

Bikestation Rides Down Block To Home

By Kurt Helin
Editor

The Bikestation is going for a ride.

After nearly a decade, the Bikestation downtown is moving, but just across the Promenade, right behind the amphitheater. It's getting a new, larger space, allowing it to expand its mission.

"It's just a bit of a different setup than before," said Andrea White, the executive director of the Bikestation. "Before we had some indoor space and some outdoor space, now it's all indoor."

While the location has changed, the Bikestation's unique mission has not.

The Bikestation is a park-and-ride facility that encourages people to ride their bikes to work, or to take public transportation the rest of the way (the Bikestation is located right in the downtown transit mall). The idea is that someone living in Belmont Shore (or wherever) and working in downtown Los Angeles could ride their bicycle to downtown Long Beach, store their bike for free all day, then take the Blue Line up to Los Angeles.

It's working.

Of people using the Bikestation, about 30% are those who would have been commuting to downtown Long Beach or other destinations as the lone person in their cars. They would still be doing that if this option were not available, research has shown, White said.

In the new location, those commuters will have access to their bicycles 24 hours a day through an advanced entry system for members.

In addition to free bike storage, the Bikestation also offers bike rentals to locals and tourists, as well as doing repairs and having a snack shop. All of



OUT WITH THE OLD. This familiar facade for the Bikestation on the Promenade soon will be a thing of the past. —File photo

that will expand in the new space, White said.

One concern was that the Bikestation would be moving a little farther away from Pine Avenue with the new location, so an architect was brought in to deal with that, White said.

"The architecture has been developed in such a way as to draw attention to the building," White said. "We want to be visible to Pine, where most of the foot traffic is."

There will be plenty of attention Friday when the Bikestation officially opens its new facility with an event where speakers will include Transportation Director Michael Replogle of Environmental Defense of Washington, D.C., State Sen. Alan Lowenthal and Long Beach City Councilman Dan Baker (Second District).

The event starts at 9 a.m. at the new location, and is open to the public.