

## BIKE-SHARING COMES TO ASIA



MOBILITY & TRANSPORT

We've already featured bike-sharing schemes in [Paris](#) and other cities in [Europe](#) and [North America](#), and recently we spotted a few like-minded efforts popping up in Asia. First, at the start of this month Taiwan's [Kaohsiung City](#) launched its first self-service bicycle rental system, with 1,500 bikes available for rent at 20 transit points around the city. Operated by Tung Li Development Co., the service is accessible via membership—members pay a lump-sum fee in advance and use their membership cards to rent bikes—as well as to nonmembers, who can pay via credit card. Bikes are free to members for the first 30 minutes and TWD 10 for each subsequent 30 minutes, with a maximum of TWD 230 for 12 hours or more; for nonmembers, renting a bike costs TWD 30 for the first 30 minutes and TWD 15 for each half-hour thereafter, with a maximum of TWD 375. Ultimately, the service will be expanded to 50 rental sites along Kaohsiung City's mass-transit route, offering 4,500 bicycles for rent. In Taipei, meanwhile, the city's [YouBike](#) effort kicked off just a week or so ago with a fleet of Giant-manufactured bicycles available at bicycle parking meters in five areas around the city. Six more rental spots will be added beginning next month, the [China Post](#) reported. Sponsored in part by Cardif Assurance Vie and its parent company, BNP Paribas Group, the YouBike Public Bicycle System uses the city's EasyCard as its membership card. Users simply place their EasyCard on the sensor zone of the bicycle parking meter; a green 'Take Bicycle' light then switches on, allowing the user to pull the RFID-equipped bike from the rack. The first 30 minutes of each rental session is free; after that, each additional 15 minutes costs TWD 10. Google Maps technology on the official YouBike website allows users to check availability in advance. Similar programs have also recently launched in Changwon, Korea, and in [Hangzhou](#), China, according to reports in [The Daily Transit](#) and the [Bike-Sharing Blog](#). And no wonder, given the respite they offer from urban congestion, rising fuel costs and environmental concerns. There's no end in sight to the continuing spread of bike-sharing programs—or to the opportunities for potential sponsors. One to support in a two-wheeling city near you? Websites: [www.tinyurl.com/kaohsiungbikes](http://www.tinyurl.com/kaohsiungbikes) — [www.youbike.com.tw](http://www.youbike.com.tw) — [www.hzzxc.com.cn](http://www.hzzxc.com.cn)

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Website: [www.tinyurl.com/kaohsiungbikes](http://www.tinyurl.com/kaohsiungbikes)