have found that women are more likely than men to identify features of the built environment, such as low lighting and the lack of separate bike paths, as barriers to cycling.<sup>27</sup>

Women can also be subject to harassment and violence from drivers and other cyclists. A survey of women and non-binary bikers conducted by the advocacy group BikeLoud PDX in Portland, Oregon, asked respondents to describe the worst—or most common—incident of abuse or aggressive behaviors they’ve experienced while cycling. 311 out of the 329 respondents reported some level of incident, from swearing and honking to tailgating and stalking.<sup>28</sup>

Women also often take on different household responsibilities and therefore different travel patterns than men. Women are more likely to travel with children, carry baggage, such as groceries or strollers, and engage in trip-chaining (traveling to multiple destinations in a row before returning home).<sup>29</sup> Bicycles provided in traditional bikeshare systems often lack cargo racks, child seats, or trailers, preventing wider use of shared bikes.

Some systems have recognized the gender gap in bikeshare ridership and have taken steps to address it. In Guadalajara, Mexico, the share of women using the bikeshare system MiBici increased from 37 percent in 2020 to 56 percent in 2021, in response to a program that provided low-income women with a MiBici membership in addition to public transportation tickets.<sup>30</sup>

---

<sup>23</sup> Timothy L. Hamilton and Casey J. Wichman, [Bicycle Infrastructure and Traffic Congestion](#) (Resources for the Future, revised November 2016).

<sup>24</sup> Samuel Littauer, [“Capital Bikeshare Records over 6.1 Million Rides in 2024,”](#) *Greater Greater Washington*, January 29, 2025.

<sup>25</sup> NABSA, [2024 Shared Micromobility State of the Industry Report](#).

<sup>26</sup> NABSA, [2024 Shared Micromobility State of the Industry Report](#).

<sup>27</sup> Simon MacMichael, [“Women Cite Badly-Lit Routes and Lack of Safe Infrastructure as Major Barriers to Cycling,”](#) *road.cc*, December 1, 2023.

<sup>28</sup> Jonathan Maus, [“Survey Reveals Depth of Abuse Women Experience While Biking,”](#) *BikePortland*, March 20, 2024.

<sup>29</sup> Alexander Shermansong, Sarah M. Kaufman, Nicholas R. Cowan, Joshua Sperling, Melissa Hart, Gloria Campbell, [The Pink Tax on Mobility: Opportunities for Innovation](#) (New York University Rudin Center for Transportation Policy and Management, February 2022); Los Angeles Department of Transportation, [Changing Lanes: A Gender Equity Transportation Study](#) (Los Angeles Department of Transportation, June 2021).

<sup>30</sup> Kiran Herbert, [“Achieving Gender Parity in Bike Share,”](#) Better Bike Share Partnership, March 23, 2022.

MiBici also studied women’s travel behaviors and barriers, which informed its *Guide to Gender-Responsive Planning for Public Bike Share*.<sup>31</sup> The study highlighted fear of sexual violence and traffic violence as some of the main barriers to women bicyclists in Guadalajara, along with infrastructure built to prioritize travel for work that does not accommodate caregiving tasks.

In response to the study’s findings, MiBici incorporated safety into its planning for new stations, including siting stations in locations with better protective infrastructure and incorporating more lighting into station design. Other feedback from the study included a need for vehicles with baskets and child seats, as well as a need to balance the number of bikes at stations to ensure they had enough for the women who depended on them.

Other operators are also working to make their systems more accessible for women and caretakers. In 2024, bikeshare operator Lime launched an initiative in Milan that equipped 150 e-bikes with child seats and expanded that program to 500 e-bikes in Paris in 2025.<sup>32</sup>

## Income

While bikeshare can sometimes be viewed as a recreational outlet for the wealthy, the data paints a different picture.

According to NABSA, in 2024, very low-income users (those earning less than \$15,000 annually) were overrepresented by 15 percentage points, while high-income users making over \$100,000 were overrepresented by 3 percentage points. Middle-income earners (those earning \$15,000 to \$100,000) are currently underrepresented in bikeshare.<sup>33</sup>

## Race

Multiple studies conclude that white riders are overrepresented among bikeshare participants, with Black Americans most starkly underrepresented. In 2024, NABSA reported that white users were overrepresented by 7 percentage points, while Black users were underrepresented by 5 percentage points.

In 2016, Charles T. Brown, a researcher at Rutgers University, conducted an in-depth study examining barriers to bicycling for Black and Latino populations, surveying residents, and leading focus groups in New Jersey. They found that the highest-ranked barrier was concerns over traffic safety, followed by fear of robbery and assault, and fear of police profiling.<sup>34</sup>

Black and Latino riders are significantly more likely to be pulled over by police, with one study finding that tickets were issued eight times more often in majority Black than majority white census tracts.<sup>35</sup> In Minneapolis, an analysis of data from 2009 to 2015 found that 48 percent of bicycle citations and arrests were issued to Black riders, despite the population of the city being only 18 percent Black. Native riders also made up a disproportionate number of arrests in that period.<sup>36</sup>

---

<sup>31</sup> Odochi Akwani, “[In Guadalajara, Women’s Safety Informs Bike Share Expansion](#),” Better Bike Share Partnership, May 21, 2025.

<sup>32</sup> Sela Musa, “[Lime Rolls Out 500 E-Bikes with Child Seats in Paris](#),” *Zag Daily*, October 30, 2025.

<sup>33</sup> NABSA, *2024 Shared Micromobility State of the Industry Report*.

<sup>34</sup> Charles T. Brown, “[Fear: A Silent Barrier to Bicycling in Black and Hispanic Communities](#),” *ITE Journal* 86, no. 9 (September 2016): 22–24,

<sup>35</sup> Jesus M. Barajas, “[Biking where Black: Connecting transportation planning and infrastructure to disproportionate policing](#),” *Transportation Research Part D: Transport and Environment* 99 (2021): 103027.

<sup>36</sup> Melody Hoffman and Anneka Kmiecik, *Bicycle Citations and Related Arrests in Minneapolis 2009–2015* (Minneapolis Bicycle Coalition, 2016).

These disparities can be exacerbated by easily overlooked local ordinances. For example, in Kansas City, Missouri, the advocacy group BikeWalkKC identified multiple local statutes that could lead to over-policing, including a requirement that any wheel on a vehicle or bike not deposit mud or debris onto city streets and a statute that allows police to pull over anyone on a bike if they have reason to believe the bike is unsafe or not properly equipped. BikeWalkKC built a community coalition and successfully lobbied the city council to repeal or significantly alter three problematic statutes.<sup>37</sup>



---

<sup>37</sup> Michael Kelley and Marisa Jones, “[Taking on Traffic Laws: A How-To Guide for Decriminalizing Mobility](#),” BikeWalkKC, accessed January 5, 2026.

## Section III: Local Context and the Role of Bikeshare

To establish a more equitable transportation system, it is imperative to understand what equity means in the context of transportation and the challenges the current system imposes on residents across the Twin Cities region.

Interviews with local transportation leaders and advocates reveal a shared understanding that achieving transportation equity requires addressing both historic and ongoing disparities in access, affordability, and the quality of available travel options. Interviewees also discussed how bikeshare, when thoughtfully designed and deployed, can be a strategy for helping to alleviate these challenges.

### Unique challenges require tailored solutions

Anthony Taylor, founder of Melanin in Motion and Slow Roll MSP, explained that access and outcomes are not the same thing: “I never use the word equity; I use equitable outcomes. . .It’s not about access, it’s about outcomes.”

*“It’s not about access, it’s about outcomes.”*

Taylor also noted that different communities face different transportation challenges and require different strategies to achieve the desired outcomes. People with fewer resources often have less time and are forced to live further from their jobs as the price of housing in the city center continues to increase. Taylor highlighted that just because some see biking as the best way to move around, this is not true for everyone.

Carly Ellefsen, communications manager at Our Streets Minneapolis, a local nonprofit dedicated to making sure people can easily and comfortably walk, bike, roll, and use public transit, also discussed the need for tailored solutions for different challenges. She emphasized that decades of disinvestment have made access to transportation choices unequal for different socioeconomic and racial groups. She also noted that those disinvestments continue to shape the region today, not only in transportation but also housing and air quality.

Dillon Fried, mobility and curbside access manager for the City of Minneapolis, agreed that equitable access is not the same thing as achieving equitable outcomes and that simply providing multiple modes of transportation is not enough; they need to be useful.

“It is ensuring that the options that serve neighborhoods are viable options,” he explained. “If it takes you 45 minutes to get somewhere on a bus and it takes you 15 minutes in a car, to me, that’s not really transportation equity.” Fried added that “just because you have an option available doesn’t mean that you’re meeting equity goals,” emphasizing the need for “actual, reliable, viable alternatives to driving” and for decision makers to be intentional “about where to prioritize the viability of these alternatives.”

Juan Luis Rivera-Reyes, coalition organizer at The Alliance, a coalition of community-based organizations and advocacy groups, put it simply when asked about the biggest transportation challenges in the region.

“Cost,” he explained. “[Folks are] being pushed outside of an area where it is transit-friendly—with rapid bus, light rail, cycling, etc. [They] are being pushed into suburban areas, further ring suburbs where there’s a lack of public transportation. [They’re] having to purchase vehicles.”

From the perspective of Russ Stark, former chief resilience officer for the City of Saint Paul, the region’s transportation system functions unevenly across socioeconomic groups. “We have a decent chunk of our overall households that don’t own a car,” he noted. “Our transportation system works reasonably well for people who do own cars . . . and it’s more of a mixed bag if you don’t.”

Collectively, these perspectives highlight the complexity of advancing transportation equity in the Twin Cities. Achieving meaningful progress will require addressing the legacy of disinvestment, improving the reliability and reach of public transit, ensuring affordability across all modes, and designing systems that reflect the diverse needs and capacities of the region’s residents.

## The role of bikeshare

Transportation leaders and advocates also discussed how bikeshare and other shared micromobility options can play a role in creating a more connected transportation ecosystem. They emphasized that bikeshare can bridge critical gaps in the network, particularly by connecting users to public transit and providing an alternative to car dependency. However, to achieve these goals, the system must be implemented with a high level of community-specific care.

Cole Hiniker, senior manager of multimodal planning at the Metropolitan Council, highlighted the importance of expanding options to strengthen regional access and sustainability. He noted: “Having more options on the table is a good thing, as long as they’re sustainable and the region can support them. Beyond just the first-last mile, it is just more access to biking and sustainable transportation.”

***“Having more options on the table is a good thing, as long as they’re sustainable and the region can support them. Beyond just the first-last mile, it is just more access to biking and sustainable transportation.”***

From an operational perspective, local institutions also recognized the potential for bikeshare to improve options for commuters. A transportation staff member at a local higher education institution, who asked to remain anonymous, noted: “In that three-to-five-mile range with transfers, you’re talking about a half-hour bus ride at least. Which could easily be replaced with a 15–20-minute micromobility trip that is also much more reliable than the bus trip. We also have staff [who] have to start early in the morning, where they have very limited transit options.”

Interviewees also cautioned that bikeshare and micromobility systems must be thoughtfully implemented to ensure accessibility and long-term use. Dillon Fried noted that “Shared micromobility options are great, but it can be a physical limitation for some folks, and because we have winter many months out of the year.” Similarly, Juan Luis Rivera-Reyes remarked that “[Bikeshare] serves as a convenient middle form of transportation, super convenient,” but that “it’s a challenge when they disappear for the winter.”

## Docked vs. dockless

As the format of bikeshare in the Twin Cities has evolved over the years, residents have had the opportunity to compare a docked system run by a nonprofit organization with a dockless system operated by for-profit entities. While some interviewees highlighted the benefits of the flexibility offered by dockless systems, others emphasized that the transition away from docked stations has led to new challenges.

Carly Ellefsen described the change from Nice Ride to the current dockless system. “The difference is massive,” she said. “So many people miss Nice Ride. [The dockless system is]. . .incredibly expensive, ADA issues, no regional coordination, having to use an app.” ADA refers to the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Dillon Fried described how the shift in systems has impacted service. “In light of losing Nice Ride and losing the reliability of docked bikes, we’ve been really doubling down with our mobility hub program to incentivize and, I think, soon require our shared mobility providers to balance vehicles into mobility hubs

to increase that reliability.” Mobility hubs refer to a location designed to allow people to easily connect to multiple forms of transportation.

Fried explained that while private companies are technically required to offer low-income access programs, participation rates remain low compared to the former Nice Ride for All initiative. “Nice Ride just wanted to get as many people riding as they could,” he observed, “but because of the financial outlook for a private company versus a nonprofit operator, it’s just different.”

From a network perspective, Max Gonzalez, public works project manager at the City of Minneapolis, pointed out that the transition from docked to dockless bikes has produced mixed results: “One of the issues that we saw with the previous docked system was the concentration in the 30s.” The 30s refers to between N 30 Avenue and S 30 Avenue, a geographic concentration in Minneapolis going north to south between Lake Street and Lowry Avenue. “The docks forced people to end their trip at certain locations, but once the dockless system started, trips were spread out because people were going directly to their destination. That created a little bit more of a reliability issue and having to hunt for the vehicles,” he said.

Russ Stark of Saint Paul reflected on the challenges cities face in relying on private providers. “To a large degree, as cities, we’re sort of at the mercy of what they are willing to provide and at the price point that they’re willing to provide it,” he said. “What we’ve seen, especially in recent years, is [that] the prices have gone way up, particularly for bikeshare.”

***“To a large degree, as cities, we’re sort of at the mercy of what [private providers] are willing to provide and at the price point that they’re willing to provide it,”***

One higher education transportation staff member shared their concerns around pricing: “We miss Nice Ride for All.” They highlighted gaps in the current access programs: “Our international students are not eligible for the low-income access programs that the private operators offer. Most of our international students pay out of their own pocket, and some have limited financial resources.”

Meredith Klekotka, shared mobility program manager at Metro Transit, also highlighted the tradeoffs between the docked and dockless strategies: “I would say I saw the distribution to be slightly better [with the private-backed companies]. What is not better is the price. Because I think the price has gone up significantly.” She added that, compared with the current system, Nice Ride had a lower level of distribution, but that communication with current private operators is more difficult because of multiple vendors and lack of responsiveness.

## Public sector support is vital

Whether run by a local nonprofit or a large private company, the question of how the public sector can best support equitable access to bikeshare has long been a topic of conversation.

Juan Luis Rivera-Reyes described what he sees as the appropriate role of the public sector, including being responsible and deliberate when determining where infrastructure is built and where education is reinforced, as those are two of the determining factors in the effort to get more people using the system and expanding the culture of biking in the City.

He was not the only one to point to infrastructure prioritization as one of the main roles of local government. Michael Wojcik, executive director at the Bicycle Alliance of Minnesota, said: “If you build a wonderful road that’s safe 95 percent of the way, most people won’t use it. But as soon as you hit 100 percent, almost everybody will use it. So, it can’t just be about mobility. It has to be the actual strategy of getting people from point A to point B.”

Helping solve the rising cost problem was also discussed. Russ Stark said: “Ultimately, cities need to figure out how to work together to get public resources invested in these systems if we want them to be a public good. Doesn’t mean they have to be publicly operated or even owned, but public resources will be required to make it a public good and to make it accessible and affordable for people in a way that you know will increase usage.”

Dillon Fried echoed that sentiment, noting that a City of Minneapolis survey found that two of the largest impediments to micromobility adoption were reliability and cost.

“There really needs to be a shift in thinking to consider bikeshare as public transportation rather than just something that helps with recreational rides and tourism.” He added that investment in bikeshare can support other regional investments: “It can be much more integrated as part of our transit system or public transportation system if there is a public sector investment and involvement with the operation.”

***“There really needs to be a shift in thinking to consider bikeshare as public transportation rather than just something that helps with recreational rides and tourism.”***

Increased public sector involvement and cross-jurisdictional coordination can also help improve the overall ridership experience. Max Gonzalez explained that when separate systems are piecemealed together through different contracting agreements, users attempting to reach their destination can encounter problems. For example, if a user crosses a geographical boundary where the system changes, the motor on a smart or electric bike may shut off, potentially stopping the rider halfway, such as in the middle of a bridge.

The challenges and potential solutions discussed by local stakeholders are not completely unique to the Twin Cities. The following section dives into how bikeshare operators and their public partners are working to utilize accessible bikeshare to alleviate transportation burdens and the strategies to ensure those benefits are extended to everyone in their community.

## Section IV: Strategies and Real-World Examples

Bikeshare systems around North America are finding innovative solutions to address challenges to providing equitable service. This section highlights real-world best practices being implemented to address various policy and operational challenges.

### Pricing and payment

The cost of shared micromobility and the methods by which users can pay are two key factors determining who has access to these transportation options. In recent years, the cost of trips and annual memberships across the United States has steadily increased, becoming more expensive than other public transportation options, according to the National Association of City Transportation Officials.<sup>38</sup> Additionally, many systems fail to provide payment options that are accessible to users who don't have access to a credit card, smartphone, bank account, or the internet.

This section explores solutions to pricing and payment barriers, including discounted pricing, inclusive payment options, and direct mobility stipends, which can make shared transportation more affordable, accessible, and equitable.

Discounted memberships for income-qualified users are among the most common approaches to employing equitable pricing within shared mobility systems today. In 2024, 92 percent of North American systems offered a subsidized membership option, costing 76 percent less than standard rates on average.<sup>39</sup> Some of the best examples of these efforts combine steep discounts with a straightforward enrollment process that provides a variety of ways to verify eligibility.

While discount memberships can be highly impactful, they will fall short of their full potential if qualified individuals are unaware of the programs that exist. To address this and maximize the reach of equitable pricing programs, some systems have implemented marketing initiatives that increase awareness of the available discounts.

Payment systems and accepted payment methods are another component of shared mobility systems with equity implications. Many systems utilize smartphone apps and online accounts, making it difficult for riders without a credit card, mobile device, or internet service to access shared systems.

Several potential solutions exist to overcome this barrier, including accepting cash, offering multiple methods for adding funds to accounts, and collaborating with established payment networks and systems.

Some communities have even gone a step further by directly providing funds to income-qualified participants to cover the cost of mobility services, such as bikeshare. These initiatives, sometimes referred to as transportation wallets, help users manage their transportation budget, explore new modes of transportation, and reduce their reliance on personal automobiles.

---

<sup>38</sup> National Association of City Transportation Officials, [Shared Micromobility in the U.S. and Canada: 2023](#) (National Association of City Transportation Officials, July 2024).

<sup>39</sup> NABSA, [2024 Shared Micromobility State of the Industry Report](#).

## Equity in action

### *Bluebikes Boston Bikes Pass program*

Launched as a pilot in October 2023, the Boston Bikes Pass program offers discounted annual memberships to the local bikeshare system, Bluebikes, to income-qualified individuals. The program includes three tiers of membership:<sup>40</sup>

- **Income-eligible Boston resident** for \$5 per year
- **Boston resident who has not had a Bluebikes membership in the last three years** for \$60 per year
- **Income-eligible non-Boston resident** for \$50 per year

Income-eligible members also receive extended ride times of 60 minutes per trip (compared to 45 minutes for standard members) and a reduced overtime fee of \$0.07/minute over 60 minutes (compared to \$.10/minute over 45 minutes for standard members). Boston residents aged 16 or older who meet the income requirements qualify for the \$5 annual pass, regardless of their past membership status. Eligibility is based on participation in a qualifying public assistance program (e.g., SNAP, Section 8) or verifiable low-income status.<sup>41</sup>

To raise awareness of the discount membership program, the city launched the Get Your Pass in Gear campaign in 2024. This marketing initiative advertised discounted memberships on billboards in high-traffic locations, as well as through digital and social media advertisements. Get Your Pass in Gear was successful, credited with helping the Boston Bike Pass application volume increase by 147 percent,<sup>42</sup> demonstrating the importance of marketing equitable pricing initiatives.

### *Mogo Detroit cash payments via DivDat*

A 2022 study found that 30 percent of adults in the metro Detroit, Michigan, area were unbanked,<sup>43</sup> resulting in many transit riders relying exclusively on cash for transportation expenses.<sup>44</sup> For this reason, the bikeshare system, MoGo, has allowed users to pay with cash since its creation.<sup>45</sup>

In 2021, MoGo began accepting payments through the digital platform Cash App, which allows participants to add funds to their account using cash at participating retailers. However, using Cash App to pay for MoGo requires access to a smartphone or the internet, which could be a major barrier for some.

To address this issue, in November 2022, MoGo partnered with the financial technology firm DivDat to provide an additional cash payment option. DivDat allows residents to deposit cash at any one of the approximately 70 DivDat kiosks across Detroit,<sup>46</sup> which can then be used to pay expenses such as utility bills, court fees, and now, for the MoGo bikeshare system. No smartphone is required.

In conjunction with the Access Pass program, a \$5 annual pass for income-qualified Detroit residents, MoGo has developed a system of equity initiatives that work in tandem. According to MoGo's former director of programming and operations, approximately 75 percent of the early Access Pass recipients paid for the pass with cash,<sup>47</sup> demonstrating how the expansion of payment options, in addition to discount programs, can improve access and programmatic equity.

---

<sup>40</sup> "[Discounted Bluebikes](#)," City of Boston, last updated November 21, 2025.

<sup>41</sup> Kiran Herbert, "[In Boston, Bike Share Is Public Transportation](#)," Better Bike Share Partnership, October 24, 2023.

<sup>42</sup> "[City of Boston Bikes Pass: Pedal Power](#)," Gupta Media, accessed December 17, 2025.

<sup>43</sup> City of Detroit, [Report on the Current Percentage of Unbanked Detroiters](#) (City of Detroit, July 2024).

<sup>44</sup> Kiran Herbert, "[Detroiters Want Better Bike Share and Transit Alignment](#)," Better Bike Share Partnership, May 11, 2022.

<sup>45</sup> Kiran Herbert, "[How Three Systems Are Tackling Cash Payments](#)," Better Bike Share Partnership, September 1, 2021.

<sup>46</sup> "[MoGo for All: Pay With Cash](#)," MoGo, December 17, 2025.

<sup>47</sup> Kiran Herbert, "[How Three Systems Are Tackling Cash Payments](#)," Better Bike Share Partnership, September 1, 2021.

MoGo’s model demonstrates how shared mobility programs can improve equitable access to their services by incorporating inclusive payment infrastructure. By offering multiple payment options that reflect the financial realities of users, shared mobility programs can better serve community members.

### *Portland Transportation Wallet*

Initially launched in 2018, the City of Portland’s Access for All Transportation Wallet is a transportation demand management and equity initiative that provides eligible Portland residents with funds to spend on transportation. The program is tied to the city’s universal basic mobility program.<sup>48</sup>

The Transportation Wallet provides multimodal transportation incentives, credits, and funds for a wide variety of transportation modes, including TriMet transit (bus and light rail), Portland Streetcar, bikeshare, scootershare, taxis, and transportation network companies like Uber and Lyft. Within the Transportation Wallet-Access for All program, there are three wallet options:<sup>49</sup>

- Transit for a Year
- All Modes (individual)
- All Modes (household)

Included in both All Modes wallet options are prepaid Visa cards intended for use on a variety of transportation services. Portland residents over the age of 18 living on a low income are eligible for the Access for All wallet program if they are associated with a participating community-based organization or reside and/or work in specific districts within the city. Living on a low income is defined as qualifying for assistance programs such as Medicaid, SNAP, or similar income-based programs.

A program report in 2023 found that 1,365 Access for All Wallets were distributed to residents, which included 772 prepaid Visa cards that were used for a total of 3,496 transportation-related purchases. Nearly three-quarters of these transactions were for taxis, Uber/Lyft, or BIKETOWN, Portland’s bikesharing program.<sup>50</sup> A survey of Transportation Wallet recipients, distributed as part of the 2023 program report, also found the following:<sup>51</sup>

- 54 percent of respondents did not have access to a personal vehicle
- 92 percent indicated that the program made managing monthly budgets less stressful
- 86 percent indicated that the program increased flexibility in how they traveled
- 52 percent indicated that they tried using new transportation modes

## **Spatial equity**

Another core equity consideration for shared micromobility systems is the distribution of vehicles within a community. Without specific spatial equity programs in place, private operators will be incentivized to distribute vehicles in locations with the highest earning potential, typically downtown cores and near universities. These locations are also typically high-income neighborhoods, meaning that, in lieu of intervention, communities that can most benefit from shared micromobility may be underserved.

This is especially a challenge for docked systems, where bikes are only available in locations with physical stations. The installation of stations is a significant expense, which can often be challenging to implement due to land use restrictions and property ownership.

Several interviewees noted the importance of spatial equity when discussing bikeshare access. Meredith

---

<sup>48</sup> “[Transportation Wallet Programs Overview](#),” City of Portland Bureau of Transportation, accessed January 5, 2026.

<sup>49</sup> “[Transportation Wallet Programs Overview](#).”

<sup>50</sup> City of Portland Bureau of Transportation, [Transportation Wallet: Access for All, 2023 Program Year Report](#) (City of Portland Bureau of Transportation, updated September 22, 2024).

<sup>51</sup> City of Portland Bureau of Transportation, [Transportation Wallet: Access for All, 2023 Program Year Report](#).

Klekotka highlighted location and distribution as central to equitable bikeshare, emphasizing the need to place infrastructure where it can serve the widest range of users.

To address these concerns, shared micromobility systems and communities may establish vehicle distribution requirements that ensure stations and individual devices are provided to specific neighborhoods and communities.

For docked systems, equitably distributing bikes means doing the work before stations hit the ground and then routinely evaluating the system to determine if redistributing resources is necessary.

## Equity in action

The Better Bikeshare Partnership, a collaboration between the City of Philadelphia, the National Association of City Transportation Officials, and PeopleForBikes, funded by the JPB Foundation, helped select cities conduct the type of engagement necessary to create a truly equitable system.<sup>52</sup>

### *Los Angeles, California*

In 2024, Metro Bike Share in Los Angeles embarked on a large system expansion to increase service between Downtown/Central Los Angeles and Westside Los Angeles. To help ensure that this expansion was equitably designed and implemented, Metro Bike Share worked with community organizations, including Bike LA, LA Walks, Walk 'n Rollers, and CicLAvia, to engage the community.

This engagement was designed to help community members use their voices to guide the location and timing of this expansion and feel a sense of ownership when the new bikes were deployed.

### *Tucson, Arizona*

In 2017, Tugo Bike Share launched 36 bikeshare stations, mostly within the city's Central Council District. While the system has grown since then, the geographic footprint has not expanded as much as the Tugo team would like.

In 2024, to support a more equitably disbursed system, Tugo began working to reallocate 10 percent of its existing stations to reach a wider set of neighborhoods, specifically in the southern and western portions of Tucson. The team is collaborating with community-based organizations and the City of Tucson to determine the most effective way to reallocate resources to better serve the entire city.

For dockless micromobility systems, operators have collaborated with cities around the country to distribute their vehicles more equitably and increase affordability in underserved areas simultaneously. Identified equity zones enable cities to mandate that a certain percentage of vehicles be deployed in specific geographic areas, allowing operators to automatically apply a percentage discount to any ride that starts within the zone. This enables a more equitable distribution of vehicles while offering discounts without requiring riders to sign up or qualify for other income-based programs.

### *Richmond, Virginia*

Richmond, Virginia has a successful partnership with micromobility provider Spin and recently expanded the number of equity zones for the company's scooter service from two to five.

To determine where to introduce new equity zones, the city's Office of Equitable Transit and Mobility utilized the existing Richmond Connects program,<sup>53</sup> which uses data and community engagement to make recommendations for improving walking, biking, and transit for Richmond's residents.

---

<sup>52</sup> Tangier Barnes Wright, "[Meet the Better Bike Share Partnership's New Living Lab Grantees](#)," PeopleForBikes, May 6, 2024.

<sup>53</sup> Odochi Akwani, "[Richmond Prioritizes Equity in Transportation With Program Expansion](#)," Better Bike Share Partnership, May 15, 2025.

The Richmond Connects program is guided by 10 equity measures established in the city’s 2022 *Path to Equity Policy Guide*, which was designed to better serve the city’s historically underserved areas.<sup>54</sup> Riders who start their trip in an equity zone receive a 50 percent discount automatically. Moreover, if a rider lives within one of the equity zones, they are emailed an offer to receive discounted rides, regardless of where they start their trip.<sup>55</sup>

## Public transit integration

When properly integrated, public transportation and shared micromobility support and supplement each other. These modes used in tandem can shorten total travel time, expand access to jobs and daily essentials, and reduce reliance on personal automobiles.

This complementary relationship is already on full display in North America, where in 2024, it was estimated that 18 percent of all shared micromobility trips were made to connect to transit, and 22 percent of shared micromobility riders used micromobility to connect to transit weekly.<sup>56</sup>

Across the US, communities and system operators are employing innovative strategies to strengthen the relationship between shared micromobility and public transit. In some systems, residents can now use a single smartphone application to plan and pay for trips using shared bikes and public transit. Other systems allow physical transit cards, typically used to store funds and transit passes, to unlock shared bikes or scooters.

Some communities are also experimenting with incentive programs that encourage multimodal trips by providing a free transit pass with a shared micromobility rental or a free micromobility rental with the purchase of a transit pass.

The importance of designing and programming the physical spaces where shared micromobility and public transit connect is also increasingly being recognized and planned for. This has resulted in a growing trend of mobility hubs as physical locations to connect between these modes.

During interviews, Twin Cities stakeholders consistently emphasized that effective integration between shared mobility and transit is vital to expanding access and making shared mobility a more practical option for everyday trips.

Michael Wojcik described how micromobility can make transit significantly more efficient. “Micromobility and transit work so well together, especially in the Twin Cities. If I have to get between places and I have to do a bus transfer, it’s going to fall apart for me really quickly,” he noted. “But if I can utilize a single bus line or transit line and have one or both sides augmented by some sort of micromobility, a lot of times you’re cutting the transit time by 60 to 70 percent.”

Wojcik also highlighted the promise of integrated payment systems, noting that a universal mobility wallet could allow users to manage a fixed transportation budget and access bus, rail, and micromobility options.

Russ Stark identified improving transit reliability and frequency as a key priority: “Better, more frequent, and reliable transit—going more places, connecting people to more places—would be really useful to a lot of folks.” He also recognized the growing role of micromobility as a complement to transit but stressed that accessibility varies by individual.

---

<sup>54</sup> “[Home](#),” Richmond Connects, accessed December 17, 2025.

<sup>55</sup> City of Richmond, “[Richmond’s New Equity Zone Program Offers 50% Off Scooter Rides for Eligible Residents](#),” March 12, 2025.

<sup>56</sup> NABSA, [2024 Shared Micromobility State of the Industry Report](#).

“Not everyone is able-bodied enough to operate a scooter comfortably or safely,” he said. He noted that for those who could use the system if it were easy to use, accessible, available, and affordable, it could play a meaningful role—particularly for trips ranging from half a mile to five or six miles, where other modes are less effective.

Transportation staff at a local higher education institution shared that integration with transit is one of the requests that they have been hearing consistently from their students. They underscored the demand among younger riders for connected systems.

Similarly, Meredith Klekotka noted that teenagers in Minneapolis do get free transit access through Minneapolis public schools. She observed that shared mobility, including microtransit and micromobility, tends to attract many teens, emphasizing that system design should take this demographic into account.

## Equity in action

### *Vancouver RideLink*

Participants in RideLink, a pilot program in Metro Vancouver, British Columbia, can plan and pay for a carshare, transit, and bikeshare trip using a single smartphone app.

Vancouver’s RideLink is an example of a Mobility as a Service (MaaS) platform. These are programs that enable users to plan and book trips using a variety of transportation modes, without needing to manage multiple apps, accounts, and payment methods.

Ideally, a MaaS platform combines real-time information, unified payment infrastructure, and a user-friendly interface to make combining modes as seamless as possible. For instance, a MaaS user can enter their origin and desired destination and instantly see door-to-door options.

These typically include the cost, total walking distance, and estimated arrival times for various combinations of modes, like bikeshare and transit, transit-only, carshare, or some other combination. When integrated well, MaaS can help people access the transportation options that best address their needs and support those without access to a personal vehicle.

The RideLink pilot, which began in February 2024 and ran through December 2025,<sup>57</sup> was Vancouver’s attempt to bring the benefits of MaaS to metro-area residents.

A prior pilot program in 2019, in which participants used their Compass Card, a reloadable transit fare card, to pay for bike and car sharing, demonstrated the impact of integrated payment accounts. At the time, 60 percent of participants reported reducing their use of personal vehicles, and 56 percent stated that they had tried a new mode of transportation due to the program.<sup>58</sup>

These promising results demonstrated the potential impact of a well-integrated MaaS system and directly informed the development of the RideLink initiative.

The program currently connects the regional transit system, carshare operators Modo and Evo, and the Mobi bikeshare system through the RideLink app, which allows users to plan, book, and pay for trips using any combination of these services.

### *King County Metro Bike and Scoot to Transit program*

In Seattle, Washington, riders are rewarded for pairing shared micromobility with public transportation.

The Bike and Scoot to Transit program is a joint initiative between regional transit operators, the Seattle

---

<sup>57</sup> “[Mobi x RideLink Pilot](#),” MobiBikes, accessed January 26, 2026.

<sup>58</sup> “[TransLink testing new app that combines transit, carshare and bikeshare services](#),” *Mass Transit*, February 23, 2024.

Department of Transportation, and the region’s shared micromobility providers Lime and Bird.

After downloading the Lime, Bird, and Transit GO Ticket apps, users create accounts, link them, and ride a shared bike or scooter to an eligible transit stop. After parking in designated zones and ending the trip, riders see 300 points in their Transit GO Ticket app, which can be redeemed for a \$3 transit ticket.

Once that transit ticket is activated, the rider then receives an additional 700 points that can be used for \$7 off a future Lime or Bird rental, creating a closed-loop system that rewards users for choosing sustainable transportation modes.<sup>59</sup>

The Bike and Scoot to Transit program simultaneously helps move shared bikes and scooters to high-use locations (transit stops) and creates a cycle in which users are incentivized to continue using transit and shared micromobility for subsequent trips.

Currently, only a select number of transit stops, typically those served by high-frequency public transportation, are eligible. However, the Bike and Scoot to Transit program expanded the number of qualifying transit destinations in 2025, with the potential to add more locations in the coming years.<sup>60</sup>

City and transit leaders have expressed optimism about the future growth of the program and its continued role in supporting climate goals, equity, and serving as a practical alternative to driving alone.<sup>61</sup> Seattle’s example demonstrates the importance of strong partnerships between public agencies and shared mobility companies and provides an example of effectively integrating sustainable modes.

### *Minneapolis Mobility Hubs*

The Minneapolis Mobility Hubs program demonstrates how the intentional design and programming of spaces where transit and shared micromobility intersect can make multimodal transportation easier, safer, and more accessible.

Minneapolis’ mobility hubs are designed to be comfortable and convenient spaces that connect between modes, provide a place to wait for transit, rest, and plan the next leg of a journey. Originally launched in 2019 as a pilot to provide more low-carbon transportation options, the Mobility Hubs program has since expanded into a citywide network that supports Minneapolis’ climate and equity goals.<sup>62</sup>

At Minneapolis’s mobility hubs, residents and visitors can find modular street furniture, multilingual wayfinding, parking for shared micromobility, electric vehicle carshare, lockers, bike-fix stations, and transit stops.<sup>63</sup> While each site’s layout is unique, consistent design elements, such as the street furniture color and wayfinding symbology, make the network easily recognizable.

Hub locations are selected based on a combination of factors, including proximity to transportation facilities, neighborhood economic and demographic characteristics, accessibility considerations, and local travel patterns. Combining these metrics with input from residents, the city has prioritized accessible hub locations, served by high-quality transportation options, and already frequented by the local community.<sup>64</sup>

Equity has been a throughline of the Mobility Hubs program from the start—shaping both process and results. The first mobility hubs were concentrated in areas of North, South, and Northeast Minneapolis

---

<sup>59</sup> “[Bike & Scoot to Transit](#),” King County Metro, accessed December 15, 2025.

<sup>60</sup> Ethan Bancroft, “[Earn Free Bike, Scooter and Transit Rides This Summer!](#),” Seattle Department of Transportation, June 9, 2025.

<sup>61</sup> Sydney Goitia-Doran, “[Bike And Scoot To Transit Programs Returns This Summer With Expanded Access](#),” *The Seattle Medium*, June 25, 2025.

<sup>62</sup> The Musicant Group and City of Minneapolis Public Works, [2019 Minneapolis Mobility Hubs Pilot](#) (City of Minneapolis, 2020).

<sup>63</sup> The Musicant Group and City of Minneapolis Public Works, [2020 Minneapolis Mobility Hubs Pilot Report](#), (City of Minneapolis, 2021).

<sup>64</sup> The Musicant Group and City of Minneapolis Public Works, [2019 Minneapolis Mobility Hubs Pilot](#).

with higher shares of residents of color, lower incomes, and higher rates of transit use compared to the city average. Engagement events at the hubs allowed staff to offer test shared micromobility devices, distribute 285 helmets, and survey residents on features that would improve future iterations of the program.<sup>65</sup>

Feedback from the 2019 pilot also made it clear that perceptions of safety and comfort influence the use of mobility hubs for many, which led the city to launch the Mobility Hub Ambassador Pilot in 2020. Ambassadors who participate in the pilot support the mobility hubs by keeping the space clean and welcoming, performing light maintenance, and flagging larger issues for staff.<sup>66</sup>

Ambassadors also interact with users to create a positive experience, connect people to discounted transportation options, and communicate safety concerns.

In interviews with mobility hub users, 69 percent of respondents reported that the presence of hubs made them more likely to use the transportation modes available at the hub, indicating that the program is having its intended impact.

Survey data also shows that most respondents reach transit on foot (63 percent) or by personal or shared bike (26 percent), underscoring how the hubs can directly strengthen multimodal transportation options.

Looking ahead, respondents noted that more places to sit and gather, more frequent buses, stronger placemaking and visual appeal, and clearer signage and wayfinding are the highest priorities for future improvements.<sup>67</sup>

### *Clipper Card*

The Clipper Card helps residents in the San Francisco Bay Area, California, move seamlessly across multiple transportation modes. Once loaded with funds or transit passes, the digital card can be used to pay for public transportation across the city.

Recognizing the complementary relationship between shared micromobility and public transit, the Clipper Card also connects to Bay Wheels, the Bay Area's bikeshare system. After linking a Bay Wheels account to a Clipper Card, a simple tap or swipe unlocks bikes at docks in San Francisco, Oakland, Berkeley, Emeryville, and downtown San Jose.<sup>68</sup>

While the Clipper Card is a convenient way to access shared bikes, payments are still handled through the user's Bay Wheels bikeshare account. This means that the Clipper Card can be used for access but not for payment.

Nevertheless, this integration acknowledges shared micromobility's role as a connector for the first and last mile to transit and is a crucial step toward a more connected regional transportation experience.

## **Internal operations, staffing, and planning**

Creating an equitable bikeshare system extends beyond the infrastructure on the ground; it begins with the internal organization that runs the operation.

Indego Bikeshare in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, is an example of a system that prioritizes equity as a cornerstone of its operations, offering valuable lessons to other systems seeking to do the same.

---

<sup>65</sup> The Musicant Group and City of Minneapolis Public Works, [2019 Minneapolis Mobility Hubs Pilot](#).

<sup>66</sup> The Musicant Group and City of Minneapolis Public Works, [2020 Minneapolis Mobility Hubs Pilot Report](#).

<sup>67</sup> The Musicant Group and City of Minneapolis Public Works, [2020 Minneapolis Mobility Hubs Pilot Report](#).

<sup>68</sup> "[Bay Wheels](#)," Clipper Card, accessed January 26, 2026.

## Philadelphia case study: Make your equity goals specific, measurable, and public

Indego Bikeshare in Philadelphia has a reputation throughout the bikeshare industry as a system that prioritizes equity, both for the system and the internal Indego team.

This commitment is exemplified by Indego's publication of its 2023 *Indego Equity Plan*, developed in partnership with the City of Philadelphia's Office of Transportation and Infrastructure Systems (OTIS).<sup>69</sup>

### *Goals and tracking success*

The five-year equity plan not only outlines the equity goals the system will work toward, but also describes the implementation actions the team will take to achieve those goals and the performance metrics they will use to determine their success.

**Goal 1** Indego will improve transportation access for all people, with particular attention to BIPOC and people with economic challenges.

**Quantitative Performance Targets**

- As the system expands, Indego's service area more closely reflects the socioeconomic composition of Philadelphia
- 15% or more of all passholders are Access Pass holders
- 15% or more of all trips are taken by Access Pass holders

**Implementation Actions**

- Build out system expansion so that with each system expansion, the demographics of Indego's service area census tracts with stations moves closer to the demographics of the city as a whole in terms of race and income
- When planning locations for station expansion, analyze a variety of data, including operational viability and census tract demographics, among others
- Continue adding e-bikes to the fleet
- Maintain core fleet of classic bikes for those who cannot afford additional per-minute e-bike fees

Source: 2023 Indego Equity Plan, used with permission.

Waffiyah Murray, Indego program manager at the City of Philadelphia, has been with Indego since its inception in 2015, taking over leadership in 2021. They explained that publicly laying out the organization's goals with specific steps was important because it allowed them to define and execute equity in the system: "It was important to do that because the city and operator have to be on the same page for this to work."

This approach also laid the foundation for equity over the next five years, so anyone coming into the space could see it.

### *Internal equity is key*

The plan's equity goals reach beyond system operations to incorporate equity into the internal workings of Indego. Goal 5 in the plan states that "Indego's workforce, including its managing team, will include demographic diversity and diverse perspectives and experiences."<sup>70</sup>

Murray described why including equity goals for the Indego team was necessary: "Diverse perspectives are key to implementing new and innovative programs and ideas that reach and impact a diverse group of folks. If you have everyone at the table with the same lived experiences, they're going to produce the same results."

<sup>69</sup> City of Philadelphia Office of Transportation, Infrastructure, and Sustainability, [Indego Equity Plan 2023](#) (City of Philadelphia, 2023).

<sup>70</sup> City of Philadelphia Office of Transportation, Infrastructure, and Sustainability, [Indego Equity Plan 2023](#), 5.

## *Commitment and accountability*

Indego is an example of how a public-private partnership can yield a program that benefits everyone. It also shows that partnership can only be successful if each organization understands its responsibilities in creating an equitable system.

In Chapter 4 of the equity plan, *Equity Roles and Accountability*, the roles and responsibilities for each major partner—the City of Philadelphia, OTIS, and Bicycle Transit Systems (BTS)—are clearly defined.

The City of Philadelphia owns most of the stations and bikes in the system. OTIS manages the contract with BTS, in addition to overseeing educational programming, pursuing grant funding, and facilitating community engagement and outreach efforts. BTS is responsible for operating the system and all technical aspects of planning and deployment.

While the overarching roles of each organization had been established during the contracting phase, the equity plan provided an opportunity to publicly state each organization’s responsibilities, including those related to providing equitable service.

For example, the plan states that OTIS is responsible for “cultivating inclusive, non-discriminatory, and equitable relationships with community organizations and stakeholders, especially regarding OTIS’s leading role in Community Ambassador programs, education programs, community rides and events, pilot program, and coordination with other city programs.”<sup>71</sup>

BTS is responsible for “cultivating inclusive, non-discriminatory, and equitable relationships with community organizations and stakeholders, especially regarding BTS’s leading role in relationship cultivation and management for system expansion and site planning, communications and promotions, and technical aspects of the program.”<sup>72</sup>

To help achieve these goals, the plan established an equity team, which includes the OTIS Indego program manager and the BTS Indego general manager in addition to other staff from each organization. The team monitors the progress of plan implementation, including tracking quantitative measures and qualitative goals.

Establishing the equity team was crucial to ensuring that the goals outlined are implemented and the status of these goals can be reliably reported to the public.

## *Plan and execute*

Finally, the *Indego Equity Plan* acknowledges the funding challenges that exist when operating a bikeshare system, clearly outlining how the system operates financially and what it will require in the future to continue its mission.

This clear-eyed view of the financial realities of the system not only increases transparency for a program the city supports but is vital to achieving the goals laid out in the plan.

Murray said: “The key component to building engagement is to create a plan on how you’re going to implement it; the staff roles and resources dedicated to implementing it, the funding. The same way you would plan any other pieces of the project. No one would take on a station expansion without a plan, knowing the cost and necessary resources.”

When it comes to the importance of communication and transparency, Murray explained: “Have a clear plan on how you want to implement your programming. The equity plan was designed [for] all of our partners [to] be on the same page.”

---

<sup>71</sup> City of Philadelphia Office of Transportation, Infrastructure, and Sustainability, *Indego Equity Plan 2023*, 35.

<sup>72</sup> City of Philadelphia Office of Transportation, Infrastructure, and Sustainability, *Indego Equity Plan 2023*, 36.

## Vehicle types

Traditional bikes remain at the core of most shared micromobility systems. However, many potential users cannot ride a bicycle, whether due to physical limitations or because they never learned. This highlights the importance of including alternative forms of shared micromobility as a key equity issue.

Integrating adaptive bicycles and alternative vehicles into micromobility systems expands who can ride and what trips are possible. From handcycles and trikes to seated e-scooters and cargo trailers, these new vehicle types address many of the barriers that prevent the use of traditional bicycles. The barriers include balancing and pedaling limitations, the need to carry goods, or the desire for a low-exertion ride.

As these alternative cycles have become more common, the number of people and types of trips that can be adequately served by shared micromobility has continued to grow.

The types of new vehicles and how they are integrated should depend upon local needs and desires. In some cities, system operators have simply added new vehicles, such as e-scooters, cargo trailers, and adaptive bicycles, into the primary fleet and docking network. This allows the vehicles to be found, checked out, and returned in the same way as any traditional shared bicycle. However, this approach makes it difficult for users to find adaptive vehicles when and where they need them.

Other systems employ a bike-library approach, where a wide variety of adaptive cycles are available at a fixed location for hourly rentals, with space for personal mobility devices and staff available to assist with equipment fitting.

Surveying community members and collaborating with local disability advocacy groups can help determine which approach best meets the community's needs.

## Equity in action

### *Adaptive cycles in Milwaukee, Wisconsin*

Since launching in 2015, Milwaukee's Bublr Bikes has committed to providing accessible and affordable bikeshare to everyone in its service area. To make good on this commitment, Bublr worked with the City of Milwaukee to convene a work group to determine the best way to integrate adaptive bikes into the system.

The overwhelming sentiment was that the adaptive options needed to be directly integrated into the system and be as similar as possible to the traditional bikes.<sup>73</sup> This presented a unique challenge, as Bublr's traditional bikes have specialized mechanisms that allow them to lock into docking stations.

To overcome this, Bublr developed a custom mechanism that allows adaptive bikes to dock into stations:

---

<sup>73</sup> "[Bublr Bikes Community Hub](#)," Bublr Bikes, accessed November 4, 2025.

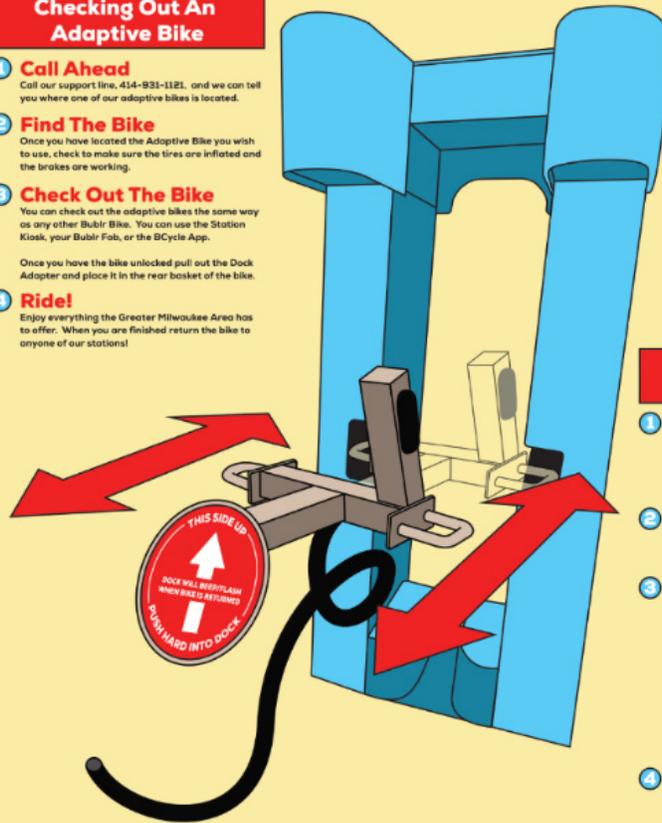
# Bubl Bikes How To...

## Checking Out/Returning An Adaptive Bike



### Checking Out An Adaptive Bike

- 1 Call Ahead**  
Call our support line, 414-931-1121, and we can tell you where one of our adaptive bikes is located.
- 2 Find The Bike**  
Once you have located the Adaptive Bike you wish to use, check to make sure the tires are inflated and the brakes are working.
- 3 Check Out The Bike**  
You can check out the adaptive bikes the same way as any other Bubl Bike. You can use the Station Kiosk, your Bubl Fob, or the BCycle App.  
Once you have the bike unlocked pull out the Dock Adapter and place it in the rear basket of the bike.
- 4 Ride!**  
Enjoy everything the Greater Milwaukee Area has to offer. When you are finished return the bike to anyone of our stations!



### Returning An Adaptive Bike

- 1 Find a Station**  
When you are finished with the bike locate the nearest Bubl Bikes station to return the bike too.  
You can see our entire station map on our website ([bubl.bikes.org](http://bubl.bikes.org)) or on the BCycle App.
- 2 Park the Bike**  
Once you get to a station locate an open dock and park the bike so the back of the bike is facing the front of the dock.
- 3 Lock the Bike**  
Once you have the bike parked lock the bike to dock by pushing the dock adapter into the dock.  
Make sure the adapter is the right side up and facing the correct direction. The circle part of the adapter should be facing you with the sticker oriented up. This will make sure the RFID chip on the adapter and reader on the dock will line up.  
Push the adapter into the dock until it locks in place. The dock will beep three times when the adapter is fully locked in.
- 4 Enjoy Your Day!**  
Once you have the bike locked in and fully returned go and enjoy the rest of your day, and make sure to come back and ride again!

414.931.1121

Have Any Questions About Bubl Bikes Adaptive Cycles? Feel Free To Contact Us!



Source: Bubl Bikes, used with permission.

This system comes with its own set of challenges, and adaptive bike availability remains limited. Additionally, adaptive bikes are more susceptible to wear and tear and require more frequent maintenance. Furthermore, customers still need to call to find out where the adaptive bikes are located.

Bubl is committed to continually evaluating the program and finding ways to make more adaptive bikes more accessible to those who need them.

### *Adaptive BIKETOWN in Portland, Oregon*

Portland's Adaptive BIKETOWN provides bike access to people with disabilities, along with low-stress spaces to do so, demonstrating the importance of extensive community engagement when developing adaptive bikeshare programs.

After launching in 2016, early feedback on Portland's bikeshare system, BIKETOWN, indicated a strong community desire for bikeshare services for residents with physical disabilities.

Receptive to these insights, the Portland Bureau of Transportation (PBOT), which oversees the BIKETOWN system, brought together a diverse community work group. Comprising service providers and individuals with a range of disabilities, the work group and PBOT spent a year collaborating with local disability

advocacy organizations to gather input and develop an adaptive bikeshare program, designed to address the unique needs and desires of the community.<sup>74</sup>

The result of this intensive engagement was Adaptive BIKETOWN, a partnership between PBOT and local bike shop Kerr Bikes. Early feedback indicated that the community wanted adaptive bikes for recreation (rather than for utilitarian transportation) and space to ride these vehicles away from cars. This input led to Adaptive BIKETOWN's location at Portland's Eastbank Esplanade, which is conveniently located on extensive recreational trails along the riverfront, physically separated from cars.

Operating as a bike-library model, with users reserving and renting from a single location, riders can select from different types of adaptive cycles.<sup>75</sup> These include hand-powered cycles, recumbent trikes, four-wheel cycles, e-bikes, and tandem bikes. Staff will assist users in getting fitted with their bikes and safety gear, and riders can leave their personal mobility devices at the rental location while using the service.

While the standard per-hour rental cost depends on the adaptive cycle being used, discounted Adaptive BIKETOWN rates are available to individuals with disabilities, Medicare recipients, seniors, and those who are unable to ride a traditional two-wheeled bicycle for any reason. Users who qualify for discounted pricing have access to a free first hour, after which a four-hour rental costs seven dollars, with each additional hour costing five dollars.<sup>76</sup>

Adaptive BIKETOWN has grown each year, from 59 rentals in the first season to over 400 rentals in 2024.<sup>77</sup> Users of the service include Portland residents living with disabilities, caregivers, and riders who are simply not comfortable using a traditional bicycle.

This success and growth demonstrate that adaptive bikeshare programs can thrive and provide a much-needed service when they prioritize community engagement and user needs and desires.

### *Growth of alternative shared vehicles*

While traditional bikeshare is a viable transportation mode for many, relying solely on it can exclude potential users from the benefits of shared mobility. Many systems have now integrated a wider range of vehicles into their shared fleets, including e-scooters, seated e-scooters, cargo trailers, and more.

Each of these vehicle options addresses potential barriers, expanding the range of users and the types of possible trips. These vehicles support individuals who cannot physically ride a bike or who never learned, people who need to haul more things on their journey than a bicycle can typically carry, and people who desire or require a lower-effort ride.

Following bikes, e-scooters are the most recognizable shared micromobility devices today. Since their first widespread deployment in the US in 2017,<sup>78</sup> shared e-scooters have been both disruptive and transformative, with ridership increasing annually.<sup>79</sup>

In 2024, more e-scooters were deployed in shared micromobility systems in the US than traditional bikes and e-bikes combined, accounting for nearly half of the country's more than 170 million shared micromobility trips.<sup>80</sup>

---

<sup>74</sup> Kiran Herbert, "[A Take on Adaptive Bike Share, Part 3: Portland, OR](#)," Better Bike Share Partnership, October 11, 2023.

<sup>75</sup> Jonathan Maus, "[BIKETOWN: More Adaptive Bikes, Service Area Expansion on the Way](#)," BikePortland, June 2, 2021.

<sup>76</sup> "[Pricing](#)," Adaptive Biketown, accessed January 28, 2026.

<sup>77</sup> Jonathan Maus, "[Portland Will Look for New Adaptive Biketown Vendor Next Year](#)," BikePortland, August 5, 2025.

<sup>78</sup> "[A Look Back at the History of Mobility Share](#)," Joyride, November 1, 2018.

<sup>79</sup> National Association of City Transportation Officials, [Shared Micromobility in the U.S. 2020–2021](#) (National Association of City Transportation Officials, December 2022).

<sup>80</sup> NABSA, [2024 Shared Micromobility State of the Industry Report](#).

Because they are throttle-operated, require no pedaling, and place riders in an upright standing position, e-scooters can accommodate people who do not know how to ride a bike or who are physically unable to do so.

New iterations of the e-scooter, such as Lime’s Gen4 seated e-scooter, also add a seat with storage, which can help lower exertion, improve stability, and make it easier to carry groceries or a bag.<sup>81</sup> Reports from Lime suggest that users of the new seated e-scooter ride more often and farther than regular scooter riders and that the seated riding position can increase stability for those with physical challenges.

In the past several years, operators have also begun deploying throttle-controlled seated vehicles that ride like an e-bike without pedaling. Lime’s new LimeGlider uses a throttle, has footrests instead of pedals, a low center of gravity, 20-inch wheels, a step-through frame, and a larger front basket.

Designed to be more approachable for riders traditionally underrepresented in micromobility, such as women and older adults, early data indicate that the LimeGlider is frequently used for trips exceeding five kilometers or 15 minutes, which is longer than the typical trip length of shared e-bikes.<sup>82</sup>

These new micromobility vehicles can expand micromobility’s user base and enhance the experience of those who have not typically benefited from shared micromobility.

In Canada, Montreal’s bikeshare system, BIXI, recently sought to address another barrier to shared micromobility: limited hauling capacity.<sup>83</sup> In 2025, BIXI added 50 attachable cargo trailers to its fleet, which can be checked out and docked at regular BIXI stations. The trailers attach to a regular BIXI bike, a BIXI e-bike, or a rider’s personal bike, providing a seamless experience and expanding the types of trips for which shared micromobility can be used.

Riders can find trailers using the BIXI app and pay a fixed four-hour rate (CAD \$4 for members, \$8 for non-members), then \$0.20 per minute after four hours. The trailers are designed to accommodate everyday errands, include an integrated lock for short stops, and can carry up to 50 kg. By expanding the carrying capacity of shared and personal bikes, the BIXI trailer can accommodate individuals who need to haul goods but lack access to a personal vehicle. Adding alternative vehicles to a shared micromobility system expands the user base and enhances accessibility by catering to a broader range of people. However, not every vehicle will fit every place or program. Local knowledge and public engagement should drive the integration of vehicles and their deployment, ensuring that systems reflect the communities they serve.

## Education

Bikeshare systems is still a relatively new concept in the United States and is a foreign concept to many who live in communities where bikeshare is not yet available. Like anything new, it takes a concerted effort to ensure users are comfortable with something they are not familiar with.

Michael Wojcik notes: “If there’s one thing we know about transit, it is that once people actually know how to use it, they tend to like it. Same thing with micromobility. So, there’s an education piece that goes along with making an equitable program as well.”

BublR Bikes in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, is committed to more than simply teaching community members how bikeshare works. BublR is focused on empowering people through opportunity. The organization integrates education, workforce development, and community engagement by creating hands-on training and employment pathways for Milwaukee youth, thereby strengthening BublR’s team.

---

<sup>81</sup> Emily Irgang, “[You’re Going to Want to Sit Down for This—Introducing the Gen4 Seated e-scooter](#),” Lime, November 1, 2023.

<sup>82</sup> Emily Irgang, “[Introducing the LimeBike & LimeGlider: Our Most Inclusive Rides Yet](#),” Lime, April 22, 2025.

<sup>83</sup> “[Renting Bike Trailer](#),” BIXI Montréal, accessed January 26, 2026.

## Milwaukee case study: Education is key for the operator and the community

Bubl Bikes launched as a nonprofit bikeshare operator in Milwaukee in 2014, with a mission to deliver a sustainable and excellent bikeshare system for all. Over the last 10 years, Bubl has grown from 10 stations to over 200 after a 2025 expansion, but the mission has remained the same.

Laura Bolger took over as executive director in 2024 and explained where she sees bikeshare fitting into the transportation landscape in Milwaukee: “We’re talking about personal vehicles, public transit, rideshare, scootershare, bikeshare, old-fashioned walking. All of these things encompass how people move through their city, and I think the gap that bikeshare fills is that last mile, connecting folks, whether they are choosing to drive into a certain point and hopping on a bikeshare and finishing their commute or whether they are taking public transit and doing the same thing, where it’s that last mile—it closes that little bit of gap.”

Bolger emphasized that in a well-functioning urban environment, all those options must be available. She acknowledged that some people will never ride a bike and explained that this is completely fine as long as individuals have a range of options that match what they feel is comfortable and affordable.

To provide a bikeshare system that ensures everyone is comfortable and confident, Bubl has made education a key component of its connection with the community. For Bubl, education is not only about introducing more riders to the system but also about benefiting the community and the organization.

### *Savvy Cycling program*

Bubl’s Savvy Cycling program works with community organizations to offer classes on using the Bubl system, including instructions on various ways to check out a bike and tips for riding safely on city streets. Participants receive a free helmet and a free 30-day pass. Additionally, the class is offered in both English and Spanish.

Bolger noted that many of the participants qualify for Bubl’s Access Pass, which is a free annual membership that provides unlimited 60-minute rides for residents of Greater Milwaukee who are over 16 years old and receive government assistance, such as FoodShare, Medicaid, or who live in housing through the Housing Authority of the City of Milwaukee.

Bubl also offers the Savvy Cycling program for corporate partners, such as businesses located within the Milwaukee Regional Medical Center campus.

Bolger explained that the program is hugely impactful for people who have not been on a bike since they were children, giving them the confidence to simply walk up to a Bubl station and take a ride. This opportunity has been especially helpful since the introduction of e-bikes into the system. The Savvy Cycling program helps riders understand the benefits of e-bikes and their built-in limits, building rider confidence.

### *B3 Workforce Development Program*

The B3 Workforce Development Program is an innovative partnership between Bublr, the Boys and Girls Club of Greater Milwaukee, and Dreambikes, a nonprofit bike shop that offers hands-on, paid job training to 14- to 21-year-olds. The six-month program is divided into three phases, offering participants three distinct opportunities that build upon one another.

- Phase one: The first eight weeks are spent at the Boys and Girls Club Bike Shop, where participants learn the essentials of bicycle repair and maintenance by building a bike from scratch that they get to keep at the end of Phase 1.
- Phase two: After learning the essential bicycle maintenance skills at the Boys and Girls Club, participants move to the Bublr headquarters. During the next eight weeks, participants work alongside full-time Bublr technicians and learn how to maintain and repair specialized bikeshare bikes, including e-bikes, monitor the system's backend dashboard, and help ensure that the system is properly balanced. Additionally, participants learn valuable customer service skills and are paid \$16 an hour during their time at Bublr, as of 2025.
- Phase three: Finally, participants spend the last eight weeks of the program at Dreambikes. As a community bike shop, Dreambikes offers participants the opportunity to further develop their maintenance skills on a range of different bike types, while also building their customer service skills and gaining valuable, real-world experience at a local business.

Following the six-month program, graduates receive a personalized toolbox containing bike repair tools, a certificate recognized by bikesharing company BCycle, which qualifies the graduates to work at any of the 43 BCycle systems across the country (this recognition may be changing since BCycle sold to Bicycle Transit Systems in late 2024), and direct admittance to Milwaukee Area Technical College's Transportation and Automotive program.

Bolger highlighted that the B3 program is beneficial for both participants and partner organizations: "We have had a ton of success with B3. We've had over 80 participants complete [the program]."

Bolger explained that, due to the limited number of workstations, only a few students can participate at a time, so the program typically operates using a cohort model with four to five students in each group.

She added that B3 graduates typically return during the summer peak season, which is beneficial because it eliminates the need for retraining and makes operations much smoother since they already know what to do.

Bolger went on: "The other amazing piece of B3 is [that] we've gone on to hire several graduates at Bublr. We still have one of our weekend operations managers [working with us]." One of the B3 graduates advanced to become Bublr's finance manager before leaving the organization to pursue other opportunities.

Between Savvy Cycling and the B3 Workforce Development, Bublr has shown that targeted and supported education programs can benefit the system, the operator, and the community.

## Community engagement

Community engagement is the key to any bikeshare system that values equity. Engagement helps build buy-in and support, ensures system design meets user needs, and complements how users already interact with the transportation system.

However, community engagement can often be viewed simply as a box to check or to invite feedback from certain stakeholders who have the time, resources, and prior knowledge that others may not.

Russ Stark emphasized this reality in the Twin Cities, noting that traditional engagement often draws feedback from the same well-connected voices, leaving others unheard.

“Really targeted engagement, where you pay people for their time, has to be part of that in some form or another,” he said. “And oftentimes that works best when you partner with community-based organizations that have existing relationships.”

That sentiment was reinforced by Carly Ellefsen, who described Our Streets’ approach to ensure that a wider range of voices are heard. “We are big on door knocking and meeting people where they are,” she said. “We do a lot of canvassing and make sure we’re facilitating a vision—not pushing a narrative we think would work. When we do events, we make sure we have shuttles, childcare, food—making it super accessible and making sure people are getting something out of it as well.”

Meredith Klekotka highlighted the importance of leveraging existing networks and empowering trusted community voices. “Engagement works best when you connect to events already happening as part of community organizations,” she said. “Identifying your community champions early and often, and elevating them into new positions of authority, is key.”

She also emphasized shifting decision-making power: “Giving community-based organizations more authority to make decisions about how they’re investing in engagement is important, because it’s going to look different for every community.”

Juan Luis Rivera-Reyes added that it is key to conduct “strategic and persistent engagement in a variety of different communities.” He also noted the value of providing physical access to the infrastructure, allowing potential new users to experience it firsthand. Overall, he stated that the end goal of any good engagement effort should be “having [the] community see identity and ownership in the system.”

POGOH, the bikeshare system in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, has relied on its relationships with community organizations to move its system forward and provide a transportation option that works for everyone.

## Pittsburgh case study: Bring community to the table early and often

Nonprofit operator Bike Share Pittsburgh launched the city's first bikeshare system, Healthy Ride, in 2015, which was rebranded to POGO in 2022. Since the beginning, POGO has worked to develop long-term, reciprocal partnerships with community organizations, relationships that have been vital to its success.

Erin Potts, director of marketing and outreach at POGO, explained that when it comes to developing relationships with community organizations, you must listen: "Listening is a big component. Listening more than you're speaking."

Potts added that one of the first steps for anyone embarking on a community engagement effort is to identify and reach out to trusted community organizations that are already established in the areas you hope to connect with. However, those connections can't be based solely on what you hope to achieve.

"Showing up to their events, supporting their events. When they call, you answer, and you help in whatever way you can," said Potts. "And having them help set the marks for success for their community, asking what they want to see in their neighborhood. And if it's not a bikeshare station, can we still find a way to support them in some other way? It's just being a good community partner and being accessible and engaged and showing up to things."

These community connections have been essential for POGO to understand how various parts of the city view the prospect of biking and bikeshare.

Potts noted: "We work with a lot of individuals who are just really passionate about all the different kinds of things that bikeshare is about, [and] it's oftentimes not even really about bikes. It's more [about] wellness, getting outside. Accessing different parts of the city and connectivity. Low-cost transportation."

Potts added that for them, the bikes are often less important than the opportunities and experiences they provide access to.

After nearly a decade of growing ridership, the system underwent a refresh in 2022, featuring all-new equipment. This transition was not only an opportunity to refresh the brand—it was also an opportunity to formalize the community input that has been informing the organization's decisions since 2015. To do this, POGO established an official Community Coalition.<sup>84</sup> This coalition is composed of the following:

- City leadership
- Community leaders
- POGO riders
- Leaders from Black, Indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC) communities
- ADA representatives
- Cyclists
- Youth representatives
- Seniors

During the transition from Healthy Ride to POGO, the coalition helped guide the organization's decisions around accessible pricing options, station siting, branding, and programming. Specifically, Potts attributed the coalition's input to why POGO did not institute the per-minute pricing model that many cities use, especially for e-bikes. The coalition did not feel it was a transparent pricing structure, and riders would not know what they would be paying.

In addition to regular conversations with coalition members to continue supporting and informing the system's progress, POGO hosts Community Coalition annual meetings that are open to the public. These meetings provide an opportunity for attendees to hear about the state of the system and plans for the next year. Each meeting has a theme, which in the past has included the expansion and introduction of adaptive bikes.

---

<sup>84</sup> "[Community Coalition](#)," POGO, accessed November 10, 2025.

### *Input to action*

The topic of adaptive bikes is one that is core to POGO's mission to "provide Pittsburgh with a joyful, sustainable, and affordable mobility service for all residents and visitors."<sup>85</sup> However, this mission is not without its challenges.

POGOH operates its adaptive bike program separately from the core system, which means additional staffing, storage, and logistics. The adaptive program is available to individuals with a range of mobility needs and features nine bike types, including cargo bikes, adult tricycles, and hand cycles. POGOH operates the adaptive program out of a storage container in the Hazelwood neighborhood of Pittsburgh. It is open three days a week and staffed from May through October.

Providing this service may not be easy, but Potts sees it as entirely necessary: "I am not even sure we think we're necessarily the best people to do it. But just when we think about really creating a bikeshare program that is for everyone, we need to think about what kind of cycles we're offering."

Potts explained that the POGOH team worked together and took on multiple roles to ensure the program had the bare essentials, and that they were recently able to expand thanks to individual funding.

### *Looking to the future*

This focus on providing the right bike for the right trip is also where Potts sees the future of bikeshare, specifically in the ability for families to replace car trips. Potts said that the importance of finding ways to transport families together is increasingly recognized across the industry and noted that cargo bikes are of great interest because parents often say they need them to transport their children to school.

The shift to more vehicle types for more trips coincides with the industry shift toward electrification.

"I think that the tendency toward more electric equipment is a big one. Our fleet is about 70 percent electric to traditional pedal bikes, which is one of the reasons why we don't do any per-minute pricing or surcharges for e-bikes, because it just feels disingenuous to offer a product and then not offer a lot of opportunities to use it at the lowest price point," Potts said.

Describing the goals for the future of the system, Potts expressed interest in e-bikes, particularly electric cargo bikes that can carry multiple people, and said they would like to see greater access to adaptive bikes and for that availability to grow.

POGOH, informed by the Community Coalition and all its community partners, is undeniably committed to finding innovative ways to fulfill its mission of providing Pittsburgh with a joyful, sustainable, and affordable mobility service for all residents and visitors.

---

<sup>85</sup> "[About Us](#)," POGO, accessed January 26, 2026.

## Community programming

Many communities that have experienced historic disinvestment may see bikeshare as an asset not for themselves but for other users, such as tourists passing through. Programming centered around the needs of underserved communities can combat these misconceptions.

As stated earlier, engagement with residents can often fall into the trap of checking a box and moving on, which can undermine trust and feelings of ownership, resulting in folks feeling as though they were never genuinely considered in the process. Community programming can fall victim to the same trap when programs are designed using a one-size-fits-all model that fails to consider the community's preferences and unique context. Successful programming results from the feedback and understanding of the documented needs of a community and is most impactful when done in partnership with existing community organizations.

## Equity in action

### *Community Ambassadors Program and mini-grants in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania*

In Philadelphia, strong relationships with community organizations enabled Indego, the city's bikeshare program, to develop a thriving Community Ambassador Program. This program was designed to help connect residents of historically underserved communities to the bikeshare system and address the barriers faced by riders.<sup>86</sup>

The program is primarily designed for community organizations, which can leverage their existing connections and programming to support the outreach. Ambassador duties include organizing bike-related activities, sharing information on Indego's own programming, and helping the community learn about Indego through tabling at community events and their own work. Ambassadors receive a \$3,000 stipend and a free monthly pass for the season.

Collaboration and a focus on community benefits have been key to successful ambassador relationships. Ambassadors from 2024 praised Indego's willingness to work with them to tailor events to their communities and provide resources like bike education and free passes. Additionally, Indego supported ambassadors by providing training on bicycle outreach and helping organizations better connect with their communities.<sup>87</sup>

In addition to engagement around system expansions and station placement, Indego operates a mini-grant program to support the missions of small, local nonprofits. In this program, Indego has found that genuine investment in the community means meeting the community where it is at, and sometimes that does not involve bikes at all.

The mini-grant program launched in 2015, shortly after the initial rollout of the bikeshare system, providing grants of up to \$1,000 to local nonprofits to support their missions, whether bicycle-centric or not. The grants are part of Indego's community engagement work, building community resilience and introducing Indego to communities before asking them to participate in bikeshare programming. Past grants have been used to fight food insecurity and provide resources for the homeless. Some organizations choose to share free ride codes or invite Indego staff to host an event as part of their programming, while others do not engage with the bikeshare at all.<sup>88</sup>

---

<sup>86</sup> City of Philadelphia, "[City Officials Join Community Partners and Key Stakeholders to Celebrate Indego's 8th Year in Service](#)," May 12, 2023.

<sup>87</sup> "[Join the Team: Indego Seeks Community Ambassadors for 2025!](#)," Indego, December 12, 2024.

<sup>88</sup> Kiran Herbert, "[Indego's Mini-Grants Help Build Trust and Community](#)," Better Bike Share Partnership, November 13, 2023.

The result of this early investment in community means that, just as with its ambassador program, Indego has created a network of supporters that can connect communities with the bikeshare, officially or unofficially.

“These grants have created a lot of buy-in for our regular programming, and much of that is done through word of mouth and communities talking amongst themselves,” said Megan Alvarez, transportation engagement coordinator and mini-grant program manager at the City of Philadelphia.

### *Community bike rides in Chicago, Illinois, and San Antonio, Texas*

One issue with significant equity implications that often goes unaddressed by bikeshare operators is the interaction between bikeshare and policing, as well as community safety. As mentioned previously, Black communities are penalized for offenses related to biking at a much higher rate than other communities.

Some communities are exploring approaches to safety that focus on building community resilience, reducing punitive measures that perpetuate inequities, such as Equiticity, a racial equity movement based in Chicago, Illinois.

Equiticity focuses on multiple aspects of mobility justice as tools to improve community health, including physical health, safety, and economic opportunities. The organization researches mobility justice and policing, advocates for more equitable transportation systems, and runs community programs, including workforce development and free bicycle distribution. In addition to these, it organizes regular Community Mobility Rituals, which are ritualized community bike rides or group walks.

“When there’s a rhythmic frequency, [it] helps trust grow at the neighborhood level,” said Olatunji Oboi Reed, Equiticity’s president and CEO. “When trust goes up in the neighborhood, the perception of violence goes down. When the perception of violence goes down, more people are willing to walk and bike and shop—and when our streets are more vibrant, we will have the potential of reducing violence in our neighborhoods.”<sup>89</sup>

Through regular bike rides that connect community members, local businesses, and their history, Equiticity works to address the root causes of issues within their community, making it a safer place to ride. The organization lists seven core elements that make Community Mobility Rituals effective:<sup>90</sup>

1. Rhythmic schedule
2. Neighborhood ownership of “our” space
3. Priority on socialization
4. Racialized healing
5. Reduced barriers to participation
6. Shared customs
7. Active disruption of the status quo

Organizers and partners emphasize the importance of keeping rides rooted in the communities they serve. When planning rides outside their normal neighborhoods, it is not enough to simply partner with organizations from those areas. Community partners need to be equal parts of the design process from the beginning, from the route to the music to deciding the safety protocols.

---

<sup>89</sup> Olatunji Oboi Reed, “[Equiticity’s Community Mobility Rituals, as vehicles to reduce hyperlocal violence](#),” posted November 15, 2021, by Equiticity, YouTube.

<sup>90</sup> Olatunji Oboi Reed, “[Community Mobility Rituals: A Vehicle for Neighborhood Transformation](#),” Equiticity, accessed December 5, 2025.

In Chicago and beyond, strong interest in incorporating community rides into bikeshare outreach exists. Chicago’s bikeshare operator, Divvy, partners with Equiticity on many rides, and some have featured the city’s Streets Are For Everybody (SAFE) Ambassadors—a group of residents providing education and outreach about active transportation across the city.<sup>91</sup>

Across the US, several bikeshare operators, including Indego in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, and EZ Ride in Passaic, New Jersey, incorporate community rides into their engagement programming. Likewise, San Antonio Bike Share in San Antonio, Texas, has partnered with Bat Conservation International and the local chapter of Latino Outdoors to host bike rides that connect participants with the outdoors and their local wildlife, with a focus on the Latino community.<sup>92</sup>

Investment from bikeshare operators can help these organizations increase capacity and reach program goals. By investing in the infrastructure of relationship building, bikeshare can strengthen neighborhoods from the inside, rather than reshape them from the outside.



---

<sup>91</sup> Reed, “[Community Mobility Rituals: A Vehicle for Neighborhood Transformation.](#)”

<sup>92</sup> Odochi Akwani, “[Bats Bring New Bike Share Riders in San Antonio.](#)” Better Bike Share Partnership, September 18, 2025.

## Section V: Conclusion

This report highlights the promise of bikeshare in reducing car dependency, improving access, and supporting healthier, more sustainable communities. It also identifies that the current bikeshare industry is falling short in ensuring these benefits are enjoyed by everyone in our communities, regardless of race, zip code, socioeconomic status, or physical ability.

The Twin Cities have been a pioneer in the bikeshare space in the United States and can lead once again. While this report is not comprehensive, it identifies some of the region's transportation challenges and showcases innovative strategies deployed by other systems around North America to overcome similar hurdles. Specifically, the report shows the following:

- **Equity must be embedded in every layer of system design and operation:** From pricing and payment options to vehicle distribution, internal operations, adaptive equipment, and integration with other modes.
- **Community engagement and education are essential:** Prioritizing authentic engagement and education helps to build trust, shape programs that reflect local needs, and foster a sense of ownership.
- **Public sector investment is critical:** If cities want bikeshare to be a legitimate transportation option, the public sector needs to treat it that way. Just as with transit and roads, sustained financial investment is necessary to create an equitable and reliable system.
- **Innovation can lead to access:** Whether through Mobility as a Service platforms, flexible transportation wallets, or new vehicle types, creative solutions can increase ridership and expand access.
- **Operators must track progress:** Clearly identifying equity goals, both quantitative and qualitative, and publicly reporting on progress toward those goals is essential.

The future of bikeshare in the United States is bright. With a sustained commitment, openness to new ideas, and dedication to equity, the Twin Cities is in a position to take the best ideas from leading bikeshare systems and use them to make bikeshare a cornerstone of the region's multimodal transportation network, supporting connection for all, regardless of income, race, or ability.

