



May 15, 2015

Contact: Mark Carnopis
Community Relations Manager
Valley Regional Transit
Work: 208-258-2702
Cell: 208-860-9811

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

BOISE GREENBIKE PROGRAM LOOKS TO THE FUTURE

It truly took a village of many to make Boise GreenBike a reality.

Through a combination of hard work by dedicated advocates and supporters and securing the necessary federal and local financial support, Boise's first modern bike sharing system opened for business recently. It consists of 15 stations and 114 bikes located throughout the downtown area and the Boise State University campus.

The years-long effort culminates Saturday afternoon (May 16) with the Pedal Power Parade (<http://boisebikeweek.org/Parade.html>) the penultimate event marking the end of Boise Bike Week.

Dave Fotsch, Director of the Boise GreenBike program, envisions the parade as a fitting launch event for the program. "We are offering free use of the GreenBike bicycles on Saturday, and I would love to see most, if not all, of the bicycles being ridden in the parade."

Boise GreenBike is offering free rides all day on Saturday. A promotional code will be available on its Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Boise-Bike-Share/741964159164163>) just after midnight Saturday.

The genesis for developing the Boise GreenBike program was the need to find a solution to a mobility problem – a lack of alternative transportation options in downtown Boise. If someone downtown wanted to run a quick errand or go to lunch outside a comfortable walking distance, they had to get in their car and drive there.

In 2012, the Central District Health Department, took the lead in developing the business plan for the proposed project. Valley Regional Transit participated in many aspects of the project's technical work due to the importance of creating good connections to transit and maximizing the public investments that were being made to RideLine, a one-stop shop customer information center. Other early partners included Boise State University, the Capitol City Development Corporation and the Community Planning Association of Southwest Idaho (COMPASS).

Boise GreenBike eventually became a service of Valley Regional Transit.

Supporters of a bike share program identified its many benefits, including: reducing air pollution and traffic congestion; it is less expensive to purchase and maintain a fleet of bicycles than traditional modes of transportation, such as buses; promotes multi-modal transportation, linking trips by bus, vanpool or carpool; offers physical exercise; and makes the city more livable and neighborly.

Primary funding to purchase the bikes and stations came in the form of a federal Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) grant. The TAP program provides funding for programs and projects defined as transportation alternatives, including bicycle facilities. The local match for the grant came from the Central District Health Department.

Additional financial assistance came from the city of Boise (start-up funds and money to purchase five additional interactive kiosks for the bike stations). SelectHealth and St. Luke's share the title sponsorship of the program. The Boise Co-op, Banner Bank, the Capitol City Development Corporation, and Bodybuilding.com have come on board as station sponsors.

The early public response to the Boise GreenBike program has been positive. As of May 15, the system has 452 members, has reduced carbon emissions by 900 pounds, and riders have burned nearly 41,000 calories by riding bikes instead of driving. More information about memberships and pricing is available at Boise.GreenBike.com.

Fotsch said all of the hard work to get the Boise GreenBike program in place was well worth it. With the infrastructure now in place, the focus now is on making the program self-sufficient and building community support.

"This is a public-private partnership. The public sector has provided the funds to buy the bikes and infrastructure," Fotsch said. "Now we need the community to support the operations of the program through membership and user fees and through corporate sponsors." If these efforts are successful, Fotsch says there is plenty of room for expansion of the GreenBike program. "I am excited about the potential of the GreenBike program expanding in Boise and even out to other cities in the Treasure Valley."