



DOWNTOWN COMMISSION AGENDA REPORT

DATE: January 12, 2017

AGENDA OF: January 26, 2017

DEPARTMENT: PUBLIC WORKS

SUBJECT: Recommendations for Locations of Downtown Bike Lockers

RECOMMENDATION: Accept results of the Downtown Santa Cruz Bike Locker Survey and provide input on recommendations for downtown bike locker locations and replacement strategy.

BACKGROUND: The downtown bike locker program has been in place for 25 years, with the goal of providing safe, secure and accessible bicycle parking for downtown visitors, employees and residents. There are currently 112 bike lockers, primarily in the downtown area. Fourteen lockers have been taken out of service due to vandalism or other maintenance issues, leaving 98 functioning lockers in 11 locations.

The bike lockers are well utilized, with nearly 153,000 parked hours in the 14-month period between August 2015 and October 2016. Of the 11 locations, the Metro Center lockers have the highest average monthly rentals, number of parked hours and revenue, followed by Lot 3 (the Cedar/Church Garage) and Lot 4 (the Farmer's Market lot). The three locations with the lowest monthly rentals are Lot 27 (Front/Laurel), Pearl Alley, and Depot Park. All Depot Park lockers and most Pearl Alley lockers are out of service. See Attachment 1 for average monthly rentals at each bike locker location. Bike theft from bike lockers is quite low, with only two instances of bike theft in the program's history.

Despite high usage there are numerous issues with the bike lockers, largely due to the age and style of the lockers. These issues include:

- Gaps in locker doors create a perceived risk of bike theft
- Frequent use of lockers for storage of non-bike items
- Use of both Santa Cruz ParkCards and BikeLink cards to access lockers makes it difficult to track bike locker users
- Lack of public awareness of bike locker locations and how to access lockers

The Bike Locker Subcommittee of the Commission met on November 30, 2016 to discuss the future of the program, and again on December 15 to tour bike locker locations. Committee members agreed that lockers should be replaced, and requested that staff survey bike locker users and the bicycling community to provide input on new locker locations. The survey was conducted in January 2017, and received 114 responses. See Attachment 2 for survey results.

Staff has also discussed the idea of ceasing to allow ParkCards to access the bike lockers, and allowing only BikeLink cards. This would provide contact information for all users, and would help to discourage use of lockers for storage of non-bike items. Downsides of this change include the loss of the “one card for all parking” concept and a possible loss of bike locker revenue.

DISCUSSION: Replacing the bike lockers and allowing BikeLink cards only to access lockers would solve several of the current issues with the bike locker program, and could help expand program visibility and bike locker usage. The current gaps in the doors of the lockers were caused by retrofitting older lockers to be able to accept BikeLink and ParkCards. This problem would not exist with new lockers. Installing new lockers with permeable exteriors (such as those at the Metro Center, which have doors made of metal mesh) would allow City staff to more easily regulate storage of non-bike items. New lockers could also be placed in more visible locations, and feature eye-catching signage that could help increase public awareness of the program and how to obtain a BikeLink card. Allowing BikeLink cards only to access lockers could also discourage non-bike storage, since BikeLink requires contact information and a credit card in order to register for a card.

Following the Subcommittee meeting, tour of bike locker locations, and survey of bike locker users, staff is proposing the following recommendations for bike locker replacement:

- Replace lockers at Lot 3 (Cedar/Church Garage, lockers near Church Street only), Locust Garage, Lot 10 (River/Front Garage), City Hall and Pearl Alley
 - Increase number of lockers at Lot 3 and Lot 10
 - Decrease number of lockers at City Hall
- Remove lockers at Depot Park, Lot 27 (Front/Laurel), River/Front (near Galleria parking), and Lot 3 near Commerce Lane
- Wait to replace lockers in Lot 4 and the Library pending discussion on new downtown library/parking garage project (these lockers will be included in budget numbers)
- Investigate new locker locations based on survey responses. Locations within the District with the highest number of requests are Trader Joe’s and the Post Office/North Pacific
- All new and relocated bike lockers to accept Bike-Link Cards only

Following Commissioner input on locker locations, staff will present a budget for bike locker replacement at the March Downtown Commission meeting, in conjunction with 2017-18 budget discussions. Staff may recommend a phased approach, in which some lockers are replaced in 2017-18 and some in 2018-19. This could allow us to start with a smaller number of lockers at some locations and expand as demand dictates.

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The downtown bike locker program supports the City's Climate Action Plan Goals to double bike ridership by 2020 and reduce single occupancy vehicle commutes by 10% by 2020. Bike lockers are also an element of a Transportation Demand Management program, which is being discussed in conjunction with the proposed downtown library/parking garage project.

FISCAL IMPACT: There is no fiscal impact associated with this action.

Prepared by: Amelia Conlen, Transportation Coordinator

Submitted by: Jim Burr, Transportation Manager

Attachments

Bike Locker Usage

Downtown Santa Cruz Bike Locker Survey Data

Downtown Santa Cruz Bike Locker Survey