

Cycle sharing comes to Anna Nagar

60 Bicycles At 6 Spots Available At ₹5 Per Hour

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Volunteers at parking stations will spread awareness about the scheme. The civic body plans to roll out 250 cycles in 25 spots soon

Chennai: If you have good stamina, you can now pedal from Thirumangalam metro station in Anna Nagar to the nearest destination — and from Tower Park, too. Greater Chennai Corporation launched a bicycle-sharing system on Wednesday with at least 60 bicycles at six locations. Soon the number will be increased to 250 in 25 locations, including six near the Marina beach.

The company, Smart Bikes, has placed the bicycles at designated parking stations. Registration cost for the

first month would be ₹1 with an hourly fee of ₹5. The cycles can be unlocked using a mobile application. After scanning the QR code using the app, a one-time password will be generated, which can be used to unlock the bicycle. After using, it must be dropped at the nearest parking station. Fifteen volunteers have been

placed at the stations to create awareness and sensitize people.

Saravnamoorthy, executive engineer of Greater Chennai Corporation, told **TOI** that 10 cycles each were placed at Thirumangalam station, Tower Park, Anna Nagar East, Chinthamani junction, near Valliammal

high school, and Kandaswami college on Wednesday. More bicycles will be placed at six spots near Marina beach and 13 other locations in Anna Nagar.

“A control room at the Anna Nagar zonal office will survey usage and track all bicycles. They will also make calls to those who do not drop their bicycles at designated locations,” he said. “Every bicycle has a unique ID and can be tracked,” he said.

The contractor will operate the system with the revenue from the rent. “Apart from this, they can sign a two-year contract with companies that want to advertise on the bicycles and at the parking stations,” said an official.

This will be scaled up to 5,000 bicycles in 250 locations in the coming months based on public response.

Nashwa Naushad, an associate of Institute for Trans-

portation and Development Policy, said as per the comprehensive traffic and transportation study in 2010 and the census figures of 2011 along with current trends, 6% of all trips in Chennai are estimated to be made on bicycles every day and approximately 12 lakh cycle trips a day.

“The launch of the bicycle-sharing system is a laudable move by Chennai to encourage this almost invisible transport mode. This pilot is a great start to an important form of last-mile connectivity,” she said.

Residents, however, raised concerns such as unavailability of exclusive bicycle tracks, existing bicycle tracks not barricaded, traffic rules not followed, potholes on roads, debris, garbage dumped on the roadside, hawkers on roadsides, traffic signal jumped by motorists and peak hour traffic.