

Official BAC comments on the Capital Bikeshare Development Plan.

The DDOT team has done a detailed and thoughtful job in developing the Capital Bikeshare Development Plan. The public has submitted hundreds of suggestions about where future stations might be located as well as specific ideas at existing locations. The level of interest in the future of the system is an indicator of how valued this transit option is to the community.

The plan falls short of its promise to provide a 6-year plan for the system, however. It provides a 3 year plan. No expansion will occur under the plan beyond 2018. This decision is based on the fact that the system's hardware will begin to reach the end of its lifecycle in 2017.

While it is prudent to anticipate that there will be a big financial impact from the need to keep the system in a state of good repair, standing still is not a plan to prepare for that contingency.

The plan states that efficiencies in the management of the program could be found and even offers some ideas about what that might look like. Pricing is mentioned as a factor that can be adjusted to achieve greater efficiency and revenues. Sponsorship is offered as a possible revenue source in the future to meet the growing cost of keeping the system in good repair. These are good ideas to mention, but unlike the attention paid to station expansion, there are no scenarios of alternative business models for a mature Capital Bikeshare system offered in the plan.

What would make this a real six year plan would be a roadmap to developing a new business model for the system by that could be implemented by 2019, providing continuity in system improvements that the community wants and needs. Capital Bikeshare has been an amazing start-up but now its moving into a new era. Stopping the program from growing and improving its service for the community in 2018 is not the way to approach the challenge of maintaining a state of good repair for the system.

Ellen Jones  
DC BAC Ward 3 Representative

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