



LimeBike is pushing westward to parts of Miami-Dade not used to getting attention from trendy national startups.

[KENDALL](#)

Why are these stray green bikes all over Kendall? And is anyone using them?

BY ROB WILE

rwile@miamiherald.com

May 01, 2018 03:17 PM

Updated May 02, 2018 11:20 AM

The green bikes starting popping up weeks ago, parked against bus stops, subdivision entrances and gas stations — and leaving Kendall and western Miami-Dade residents asking, "Huh"?

"I was actually pretty confused — I didn't know what was going on," said Tevin Skeete, 18, as he wheeled (on his personal bike) home from West Kendall to the South Miami Heights area. "I was like, 'Who just leaves two bikes out here, two lime green-and-yellow bikes?'"

The move was the latest expansion by California-based startup LimeBike. Already popular in other parts of Miami-Dade, the bikes are part of the company's push to bring the [national dockless bike-sharing trend](#) to a part of South Florida that often feels neglected. Using LimeBike's app, riders can take the two-wheelers as far as they need to go for the price of \$1 for every 30 minutes.

Citi Bike pioneered bike-sharing in Miami Beach in 2011 (when it was known as DecoBike); its signature blue bikes are now offered on the mainland, too. Last year, China-based ofo began [offering](#) its yellow dockless bikes in South Miami, while Spin brought its orange cycles to Doral and Miami Lakes. LimeBike appears to be the most aggressive in pushing west

On a recent warm Monday night, just one biker was seen spotted using a LimeBike in the area around Kendall Indian Hammocks Park; other bikers like Skeete were using their own. LimeBike declined to specify exactly how many bikes it has rolled out to western Dade, but the LimeBike app shows about 200 dotting the area from Dadeland Mall north to Southwest Eighth Street and south to Southwest 184th Street. The bikes are stationed as far west as Florida International University, home to about 100 shared LimeBikes.

LimeBike first entered the Miami market last June when it landed in Key Biscayne. The bikes can now be found from Wynwood to North Miami. There have been about 100,000 rides taken so far, the company says.

But Gauthier Derrien, LimeBike's regional general manager for Florida, said Miami is still a bit of an experiment. When it comes to adopting something like dockless bikes, Miami is special.

"Miami is very much a unique market," he said. "There are a ton of challenges inherent to operating here."

Among the biggest: The county simply wasn't designed for bikes. That's especially true of unincorporated west Kendall.

There, Francis Vega leads a [popular](#) evening bike ride around the area every Thursday. His long-term goal: to get local officials to increase infrastructure for the area's swelling population. That includes bike lanes.

"I'll be perfectly frank: bike riding in west Kendall — that's scary," he said. "We're basically there to teach them how to ride safely and not get hit by cars."

Vega has been running the [Two Wheel Picker Bicycle Shop](#) in Kendall for five years. He says he welcomes the LimeBike rollout. One customer has already bought his own bike after realizing he was spending so much on the rentals, Vega said.

Still, cases like that are outweighed by customers coming in to ask: "What's the deal with the screaming green bikes?"

"I had to explain to some older people what they are," Vega said. "They were asking, 'How are they not being stolen?' " (The bikes contain GPS tracking devices and electronic locks, and their parts can't be used on other bikes.)

There have been some complaints about bikes being left haphazardly in and around churches, schools, and parks in the area, according to Marie Holborow, a spokesperson for County Commissioner Joe Martinez, who represents the area. LimeBike did not immediately respond to a request for comment about the complaints.

Vega said while most locals still seem bemused, he thinks it's only a matter of time before use takes off. West Kendall is home to many people in their 20s who may not have access to any kind of transportation, let alone a basic two-wheeler.

LimeBike's West Dade rollout comes as the company introduces the first electric razor-style scooters in Miami, [making them available](#) in the hip and increasingly tourist-friendly Wynwood neighborhood.

"Miami has so much room to grow from infrastructure perspective," said LimeBike's Derrien. "It's undeniable that the population is going to explode. The question is. how are all these people going to move around."

