



AMY HAMMOND | GVL

Hold please: GVSU student Becca Youdell remove her bike from a bike rack in front of Kirkhof.

Cycling Club works to start bike repair shop

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The Grand Valley State University Cycling Club is avidly seeking to open a bike repair shop that will bring the university one step closer to being a 'bike-friendly' campus.

"There is a master bike plan that was developed by a consulting firm working with the GVSU facilities planning department a couple years ago," said Lindsey DesArmo, who works for Human Resources and is heading up the application process to make GVSU a recognized 'bike-friendly' institution. "The bike repair stands...are partly a result of the recommendations from the report. A move in the right direction."

The bike repair shop will be an extension of the bike rental program instituted by Pew Campus Operations last year.

Bikes that had been abandoned on campus were gathered, repaired, painted "Laker Blue" and then rented out to students. The bikes are now being rented out all year, along with heavy-duty bike locks, GVSU bike permits and free use of the bike racks and the self-serve compressed air pumps at various locations on campus.

Currently, a broken-down rental bike can be taken to Laker Village South Community Center to be repaired or replaced with a loaner. Assistance is also available to students who have lost their lock keys, and the "Borrow a Bike Lock" program allows those with bikes to borrow a lock for 24 hours.

Rachel Harden of Pew Campus Operations, said loaner and repair services "apply to students who have rented a bike through GVSU," not students who own their own bicycles.

The proposed new repair shop for bike owners would be run by the students involved with the Cycling Club, which is also looking into possibly starting its own rental service that would be unaffiliated with the current GVSU bike rental program.

"We need the right people in place and then (we need to) provide them with a suitable venue and some start-up money," said Bart Bartels, campus sustainability manager. "GVSU has not yet applied to be a 'bike-friendly university,' but once a bike shop is built and additional paths are added, that designation would be a possibility."

As aforementioned, more bike trails would have to be added to the five walking and recreation trails already part of the Allendale Campus. These trails range in length from .97 miles to 3.1 miles and are spread out through the campus.

It is currently uncertain as to where the funds for the repair shop and additional trails will be coming from, a problem that could be the most difficult to overcome.

There are other factors, however, that may stand in the way of the bike repair shop becom-

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ing a reality.

Capt. Brandon DeHaan, assistant director of the Grand Valley Police Department, said there are 370 registered bikes total on campus. Since January of this year, there were 23 reported bike thefts, three of which have happened since the fall semester began.

In addition, there are between 50 and 100 bikes recovered by the university in a year, which the police department tries to return to their owners.

Being a bike-friendly campus may be difficult if bikes are unable to be kept safe, but DeHaan said the impact of the 'bike-friendly'

improvements are determined not by how many bikes are on campus, but by how the people riding them choose to behave. He said he strongly advocates registering all bikes on campus.

"We have a lot of bicycles on campus that are unregistered, and we need to get those bicycles registered," he said.

Meanwhile, as students are encouraged to do their part, GVSU will look closely at what it needs to do to become recognized as 'bike-friendly.'

"GVSU still has work to do before applying (for the bike-friendly designation)," DesArmo said, also

mentioning the possible installation of bike lanes and development of a bike coordinator position. "After reviewing and partially completing the application, there are many structural features that need to be in place for the university to have a better chance of being recognized as a bike-friendly university."

To register a personal bike on campus, visit www.gvsu.edu/gvpd/bike.htm.

For more information on how to rent a bike or bike lock, visit <http://www.gvsu.edu/bus/biking-main-57.htm>.

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