**Increasing Access to Adaptive Bicycling: PBOT Pilot Project Concept Description**

**Summary:**

Commissioner Novick has directed PBOT staff to develop a pilot project that increases access to adaptive bicycling. This pilot concept will be further developed with community stakeholders this summer and fall, with a planned pilot launch in spring 2017.

**Background:**

PBOT has received two requests for physical accommodation with its BIKETOWN bike share system. PBOT staff have interviewed bike share systems in other cities, City program staff, companies and organizations serving people with disabilities, and most importantly Portlanders with disabilities.

This June, PBOT attended the Adaptive Bicycle Clinic and Wheel Connect (an event sponsored by the Oregon Spinal Cord Injury Connection organization). Staff interviewed a number of people with disabilities about an adaptive bicycling rental service. Individuals with disabilities interviewed almost universally expressed a desire and/or need for a staffed service. Individuals explained their need for personal wheelchair storage and assistance with fitting, the need or desire for staff assistance to move between their mobility device and the adaptive bicycle. Because of safety concerns of riding in auto traffic, and a primary interest in exercise and recreation, they wanted to use adaptive bicycles to ride on trails or paths without motor vehicles.

In addition, the local nonprofit Adaptive Sports NW already provides a long-term adaptive bicycle rental service.

The pilot concept is based on the need that PBOT staff have heard to date. It focuses on medium length rental (1-3 hours) through existing bike rental businesses located on or in close proximity to non-motorized trails. PBOT would purchase the adaptive bicycles and work with participating bike rental shops to provide the service. PBOT is considering providing both hand bicycles and three wheeled bicycles.

Portland Parks and Recreation has an existing Adaptive and Inclusion program. We are in conversations with Parks on how to integrate this pilot with their existing programming, such as their [Senior Recreation](https://www.portlandoregon.gov/parks/39833) program.

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**Next Steps:**

Project development and planning will occur later this summer and autumn. PBOT currently has a pilot concept and wants future customers, City partners such as Portland Parks and Recreation, service providers and interested parties to play an active role in developing the program. PBOT has made initial inquiries to a number of bike rental shops, but further discussions need to take place.

To date, PBOT’s outreach has focused on people with disabilities that are using wheelchairs or mobility devices. Staff recognize the need to broaden this to include people that may have balance issues, such as seniors. The three-wheeled bicycles are intended for this purpose.

**Current and recent PBOT projects and initiatives related to adaptive bicycling:**

This pilot would further PBOT’s work to increase access to adaptive bicycling. PBOT’s current and past projects include:

* Adaptive bikes for the Safe Routes to School in-school bike safety education program for students who would benefit from them.
* One-on-one bike riding instruction to students who haven’t successfully learned how to ride a bike with the Safe Routes program.
* Full scholarships for Bike First (<http://www.nwdsa.org/what_we_do/bike_first.html>) for all eligible Portland students. Bike First is a camp teaching riding skills to students with disabilities including those with Down syndrome, autism, cerebral palsy, visual impairments, and developmental delays. Safe Routes has been a key sponsor of this effort since 2008.
* Purchasing and donating a trailer full of Senior Trikes to Portland Parks and Recreations for its recreational programming.