

Appendix E – Issue Brief: Engagement

Engagement and Inclusive Planning

Bike share has been in the United States for over 10 years and it has changed the way people move. Millions of trips have been made across the country, eliminating vehicle trips, burning calories, connecting people to better jobs and opportunities, and has been an outlet for physical activity. These beneficial impacts have trended in cities across the country, but have predominantly and disproportionately benefited certain populations. In the U.S., bike share has been most popular with young, white men with high educational attainment, and due to various barriers and challenges has omitted users that are women, low-income, people of color, and the disabled. There are various challenges, such as inclusion of low-income neighborhoods, lack of infrastructure, or cost and access to the system that have led to these trends. However, one of the biggest barriers associated with all of these challenges is the engagement of low-income and minority communities

The roll out of the Sacramento region bike share system is still under way, but since the beginning, SACOG and its partners have tried to focus on the communities in the initial service area that have the biggest chance of being left out of the system. This has not been an easy task, as has been seen across many systems, and despite the lessons learned from across the industry, there are still no perfect solutions. Yet a promising strategy to manage the negative outcomes and barriers of bike share has been strong community engagement, and staff of the Sacramento region system have strived to implement this.

Lessons from other systems have shown that communication about bike share systems is key in encouraging all residents to understand and access the service. Low-income communities have not always been included in the service areas. The times that they have been included, residents within access to the system didn't think it truly was intended to be for them. This was the case with the biggest bike share system in country, New York's Citi Bike. [The Bedford Stuyvesant \(Bed-Stuy\) community](#) is low-income and has a majority population of people of African-Caribbean descent. The community was included in the service area, but ridership was almost non-existent because of the lack of strong engagement with the community and lack of adequate communication about the system to the residents. Imagery and language matter, and when the system was first marketed to this community the language and images used in advertisements excluded the residents they were attempting to address. To address this issue, The New York City Department of Transportation, the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, and Motivate (the operator), partnered with the Bed-Stuy Restoration and worked on engaging residents and changed the way they communicated about the system. They saw a 56% increase in members from March 2015 to December 2016 and directly connected with over 2,500 participants with their engagement efforts that included three major community events, stakeholder convenings, and 84 community-led group rides.



Lack of inclusive and strategic marketing have perpetuated the lack of people of color, women, and low-income residents. Recently, many bike share systems have paid attention to the short falls dueto case studies, like the Bed-Stuy community, and organizations advocating for inclusion of low-income/communities of color, and other underrepresented groups. Best practices now include targeted marketing and engagement, and SACOG has drafted an Equity Plan to attempt to address these concerns. SACOG and its partner cities are working to have a system with inclusive marketing and outreach. Some of the strategies for inclusive marketing and outreach include marketing materials that reflect of the population, translated material in multiple languages, easily understood language, workshops with community organizations, connection to other existing programs, education at existing community events, stakeholder informational sessions, and biking demonstrations.

The Sacramento region bike share currently system does not collect user demographic, but there are attempts to encourage groups that have been traditionally underrepresented in other systems to participate. SACOG has committed to the Equity Plan that heavily focuses on outreach, engagement, and strategic marketing to promote the system for as many people as possible. The most successful outreach events to datet have been in low-income areas and communities of color. This is promising as the system continues to expand and address the needs of these communities.