

TORONTO TRANSIT COMMISSION REPORT NO.

MEETING DATE: August 23, 2010

SUBJECT: BICYCLE SHARING SYSTEM

INFORMATION ITEM

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Commission receive this report for information.

FUNDING

Funding for the production of transit and bicycle sharing promotional materials will be included in the 2011 TTC Operating Budget.

BACKGROUND

A public bicycle sharing system provides affordable access for short term use of bicycles, with the benefits of a bicycle without having to own one. For a nominal fee, users can take a bicycle from one location and drop it off at another location nearest their destination, and then pick up another bicycle to return or continue their trip.

Bicycle sharing systems have been popular in Europe for many years and several North American cities have recently expressed an interest in or are in the process of developing similar programs. They are seen as useful in urban environments to reduce the use of cars for short trips in the city, diminishing traffic congestion, noise and air-pollution.

DISCUSSION

BIXI, a contraction of the words "bicycle" and "taxi" is the name of Montreal's public bicycle sharing system. It was launched in May 2009 as part of Montreal's transportation plan and is run by their Parking Authority. Within its first year, more than 1.1 million BIXI trips were taken on 3,000 bicycles at 300 centrally located stations.

BIXI is a complement to the public transit system, Société de Transport de Montréal (STM), as an alternative to the car for residents and tourists in the city. STM has partnered with BIXI to actively promote new ways for people to be mobile by combining public transit with BIXI in various promotional offers.

Since Montreal's success, London, UK, Melbourne, Australia, and U.S. cities such as Boston, Minneapolis, and Washington, D.C. have adopted the BIXI bicycle sharing system. BIXI Toronto is planned to launch in May 2011 with 1,000 bicycles at 80 bicycle parking stations in the downtown area, that's also well served by frequent subway and streetcar service.

Staff will explore promotional opportunities similar to those used in Montreal to support BIXI Toronto's launch and create additional awareness that BIXI complements public transit as a green alternate means of urban transportation.

JUSTIFICATION

BIXI Toronto will provide a bicycle sharing system as an alternative to the car for residents and tourists in the city. TTC marketing programs will be developed to promote BIXI as part of intermodal transportation, allowing users to easily shift from transit to bicycle and back again.

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