

BIXI BRINGS URBAN BIKE-SHARING TO NORTH AMERICA



MOBILITY & TRANSPORT

Urban bike-sharing is coming to North America in the form of [Bixi](#), the new high-tech public bike system developed for the city of Montreal. Bixi follows the standard bike sharing principles: users take a bike from a stand, ride it to where they want to go, and drop it at another stand when they're done. To make the concept even more attractive to users, bikes will be equipped with RFID tags so that users can track availability online; real-time information is beamed to the web from the system's solar-powered bike stands. Users will pay a membership fee of CDN 78 for one year, CDN 24 for one month or CDN 5 for one day. The first half hour of every trip is free, rising to CDN 12 per hour for extended periods of use. The aim is to encourage short trips, and fees compare favorably with the price of a monthly bus pass (CDN 66.25). One reason for the system's low cost is the long-lasting bikes, which were designed by Michel Dallaire and are expected to provide 75,000-100,000 km of travel. Bixi's full launch is scheduled for April 2009, when 3,000 bikes will be installed in 300 locations across the city. Taking Montreal's fierce winters into account, Bixi will operate from April to November. If it all goes according to plan, the city will end up with a financially independent yet affordable scheme that will keep its residents fit and safe and its environment clean and open.

(Related: [City bike schemes](#) — [Bank-sponsored bike sharing](#).) Spotted by: Roberta Steinberg

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