

EUGENE BIKE SHARE TO LAUNCH IN 2017

A few weeks ago, *Bicycling* magazine released a list of the 50 best bike cities in the U.S. — Eugene placed 18th. In its write up extolling Eugene's biking street cred, the magazine praised Eugene's plan to add a new transportation program called "bike share" in 2017.

By this time next year, the streets of Eugene might host a small fleet of rental bikes stored at self-serve kiosks throughout the city that riders can check out with credit cards. Seattle and Portland already have bike share, and if all goes according to plan, Eugene will be next.

According to Eugene's 20-year transportation plan, the city wants to triple the number of citizens who travel by foot and bike, and one of the rationales for implementing bike share is to encourage active forms of transportation.

A 2014 bike share feasibility study conducted by the city of Eugene and Lane Transit District found that citizens were overall supportive of bringing bike share to the city, but expressed "strong concern" over the program's ability to remain financially feasible.

Eugene's program will use a \$909,066 grant from the Oregon Transportation Commission to start, and the city is currently seeking sponsorship to supplement the total cost of about \$2.3 million. Eugene will need to find additional funding to pay for yearly upkeep costs.

Reed Dunbar, associate transportation planner for the city of Eugene, says the city plans to have four bike share stations at the University of Oregon, which pooled its bike-share funds with the city of Eugene instead of creating its own system.

The Whiteaker neighborhood and downtown Eugene will host other stations, with a total of about 300 bikes.

Dunbar explains that bike share is an ideal op-

tion for people who want to get from one area of Eugene to another quickly and easily — for example, people working in downtown Eugene who want to get to the Whiteaker for lunch.

For those who already own a bike but don't leave it locked outside for fear of theft, bike share offers a solution to that problem.

"The bikes aren't generally useful for thieves because they've got a lot of proprietary parts on them," Dunbar explains.

Portland's bike-share program, called Biketown, launched with a fleet of 1,000 bright-orange bicycles in July of this year, and so far the city considers it a success, with a \$10 million sponsorship from Nike. According to Biketown, the program has logged a total of 105,480 trips in the past two months.

Dunbar says Eugene is currently negotiating with its proposed but thus far unnamed ven-

dor, and the details could be hashed out in a week or two. Just as Nike sponsors Portland's program, Eugene's bike share also needs a sponsor to help it get started.

While bike-share programs have met with success around the country, they aren't always a smash hit. In Seattle, the city had to buy out its bike share program for \$1.4 million. It only logged 142,846 trips in its first year of operation, according to *The Seattle Times*.

Dunbar says Seattle faced a number of issues that Eugene won't; for example, Seattle has a mandatory helmet law, and its bike-share program had to juggle helmet rental, which complicated the process.

He anticipates some backlash before launching Eugene's program "because there's public money involved," but according to bike-share literature, Dunbar says, public angst dwindles during and after launch "once people see it and use it and understand why it's valuable." ■

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HAPPENING PEOPLE

BY PAUL NEEVEL



MIJA ANDRADE

"I've been an artist my whole life," says Mija Andrade, who made national news in 1986 at Salinas High School in California, when she went to the senior prom with her best friend, another girl. "We had boy friends at different schools. When we were denied permission, we took it to court and won the case." Andrade studied graphic arts at University of California, Santa Cruz and worked for a decade as a graphic artist in Monterey. She began to study massage therapy in 1994, a year before moving to Eugene with her then husband. "The licensing process was long," she says, and for 10 years she worked at both graphic arts and massage.

"I began volunteering at MECCA in 2006 while recovering from an overuse injury from massage," she says. MECCA (Materials Exchange Center for Community Arts) became her passion. She joined its board, taught classes and became executive director in 2008. "I started the Object Afterlife Art Challenge," she says, "as a way to challenge artists to incorporate reused materials in art work." The 8th annual Object Afterlife exhibit can be seen at MECCA, 449 Willamette, during the First Friday ArtWalk on Oct. 7. She left MECCA in 2013 for a position as resident artist with the Oregon Supported Living Program. "OSLP provides services to developmentally disabled adults," she notes, "but the OSLP Arts and Culture Program is inclusive, open to people of all abilities. Attendance has tripled in three years." Last December, Andrade became development director for OSLP. She is also a 14-year member of the ArtChics women's art group, whose annual benefit art sale is set for Nov. 4-5 at OSLP A&C's Lincoln Gallery, 309 W. 4th Avenue.

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