



**For immediate release**

**June 25, 2020**

**Kankakee County** – Bike 609 would have been celebrating its’ two-year anniversary next week but soon, bikes and empty bike racks will be collected and returned to a Virginia-based leasing agent as part of the dissolution of bike share vendor, Zagster.

Partners from across the region came together to provide both residents and visitors an opportunity to explore Kankakee County on two wheels. Using an app, riders could rent one of 50 bikes at any of the programs’ 11 locations. Bike 609 generated close to 3,500 trips from its’ 1,500 members.

Dubbed the second-largest bike share program in Chicagoland in 2019, second only to Divvy, program coordinator Staci Wilken, Executive Director of the Kankakee County Convention & Visitors Bureau, was notified on May 27, 2020, by Zagster of an anticipatory breach of contract.

In an email from Zagster, it was noted that “the effects of COVID-19 on our communities has been tragic. Sadly, the pandemic has also impacted Zagster’s business, and it is with heavy hearts that we must inform you that Zagster will no longer be providing bike share services in your community. This was a difficult decision but a necessary one, for which we are truly sorry.”

Wilken isn’t convinced that bike share in Kankakee County is over. “The termination of the program is not a reflection of the ridership or the ability of our region to sustain a 50-bike fleet. There are several worthy vendor candidates to consider once we turn the page from 2020 and I am hopeful that in the future our sponsors, and our riders, will consider hopping back in the saddle.” Wilken stressed the importance of advocating for micromobility and sustainable transport options on a regional level.

Thank you to program sponsors: Village of Bourbonnais, Bourbonnais Township Park District, Village of Bradley, City of Kankakee together with Kankakee Development Corporation and Kankakee Public Library, Kankakee Community College, Kankakee County Convention & Visitors Bureau, Village of Manteno, AMITA Health St. Mary’s Hospital and Riverside Healthcare; to location partners: Kankakee River State Park, Kankakee Valley Park District, Municipal Bank, Northfield Square Mall, Olivet Nazarene University, and the YMCA; to Tern of the Wheel for your boots on the ground support; and to all of Kankakee County, for your support of Bike 609.

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*About Kankakee County Convention & Visitors Bureau: Visit Kankakee County works to market and sell Kankakee County as a premier business and leisure destination enhancing our community image through digital media, advertising, marketing, public relations and group sales.*

*To request more information, please contact [info@kccvb.com](mailto:info@kccvb.com).*