



CITY OF HAMILTON
CITY MANAGER'S OFFICE
Human Resources
and
PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT
Corporate Assets & Strategic Planning

TO:	Chair and Members Audit, Finance and Administration Committee
COMMITTEE DATE:	May 9, 2016
SUBJECT/REPORT NO:	SoBi Hamilton Bike Share Employee Discount Pilot Project (HUR16008/PW16031) (City Wide)
WARD(S) AFFECTED:	City Wide
PREPARED BY:	Dave Lindeman (905) 546-2424 Ext. 5657 Peter Topalovic (905) 546-2424 Ext. 5129 Miri Freimanis (905) 546-2424 Ext. 7141
SUBMITTED BY:	Lora Fontana, Associate Executive Director, Human Resources and Organizational Development John Mater, C.E.T. Acting General Manager Public Works Department
SIGNATURE:	

RECOMMENDATION

That the Audit, Finance & Administration Committee approve the discounted SoBi Hamilton Bike Share memberships for City of Hamilton employees for up to 2 years, as a pilot, to maximum of 500 memberships through a subsidy provided jointly by Human Resources and Public Works.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Human Resources and Public Works are jointly proposing a pilot program that will offer discounted SoBi Hamilton Bike Share memberships to City of Hamilton employees for up to 2 years, with a maximum of 500 memberships. The discount will be applied to membership fees only. Employees will be responsible for any additional trip charges not covered by the membership unless costs are directly related to work-related travel. This proposal originated from ongoing inquiries from staff last year regarding the possibility of financial assistance to access SoBi bikes for work and personal transportation. The

program would also encourage employees to partake in activities like cycling that improve mental, physical and social well-being that are essential to having healthy and engaged employees at work and in our community.

Pilot Details

The proposed pilot subsidy will divide the \$75/year SoBi membership fee as follows:

- \$37.50 paid by employee
- \$37.50 paid jointly by Corporate Wellness budget (Human Resources) and Transportation Management TDM Project ID 4031655820 (Public Works); approximately \$18,750.00 total (\$9,375.00 for each budget)

Bike share has quickly become an important part of the daily commute in the area it serves. Its popularity may help explain why City of Hamilton staff have been making numerous inquiries as to whether any incentives exist to use the system. We also want to encourage others to consider using cycling as a transportation and commuting option.

A Discounted Bike Share Pass program would complement the current Discounted Transit Pass (DTP) program and provide a similar incentive to use bike share. Employees who use bike share and transit to commute to work help reduce congestion during rush hours and reduce the need to provide parking. In addition, staff can use bike share for short trips to meetings during the work day, reducing the need to use fleet cars or their own vehicles, and thereby reducing fleet ownership costs and employee mileage costs

The pilot program will be evaluated to determine if an ongoing program is recommended based on usage, user feedback and financial implications.

Alternatives for Consideration –Not Applicable

FINANCIAL – STAFFING – LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Financial:

The Corporate Wellness and Transportation Management TDM Project ID 4031655820 (Public Works) budgets will share the approximately \$18,750.00 total (\$9,375.00 for each budget).

The employer's contribution to the discounted membership would be considered a taxable benefit and reported on the employee's T4.

Staffing:

n/a – SoBi Hamilton administers the discounted bike share pass and invoices the City

Legal:

All users who purchase memberships from SoBi Hamilton sign an electronic legal waiver for the use of the system. The City and SoBi will encourage safe cycling and proper helmet use along with obeying the rules of the road pertaining to a bike.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

SoBi Hamilton Bike Details

The current Hamilton Bike Share System, operated by SoBi Hamilton, has over 115 stations (or hubs) and 750 bikes available for use in the 45 square kilometre system area (which can be viewed at: <https://hamilton.socialbicycles.com/#map>). As of March 1, 2015, the system has over 7,500 active members and has seen a total of 9,300 people use the service since launching on March 20th, 2015. These members have taken over 220,000 trips and travelled a total of 450,000 kilometres (over 9 times the circumference of the earth).

There have been numerous news articles in Hamilton, Toronto, Vancouver and Calgary which speak to the success of the program and the innovative “smart bike” technology of the Hamilton Bike Share System. Through emails, phone calls and social media, current bike share members confirm these stories with real world feedback on how the system has worked for them and improved their lives. Others have provided valuable feedback on how to make improvements to the system.

The Hamilton Bike Share System was designed to improve the “first and last mile” connection to transit and develop a multi-modal transportation system in the City. Bike share itself is a form of on-demand transit which allows residents to make one way trips to the places they need to go. The results of the first year of operations indicate that the most popular use of the system is for the commute to and from work, either directly by bike or by bike and transit. Other uses include running errands, leisure and exercise trips.

Bike share has quickly become an important part of the daily commute in the area it serves. Its popularity may help explain why City of Hamilton staff have been making numerous inquiries as to whether any incentives exist to use the system. We also want to encourage others to consider using cycling as a transportation and commuting option. A Discounted Bike Share Pass program would complement the current Discounted Transit Pass (DTP) program and provide a similar incentive to use bike share, as the DTP does for transit. Employees who use bike share and transit to commute to work help reduce congestion during rush hours and reduce the need to provide parking. In addition, staff can also use bike share for short trips to meetings during the work day, reducing the need to use fleet cars or their own vehicles.

Pilot Details

Presently, the yearly membership fee is \$85/year. SoBi Hamilton will provide a corporate discount of \$75/year for City of Hamilton employees.

Pilot subsidy proposed will divide the \$75/year SoBi membership fee as follows:

- \$37.50 paid by employee
- \$37.50 paid jointly by Corporate Wellness budget (Human Resources) and Transportation Management TDM Project ID 4031655820 (Public Works); approximately \$18,750.00 total (\$9,375.00 for each budget)
- 500 memberships available over 2 year period starting June 2016
- This membership includes the following:
 - 1 free hour of ride time per day
 - each additional hour is \$4/hr, pro-rated to the minute
 - out of hub locking fee of \$1
 - credit of 15 minutes of ride time every time a bike is moved from an out of hub location to a hub
- Employees will be responsible for any additional fees that may occur from additional use outside the parameters of this membership or misuse, for example, locking a bike outside of the service area
- A survey will be included for the employees who take advantage of the subsidized membership fee. The questions will include the following:
 - Do you currently have paid parking?
 - What mode(s) of transportation do you take to work?
 - What mode(s) of transportation do you use during the work day?
 - Do you currently have a transit pass?
 - Do you participate in the car share program?
 - Are you already a SoBi Hamilton bike share user?
- In addition to this pilot program, it has been identified that some employees who must drive for work may wish to make use of bike share for work purposes, such as travel to meetings. In this case, the employee would not require an annual pass, but would benefit from a pay-as-you go pass. It is recommended that as part of the pilot, employees who have pay-as-you-go passes would be able to expense work bike share trips, just as they do automobile trips. If they wish to expense the trips, they can obtain a print out of trips from the SoBi Hamilton website and highlight the work trips they are expensing.

The Discounted Bike Share Pass program further complements the Discounted Transit Pass program by helping to meet the objectives of the Transportation Master Plan including: improving air quality, promoting sustainable transportation options and reducing traffic congestion in Hamilton. The program puts the City in a leadership role among local employers for its efforts to assist employees in shifting to more sustainable and healthy modes of travel.

Physical and Mental Health

The link between mental health and physical health is well established. The provision of a discounted membership to encourage healthy transportation options supports the improvement of both physical and mental health – an opportunity to assist employees to improve their overall health. A healthier employee is more engaged in work.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS AND LEGISLATED REQUIREMENTS

Not applicable

RELEVANT CONSULTATION

- City Manager’s Office
- Human Resources – Health, Safety, Wellness
- Public Works
 - General Manager, Public Works
 - Transportation Management Staff
- SoBi bike share program

ANALYSIS AND RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATION

The current Hamilton Bike Share System, operated by SoBi Hamilton, has over 115 stations (or hubs) and 750 bikes available for use in the 38 square kilometre system area (which can be viewed at: <https://hamilton.socialbicycles.com/#map>). As of March 1, 2016, the system has over 7,500 active members and has seen a total of 9,300 people use the service since launching on March 20th, 2015. These members have taken over 220,000 trips and travelled a total of 450,000 kilometres (over 9 times the circumference of the earth).

Data evaluation will include: a pre-use survey that each employee will have to fill out before using the program, a follow-up survey after one year of use, aggregated usage data for all City employees (no individuals will be identified) including: number of trips, average trip length, most popular routes to work.

ALTERNATIVES FOR CONSIDERATION

Not Applicable

ALIGNMENT TO THE 2012 – 2015 STRATEGIC PLAN

Strategic Priority #1

A Prosperous & Healthy Community

WE enhance our image, economy and well-being by demonstrating that Hamilton is a great place to live, work, play and learn.

Strategic Objective

- 1.3 Promote economic opportunities with a focus on Hamilton's downtown core, all downtown areas and waterfronts.
- 1.4 Improve the City's transportation system to support multi-modal mobility and encourage inter-regional connections.
- 1.5 Support the development and implementation of neighbourhood and City wide strategies that will improve the health and well-being of residents.
- 1.6 Enhance Overall Sustainability (financial, economic, social and environmental).

APPENDICES AND SCHEDULES ATTACHED

Not applicable