



BAY AREA
AIR QUALITY
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METROPOLITAN
TRANSPORTATION
COMMISSION



SFMTA
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NEWS

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Air District announces pilot regional bike-share project

SAN FRANCISCO – The Bay Area Air Quality Management District is announcing that it has signed a contract with Alta Bicycle Share to deploy and operate a regional bike-sharing system pilot program that is expected to launch by August 2013. The regional bike-sharing system will run along the Peninsula transportation corridor in the cities of San Francisco, Redwood City, Mountain View, Palo Alto and San Jose.

Bike sharing provides an alternative to driving and parking in busy downtown areas and can also help reduce the need to take bikes on board transit. As demonstrated by successful bike-sharing programs in Washington D.C., Montreal and Boston, bike sharing complements the existing transit system by expanding the reach of transit stops and destinations, providing residents and visitors alike more options to travel in and around town.

“Bike sharing is an innovative way to improve health and air quality in our communities by replacing short car trips with zero-emission bikes,” said Jack P. Broadbent, executive officer of the Air District. “This pilot program will enable commuters to conveniently complete their travel and provide tangible air quality benefits for the Bay Area.”

A main goal of the pilot system is to evaluate bike sharing's potential to effectively reduce vehicle traffic and improve local air quality. The results from the pilot will be used to assess opportunities for expanding the program to include other Bay Area communities.

“San Francisco and the Bay Area are ready for bike sharing,” said Ed Reiskin, SFMTA director of transportation. “Bicycle use continues to grow in San Francisco and bike share is a great way to get more people on bikes in a convenient and fun way.”

Unlike traditional, individual bike ownership or rental, public bike sharing offers users 24/7 access to bicycles for short trips without the worry of maintenance, theft or storage.

“San Jose residents are thrilled to see us living up to our commitment to smart, sustainable development strategies that invest in our existing urban cores and transit corridors and promote walking, bicycling and transit,” said Sam Liccardo, MTC Commissioner, San Jose City Councilmember and VTA Board member. “The Bike Sharing Program Pilot nudges San Jose and the rest of the region forward with a regionally-focused program that provides a much needed bridge for transit riders making last-mile connections to work, school, and entertainment destinations.”

Bike sharing is ideal for short distance point-to-point trips, providing users the ability to pick up a bicycle at any self-serve bike station and return it to any bike station located within the system's service area. Bicycle stations will be located near transit hubs, high-density residential areas and key destination points such as employment centers and universities, making it easier to quickly and conveniently connect to and from transit and to make short-distance trips by bike.

"The ability to make an efficient first- or last-mile connection is often the key to getting a commuter out of their car and onto transit," said Michael J. Scanlon, general manager/CEO for SamTrans and Caltrain. "As supporters of mobility alternatives, we are enthusiastically supporting the bike-share project and we hope it will motivate more drivers to leave their cars at home."

The first phase of the pilot project will launch with approximately 700 bicycles at 70 kiosk stations deployed throughout the five participating service areas for a period of 12 to 24 months of testing. Additional funding will be needed in order to grow the system and the Air District is actively seeking sponsorships. Once additional funding is secured, the pilot system will be expanded to deploy at least an additional 300 bicycles at 30 kiosk stations. The system may be further expanded to encompass other service areas and to comprise as many as 6,000 – 10,000 bicycles region-wide. Parties interested in sponsoring the system should contact the Air District at **(415) 749-8660**.

The pilot project is a partnership among local government agencies including the Air District, San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency, Sam-Trans, Caltrain, the County of San Mateo, the City of Redwood City and the Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority. The initial pilot phase is estimated to cost approximately \$7 million with \$1.4 million in funding provided by the Air District, \$1.3 million from the local agency partners and \$4.29 million from the Metropolitan Transportation Commission.

In the Bay Area, the transportation sector accounts for more than 50 percent of air pollution overall. Significant emission reductions from the transportation sector will help the Bay Area attain and maintain state and national air quality standards and reduce greenhouse gases.

The Bay Area Air Quality Management District is the regional agency responsible for protecting air quality in the nine-county Bay Area. For more information, visit www.baaqmd.gov.

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