

Bostinno

How an Onsite Bike-Sharing System Changed a Boston Woman's Life

By Naomi Rutledge

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As the sun rises over the Charles, flooding the east facing windows of apartments at One Back Bay, resident Lindsey O'Neill does something she never quite thought would be part of her morning routine: she straps on her biking helmet, stretches and heads downstairs for a ride.

Lindsey, who's lived at One Back Bay for 3 years, is a busy professional who works as a yoga instructor, freelance writer and part-time caterer. Her work keeps her busy and on the move, particularly from one yoga studio to another. Between her occupation, obligations, and social activities, finding time for physical activity was becoming a bit of a challenge.

While the onsite health and fitness center at One Back Bay is incredibly convenient, it wasn't until Related partnered with bike sharing company Zagster to make bikes available on demand for tenants that Lindsey found that she could actually incorporate physical activity and her love for the outdoors into her lifestyle without sacrificing her other passions.

"I was thinking about getting a bike," she says. "but I wasn't sure if I would really ride it and whether or not I could justify the cost."

But the availability of the shiny new comfortable Zagster bikes, along with the Back Bay's notorious traffic and parking challenges gave her an idea. She wondered what it would be like to ride a bike to her various studios, **meetings**, social activities and just for pure exercise. With Zagster, it was a convenient and cost effective way to see if biking would work for her.

Her first trip with Zagster was along the Charles River, and over to Central Square to visit one of her favorite local cafes.

"It was so easy. I just tapped in a text on my phone, got the code to unlock the bike, and was on my way."

Unlike other city-wide bike sharing programs, Zagster's bikes come with their own locks, so riders can park wherever they like.

"I guess you could say that riding Zagster was all about building confidence – learning more about the city than I ever knew before, finding great places to explore, eat, and hang out with friends. I'm really enjoying the freedom that comes with knowing I can bike to just about anywhere I want to go."

Today, Lindsey is a fanatic about bike riding. She no longer uses Zagster as much as she once did – not because of Zagster but rather because she decided to purchase her own bike. And although she's not riding Zagster, of course, she takes advantage of One Back Bay's extensive bike parking facility.

When asked if she'd be riding her own bike without her experiences with Zagster, she says: "I doubt it. I had looked at other bike shares around the city, but they seemed a bit complicated and intimidating. But with Zagster downstairs and with its simple process, it was the perfect fit."

"Thanks to Related and Zagster, I'm healthier and happier, and have found the joy and confidence of biking in the city," she says. "It really is the perfect thing to have on-site for people like me."