



November 3, 2017  
Administration & Regulatory Affairs Department  
Dockless Bikeshare FAQs

### **What is Dockless Bikeshare?**

A service in which bicycles are made available for shared use on a short-term basis. Bikes can be borrowed at point A and left at point B. Dockless bikeshare generally is located and paid for via a smart phone app. Cities such as Seattle, Washington DC, Durham and Charlotte have launched programs for this alternative mode of transportation. The City of Houston is proposing a dockless bikeshare pilot program.

### **Describe the pilot program?**

The 12-month pilot will allow dockless bikeshare operators to apply for permits and to deploy 500 bikes in the first month and up to 250 bikes per month during the pilot. During the 12-month period, operators will share data with the City that will shape the future of the program. After the 12-month period, the City will return to City Council to provide an update on the pilot with recommendations to either modify, terminate or codify.

### **Why permit?**

This model allows for bikes to be available in the public right of way. Permitting the providers allows the City insight as to the number of bikes that are in the public right of way and requires operators to ensure bikes meet minimum federal standards. Permits will also hold the operator responsible for bikes that are improperly parked or defective.

Permittees must also provide a 24/7 customer service contact information on every bike. Permits will have minimum insurance requirements to ensure public protection.

### **Where can I find a bike?**

Bikes can be parked in the public right of way. Customers can locate where bikes are available via smartphone app. Operators will be required to provide a cash payment solution for customers who do not use smartphones or credit cards.

### **Where can I leave a bike?**

Under the permit, operators are required to educate customers on where bikes may be parked. Bikes must leave at least 6' pedestrian clearance on the sidewalk, must be parked upright and not leaning against buildings or public infrastructure, must be parked on a hard surface and cannot impede vehicular travel.

Additionally, high demand areas will require operators to create virtual docking stations within the app so that customers know where to leave the bikes.



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Bikes parked in violation of these requirements must be relocated within 2 hours of notification to the operator between the hours of 6 am to 6 pm, Monday – Sunday and within 10 hours during all other times.

#### **What if a bike is left on my property?**

The customer service number on the bike is 24/7 and the operator must relocate the bike within 2 hours of receiving notification Monday-Sunday, 6 am to 6 pm and within 10 hours of receiving notice during all other times.

If the operator does not relocate the bike as required, the City may relocate the bike and assess the permittee a relocation fee.

#### **What information does the City require for a permit?**

The City will require the permittee to submit the following in order to obtain a permit:

1. Application with company information and local contact information.
2. Total fleet size and unique identifiers associated with each bike
3. The service area at launch
4. A photo or visual representation of the bike
5. A description of the smart phone app and how cash customers will be accommodated
6. Maintenance plan
7. Plan to educate customers on proper parking and bike safety
8. Identification of high demand locations and virtual docking stations.
9. Plan to deploy bikes in underserved areas once 2,000 bikes are deployed
10. Relocation and balancing plan (how will bikes be moved/relocated to meet demand)
11. Affidavit certifying that the bikes meet the minimum standards per ordinance
12. Proof of insurance
13. Performance bond
14. Permit fees

Permittees will be required to share anonymized trip data with the City. This data and the method of sharing is to be determined by the ARA director.

#### **How many bikes can be permitted?**

Each operator may deploy 500 bikes in their first month of operation and no more than 250 bikes per month during the remainder of the pilot period.