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First Orinda, now Lafayette considers LimeBike

By Pippa Fisher



Lafayette is joining neighboring cities in considering introducing dockless bike sharing for its residents.

The city council heard a presentation from LimeBike representative Sam Dreiman at its Jan. 22 meeting.

The young, Bay Area company launched in June and has since introduced its bike-sharing program in multiple cities and on college campuses across the country. What sets this company apart from other bike-sharing companies is the fact that it works without requiring bike racks be installed, and comes therefore at no cost to cities and with more flexibility to users.

The customer uses an app on their smartphone to locate a nearby GPS-equipped, lime-colored bike. Customers use their phone to scan and unlock the bike and then the bike is all theirs until they are done with it, wherever

that may be. The rental is over once the customer closes the back lock, parking it in a permissible spot. At that point the bike is available for another customer who will locate it for their ride. At \$1 per 30 minutes, the cost is much lower than traditional bike-sharing programs.

The app provides information on locally recommended parking spots.

Dreiman explained that the company's aim is to provide a sustainable solution to first and last mile transportation. He noted too that Walnut Creek is just starting its own LimeBike program.

City Council Member Mike Andersen raised questions about how the system would work in Lafayette given the topography of the city and said he would like to see a pilot program in place first. Vice Mayor Cam Burks agreed and said he thought the city should also look at some of the other dockless programs before committing to LimeBike.

Two residents spoke, saying that they had great experiences with the program in other cities.

Unanimously, with Council Member Ivor Samson absent, the four council members instructed the city manager to look into a pilot program and to also have staff access other dockless bike-sharing programs.

These hard-to-miss green bikes may yet be seen all over Lamorinda.

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