



October 30, 2013 – re Bixi bike sharing strategy

Dear Mayor Ford & Executive

I am here today to encourage you to recognize the Bixi program as part of Toronto's transportation strategy, and give your support to see it grow.

I started AutoShare over 15 years ago to give people an alternative to owning a car in Toronto. We brought this smart, money, traffic and pollution-saving idea to our city just as the boom in "downtown living" arrived, and *our success* brought several international competitors. Today as many as 40,000 Torontonians share over 1,100 cars in Toronto instead of owning. The City lets new condos build less parking if they have carsharing onsite, and is expanding onstreet parking availability. AutoShare even provides City of Toronto employees and departments service, saving them time and money.

As we like to say, the car of the future will be shared.

But just as important to a city as having access to modern, shared vehicle services is having access to shared bikes.

I don't own a personal car, but have access to 300 cars through AutoShare at a pretty good rate – and I do own 3 bikes. But I use BIXI all the time, especially in winter when I put my own bikes in storage. I primarily replace taxi & transit trips downtown, because BIXI is faster & cheaper.

Bike sharing – BIXI – is transit. This month studies on bike sharing across North America, including Toronto, have shown that outside the downtown core a BIXI system produces more transit usage. That means that in Scarborough, North York & Etobicoke it will support subways. It replaces the bus option. It's faster, more reliable and is proven to increase transit use. People will BIXI + transit more, reducing traffic congestion.

Curiously, BIXI actually reduces transit-use in the downtown core – which is good, because our system is actually 'congested' downtown. BIXI is an inexpensive way to make the streetcars and subways move faster.

As you consider what to do with our own BIXI system, I understand the need to have it be financial sustainable. But I urge you to consider BIXI in its larger transportation context. It does need a proper management structure & viable business plan. But the benefits to the City are real, and we should not be afraid to invest in great new ideas if they deliver service – in this case, transit – in a better way.

Thank you.



Kevin McLaughlin

President

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1h

@gabe_klein Any words for a City Council (Toronto) that is voting on whether to keep or kill their bike share today?

Details



gabe klein

@gabe_klein

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@AutoShare will be huge transpo success like other large cities if scale of BS matches city pop. Otherwise it is for tourists w/ lim utility

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Gabe Klein
Commissioner
Chicago Dept. of Transportation
October 30, 2013