



Summary of La Jolla Town Council April 12, 2018 Special Session Bike Apps and Dockless Bikes

Ann Kerr Bache, President, LJTC indicated that this session was meant to explore the problems and seek mutually acceptable solutions that fit the business models and benefit the community. The topics and summary of presentations and discussions are provided below:

SPECIAL SESSION BIKE APPS

Ann Kerr Bache, Moderator
Chris Brewster, Public Safety
Cynthia Chasan, LJTC
Sheila Fortune, LJVMA
Khoa Nguyen, LimeBike
Stefan Winkler ofo Bike-share
Cameron Gore, City Launcher, Bird San Diego
Andy Hanshaw, Executive Director, San Diego Bike Coalition
Serge Issakov, Cyclist
Janet Stratford, Collins Parks & Beaches

Chris Brewster, Public Safety

In 2013, Deco Bike contracted with City of San Diego to be the exclusive bike business for 10 years, until 2023. The bikes and their docks began to appear in 2015. It meant 1-2 ½ million income to the city. Some areas of the city wanted it and others did not. There was opposition to them based on the inconvenience of having to pick them up and leave them in designated docks. Other bike companies, without docks, wanted to compete in San Diego. Even though Deco Bike had an exclusive contract with the city, the City Attorney determined that other companies could do business in San Diego.

Three companies (LimeBike, ofo, Yellow Bike, and City Launcher: electric scooters) started in business. Their bikes and scooter became popular because they could be used and left anywhere. The bikes are regulated by the City as are other bikes used in San Diego. Electric scooters must adhere to the CA vehicle code, statewide: riders must wear a helmet, have a license, no passengers, not ridden on the sidewalks or boardwalks, and go at a speed not to exceed 25 mph.

Complaints arose almost immediately, because the bikes were left everywhere – on sidewalks in the right of way, blocking street corners and businesses, in parks, etc. City not prepared for the problems. Mayor asked bike companies to provide city with contact information. Police enforcement is minimal or non-existent at this time – helmet law is being ignored, riding on boardwalks and in parks is being allowed.

Mr. Brewster indicated that this does not constitute “bike sharing,” but rather is “bike rental.” This is Big Business – there are a lot of bikes out there and will be more. There are Pros and Cons.

Cons: Commerce in the parks, lack of adherence to laws and codes, only 1 in a 100 have helmets. Pros: bikes reduce car use and parking problems, less pollution, convenience, many people like the bikes.

Possible solutions: Put out bike racks, limit the number of bikes, impound bikes left in certain areas, make bike companies pay for violations, leave it to the free market to solve problems.

Sheila Fortune, La Jolla Merchants Assoc.

Deco Bikes are only interested in obtaining paid advertising on their bikes, not interested in bike rentals. La Jolla Merchants Assoc. has regulatory authority over “prowl” – the private right of way in the La Jolla Business District (BID). This has turned out to be a much bigger problem than anticipated. The Assoc. does not want public complaints or companies taking money and not giving back to the community. The Assoc. wants to find solution.

Bike Share Companies

Stefan Winkler – Yellow Bikes (ofO): No bikes deployed here in La Jolla and in other neighborhoods. They are in San Diego for less than a year. They have 1200 employees globally.

Khoa Nguyen – LimeBike: Theirs are regular bikes, battery in back to help going up hills and scooter. He says over 50% of all their rides are within 50 yards of transit stops for people going home. They have no docks because that would defeat the transit purpose and of going anywhere people want to go. They are not in La Jolla yet. We put the bikes where demand is high and in high transit areas.

Cameron Gore – City Launcher electric scooters: There were 50 electric scooter “Birds” in PB and now more. They have a group of people called SOS- Save our Sidewalks - who pick up scooters every night and redistribute them to other areas. They do not increase the number of Birds in an area, unless they are being used frequently, all day. They are affordable to everyone. Electric bikes have no carbon emissions. They are introducing a Free Helmets program in which for \$1 newhelmets are shipped to people. Some helmets will be given away for free. A drivers’ license is required through their App.

Question: Can helmets be tethered to the scooters?

Answer: No, can’t do it for hygienic reasons - can’t share helmets.

Question: PB is real problem. Scooters are left everywhere in public right of way, riders are not using scooters safely, they are riding on sidewalks and boardwalks, they are not being considerate, and there is no police enforcement. Can you track who used the scooter last and confront the bad rider?

Answer: Yes, if complaint comes in quickly. They are working on being able to supply real time feedback for bad riders.

Khoa Nguyen, LimeBikes

<http://www.limebike.com/>

We know where are bikes are. We encourage our riders to tell us if they are broken or in the wrong place. Q – Can you use a Get it Done App to photograph situation and send it no to bike company? Yes, you can get those kinds of reports. It is usually a situation where there is an initial 2 month period of chaos and then good people do the right thing.

Andy Henshaw, San Diego Bike Coalition

We do bike advocacy for all the right reasons – because they are better than cars. Goal is 50% by 2035 in San Diego. Need more money being invested in infrastructure for bike riders in future. Need bikeway networks in downtown San Diego. Dockless bikes are great for the future. Need better and safer places to ride. A lack of bike parking is a problem, although parking spots may not work since the idea is to leave the bike anywhere for convenience purposes.

Comments from La Jolla residents:

La Jolla ordinances and La Jolla Merchants Assoc. require La Jolla to improve, enhance and maintain it, to keep sidewalks free of clutter like retail store balloons, sandwich boards, newspaper racks. Walking through town is encouraged, not biking. There should be no vendors allowed in parks. These bikes are clutter and are vendors and there is no real financial benefit to the town or San Diego for allowing them.

We should allow bikes to park somewhere, even if inconvenient to the rider.

People in PB rent bikes only in order to joyride. Ones who use them for transit buy their own bikes.

LimeBikes: Our bikes are for use to get around, not necessarily to use only for transit, it's for enjoyment, on the weekends as well.

Need infrastructure for bikes; chaos now, but just as car riding is subsidized and we are used to that, bikes should be given a chance to get over this initial period.

These are not new problems for these commercial bike companies. How did they solve these problems elsewhere?

Stefan Winkler, ofo.com

<https://www.ofo.com/us/en> – cities and neighborhoods are all different. Need good parking queues. There should be “carrot and stick” regulation. There should be good patrolling of communities.

BOTTOMLINE:

Suggestions Made for improving impact on Community:

1. Arrange with Parking Lots in LJ to designate painted area (a parking space or other space in the lot) as dropoff areas for Dockless Bikes.
2. Notify the renter that choice is to leave in designated dropoff area or either pay a dropoff fee (ala rental cars) or get special consideration for using dropoff areas (reward points; discount on rental, etc., company choice)
3. Require the renter to take photo when dropping off the bike.
 - Improves locating bikes as the GPS accuracy in the apps is not as precise as would like
 - Prompts renter to leave in appropriate location – don't block sidewalk; don't lay on hedges or anywhere could damage landscape.
4. Get Helmets out with Scooters asap – Bird plans this soon – new helmets each time
5. Inform Scooter riders of the rules for riding and penalize if not followed.
6. Everyone who sees dockless bike left inappropriately should photo and send to the companies or even easier use the GET IT DONE APP for SD and send photo there.
7. Bird Scooters plans to give \$1/day/scooter to SD – but have not found how and where to send funds.
8. Suggest sending money directly to each community for use improving their bike access and facilities; especially since taxes are not paid to the individual communities.
9. Request data on locations and usage of the dockless bikes be shared with communities so we can gain knowledge of their use and by whom. (busiest areas? ;residents or tourists, etc.)