

EXCLUSIVE: Bublr Bikes In Deep Financial Trouble
By Mark Belling, WISN-AM

Bublr Bikes, the non-profit organization that owns all those blue bicycles set up in bike racks in Milwaukee and some suburban communities, is in deep financial trouble and its continued operation is in jeopardy.

Milwaukee County and the City of Milwaukee invested in the bike racks the bikes are parked in but Bublr owns the bikes. Shorewood, a small community, for some reason spent \$500,000 for bike racks despite Bublr's lack of business experience. The service works by users paying modest fees to ride bikes and then park them. But use has crashed in the cold weather months after badly declining after electric scooter services started showing up.

While Bublr calls itself "non-profit," it has a paid staff whose employees have been paying themselves even as the operation's revenues have been shrinking. Bublr's bikes are praised for their safety but are very slow and many consider them to be so dorky that they don't want to ride them.

Milwaukee invested hundreds of thousands of dollars in setting up the bike racks even though Bublr owned the bikes. It's theoretically possible some other entity would step in to operate the service but it's hard to see why given the scant use of the bikes.

Bublr officials aren't answering my questions

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