



# UNIVERSITY TRANSPORTATION CENTER RESEARCH BRIEF

**PROJECT TITLE:** Taming and Tapping the Bike Share Explosion

**PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR:** Mike Lowry (UI), David Pimentel (UI)

**INSTITUTION:** SINGLE-INSTITUTION PROJECT  
**ESTIMATED COMPLETION DATE:** AUGUST 2020

**SPONSORS:** THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST TRANSPORTATION CONSORTIUM, UI



## **Background**

The Pacific Northwest is experiencing an explosion of bike share systems (BSS). Every major city in the region has at least one BSS company operating and many cities are exploring how to effectively introduce or expand this new form of mobility. While there is considerable promise for our region, serious barriers

persist; indeed, Seattle's first venture with BSS collapsed after only two years—a failure that cost the city \$2.2 million dollars. In the summer of 2017, three new companies hit Seattle with a novel technology and business model called “dockless”. They blanketed the city with 10,000 dockless bikes and in the first six months had huge success with over 350,000 trips totaling more than 1 million miles. Nevertheless, this new technology brings new challenges, which in some cities has included legal problems, negative public reaction, and stress on the transportation system.



## **Research Project**

The goal of this project is to improve system-wide efficiency for residents and visitors to our region by studying the legal framework, infrastructure needs, and consumer perceptions of BSS. We will identify travel service gaps that BSS can alleviate. We will produce guidance and tools (legal, business, and engineering) that cities, states, and other organizations can use to leverage BSS mobility. We will pursue this study from a system-wide perspective to identify how BSS can complement other modes of transportation, such as ride-hailing services and public transportation, to effectively improve multimodal connections.

