



Eda Jane Matchak  
*Director of Elections/Municipal Hearing Officer*

MEMORANDUM

TO: Eileen M. Donoghue, City Manager *EMD*

FROM: Eda Matchak, Director of Elections/Municipal Hearing Officer  
Michael Vaughn, Chief Procurement Officer

CC: Yovani Baez-Rose, Neighborhood Planner  
Nick Navin, Parking Director  
Natasha Vance, Transportation Engineer  
Christine P. O'Connor, City Solicitor  
Rachel Brown, 1st Assistant City Solicitor

DATE: August 23, 2018

SUBJECT: C. Kennedy/C. Cirillo – Request City Manager meet with representatives from the OFO Bike Sharing Program and provide City Council with a report regarding the feasibility of establishing a bike sharing program in Lowell.

In January of 2018 an exploratory team including Neighborhood Planner Yovani Baez-Rose, who is knowledgeable about bike share goals in the city's Master Plan, Parking Director Nick Navin, who has been researching alternatives to building additional municipal garages to address traffic and congestion concerns, and Director of Elections/ Municipal Hearing Officer Eda Matchak, first assembled to discuss the possibility of bringing a dock less bike share program to the City of Lowell. Prior to commencing conversations with bike share companies as well as community partners, feedback was gathered from communities, both local and national, to collect information about the benefits and challenges of bike share implementation. Simultaneously, an ordinance was drafted and a review committee comprised of city staff and community members convened to ensure that regulations will be in place at the commencement of the pilot program.

Staff discussions focused on how a bike share system could positively compliment the city's current transportation infrastructure, connecting Lowell's neighborhoods to each other and making attractions such as the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail and the Concord River Greenway more accessible to residents across the city. The accessibility and affordability of a dock less bike share system to users and the fact that there would be no upfront cost for the City made this a model worth pursuing further. Feedback was gathered from the University of Massachusetts Lowell and the Lowell Regional Transit Authority (LRTA) as bikes will inevitably be used by students and individuals at the Gallagher Transit Terminal. During this information gathering stage representatives from both Lime Bike and OFO U.S. were invited to Lowell to discuss bike share in Lowell as an intermodal approach to transportation.



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On May 28, 2018 the City of Lowell Purchasing Department issued a request for proposal (RFP) for a No Cost Bike Sharing System for the City. The RFP was modeled after the City of Boston's RFP for a pilot program. The duration of this contract would be September 1, 2018 to August 31, 2021. The RFP was advertised in the Lowell Sun, CommBuys and Goods & Services and posted on the City of Lowell website.

Four proposals were received - from vendors OFO U.S., Gotcha Mobility, VeoRide Inc, Neutron Holdings, Inc dba LimeBike. A technical review committee was formed that included Neighborhood Planner Yovani Baez-Rose, Parking Director Nick Navin, Director of Elections / Municipal Hearing Officer Eda Matchak, Transportation Engineer Natasha Vance, as well as non-scoring advisory members 1st Assistant City Solicitor Rachel Brown and University of Massachusetts Lowell staff.

The technical review committee scored the four proposals. The companies are listed in the order they ranked: 1) VeoRide, 2) LimeBike, 3) OFO U.S. and 4) Gotcha. An interview was scheduled with VeoRide, the highest scoring firm, with representatives from VeoRide including Co-Founder and Business Development Manager Candice Xie, Co-Founder and President Edwin Tan and Sales Representative Phil Hallstedt in attendance.

As outlined in the response, VeoRide is offering a no cost bike sharing system that will begin in the fall of 2018 with 100 smart bicycles and some electric-assisted bicycles. The fall roll out of bicycles will begin approximately four weeks from contract execution, and will include promotional events throughout the city. The winter season will see a reduction in the number of bicycles. In the spring of 2019, VeoRide will provide approximately 300 smart bicycles, with up to 10% to be Electric-Assisted Bicycles. Highlights and details of the bike share pilot include that VeoRide will respond to the City's request within two hours to remove and pick up a bicycle. VeoRide is responsible for deployment, operation, and maintenance of their fleet. Bike rental will cost \$.50 every 15 minutes after a bicycle is unlocked for \$1.00. Riders will have the option to purchase monthly memberships for \$25.99 that will include 30 minutes of free riding per day. Annual memberships will be available for \$99.99 that will include 60 minutes free riding per day. Discounted student rates of \$13.99 monthly for students and \$48.99 annually will be offered as well as low income accommodations and options for users without smartphone devices.

Moving forward, the city will be working collaboratively with VeoRide and University of Massachusetts Lowell to promote bike safety, increased bike-centric infrastructure and rider education.