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## ► Real Estate

### Bike racks could be headed to Bricktown

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OKLAHOMA CITY – Without bike racks it's hard to get people to leave their cars at home and opt to pedal when they come to Bricktown.

That was the dilemma Urban Neighbors decided to address in what has become a pet project for the group of downtown residents who say that bike racks will encourage more people to move about downtown on bikes and stop for dinner or see the sights in Bricktown.

The group plans to address the Bricktown Urban Design Committee on Wednesday with a proposal for a revocable permit to install 30 to 40 bike racks around Bricktown. The racks would be east of E.K. Gaylord Avenue and extend north of Bricktown to Northwest 10th Street.

Funding is already secured for the racks, which will cost about \$200 each, and the estimated \$600 for yearly maintenance of the racks will be picked up by the Downtown Business Improvement District.

John Calhoun, with the city Planning Department, said things in the right of way have to have a revocable permit, and in Bricktown those items have to be reviewed for comment by the Urban Design Committee.

Mark Gibbs, secretary of Urban Neighbors, has led the bike rack initiative for his benefit and that of others.

"I'm a cyclist," he said. "Although this bike rack project has already been around, I kind of picked it up and ran with it, but it's still a work in progress."

Urban Neighbors has partnered with Downtown OKC Inc. for the project and received a \$20,000 grant from the City of Oklahoma City Neighborhood Partnership Program. Additional matching funds are coming from donations of money and volunteer time from Urban Neighbors members and downtown businesses.

If approved, the group plans to install the racks themselves.

Jim Cowan, executive director of the Bricktown Association, said he hopes the proposed bike racks will encourage Bricktown merchants to also put up bike racks on their property.

"I think everybody loves it," Cowan said. "The biggest thing we need to do is help them get those going and we hope that will also help stimulate other businesses to put up bike racks as well."

Cowan said he has received positive feedback from numerous Bricktown entities on the idea of bringing more people to Bricktown on bikes.

"What this does is embrace those people that live within biking distance of Bricktown," he said.

People do come to the district on bikes now, but have to share one or two existing racks, or chain their bikes up wherever they find space.

"People now are chaining their bikes to whatever they can," Cowan said.

The Urban Neighbors plan calls for black steel inverted-U and loop supports to hold two bikes each. Each site will have one to eight racks, depending on available space.

Additional approval will need to be obtained from property owners, utilities and the city.

But Gibbs isn't worried about opposition to the project, based on positive feedback so far.

"We're all about being good neighbors and we've received a tremendous amount of support," he said.

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