

French electric car share program sets sights on Indy

June 10 2013, by Mira Oberman



An electric Autolib' bluecar is presented during a press conference in Paris on November 29, 2012. The French electric car share program has set its sights on the home of one of the top US race car events: Indianapolis.

A French electric car share program has set its sights on the home of one of the top US race car events: Indianapolis.

Bolloré, which already runs a successful car share program in Paris,

plans to bring 500 electric vehicles and 1,200 charging stations to the home of the Indy 500 early next year.

The \$35 million project is Bolllore's first car share venture outside of France and the first step in a plan to establish similar programs in a number of US cities.

"The success of the Autolib' in Paris—based on convenience, reliability and availability—has exceeded our expectations and realized our goal of transforming habits of car ownership, reducing pollution and relieving [traffic congestion](#)," chairman Vincent Bolllore said in a statement.

The Indianapolis project will fill a pressing need for better public transportation in a sprawling midwestern city which—unlike urban hubs like New York, Chicago and San Francisco—does not already have a car sharing program and has a limited transit system.

"This program provides a great opportunity for downtown workers, residents and visitors to get around town in a car without owning one," Indianapolis mayor Greg Ballard said.

Bolllore, a shipping giant which also develops [electric batteries](#) and 'smart' electrical systems, said it was drawn to Indianapolis after Ballard announced plans last year to shift the entire city fleet to [electric vehicles](#).

"That told us, ah there is something there—we have to go talk to Mayor Ballard," said Herve Muller, general manager for Bolllore subsidiary IER, which is managing the program.

Aside from the strong political commitment, Indianapolis also offers a "very dynamic business community" and a large student population which could make use of car sharing, Muller told AFP.

Unlike many mid-sized US cities, it also has a vibrant downtown core populated by young professionals who might be willing to give up their cars if a good alternative was offered, he said.

The charging stations will be available to private electric vehicle owners, which will help Indianapolis to be one of the most electrified cities in the United States.

Bollore has been in contact with a number of other large and mid-sized US cities, and Muller said every one of them expressed interest in establishing an electric car-sharing program.

"The question is how do you translate that interest into a real project," Muller said.

The as-yet-unnamed program will be based on short one-way rentals and the cars will be outfitted with a GPS that allows users to reserve a parking spot with a charging station near their destination.

It will be available to both individuals and to government and corporate users wishing to reduce the size of their vehicle fleets.

© 2013 AFP

Citation: French electric car share program sets sights on Indy (2013, June 10) retrieved 23 April 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2013-06-french-electric-car-sights-indy.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.