

HAMILTON

BIKE SHARE

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

REPORT

FEBRUARY 14 - MARCH 7 2014



# OVERALL

3000 PEOPLE ENGAGED

500 PEOPLE VOTED

Through our intensive public engagement strategy, a total of 3000 people were engaged and 500 of them voted on and proposed bike share hub locations.

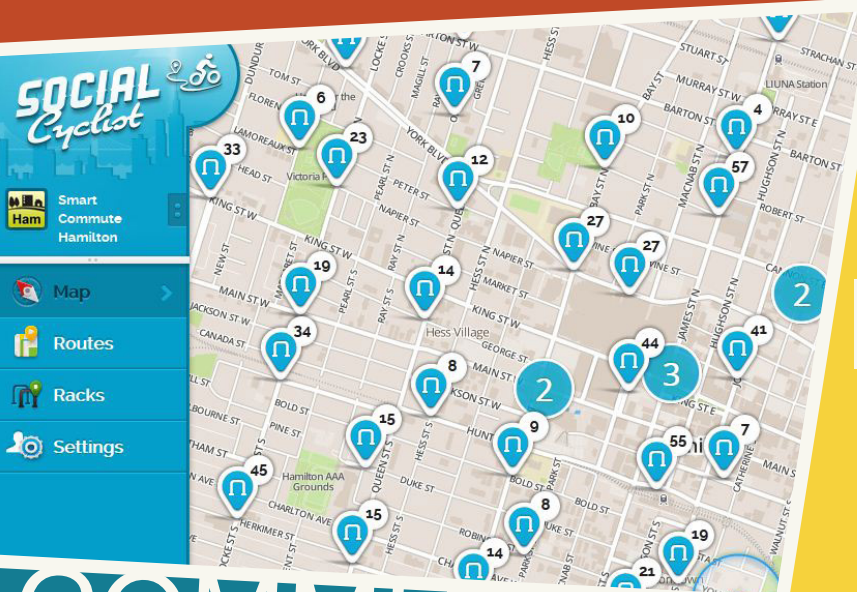


## SOCIAL CYCLIST ONLINE APP

759 UNIQUE VISITS

1945 VOTES PLACED

The Social Cyclist app was used to accumulate 1945 location votes and suggestions from 275 citizens in the Hamilton area. The app also received 759 unique visits throughout the engagement period



# COMMUNITY

11 MAP LOCATIONS

301 STICKERS PLACED

There were 11 maps strategically placed within the city to ensure that a wide range of demographics were exposed to the plan and could give their input. These maps received 301 votes and proposals for hub locations by an average of 150 people.





# PHASE 1

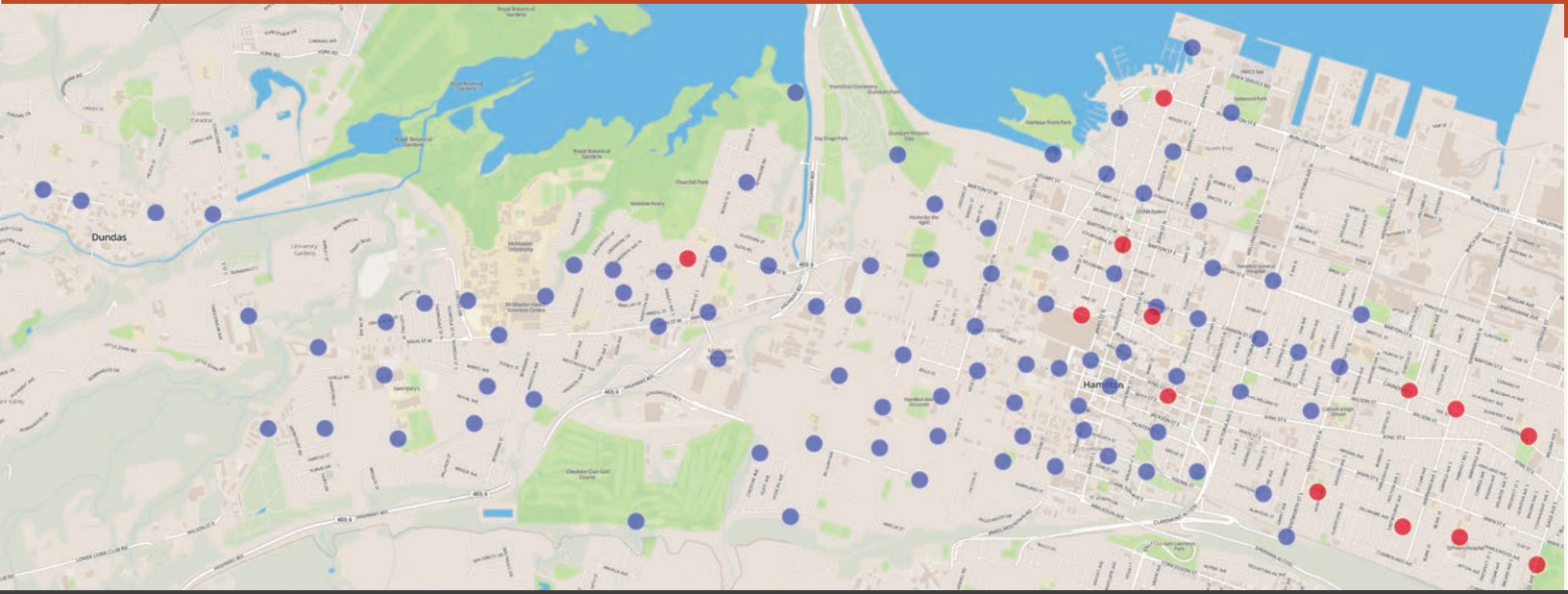


FIGURE 1. Map of all finalized hub locations. The locations in red are new as a result of public input. See Appendix E for maps that show the progression of hub locations for this public engagement period.

## INTRODUCTION

It was recognised that the key to launching an effective bike share program in the City of Hamilton is to ensure that the location of bicycle hubs will serve local needs. Therefore, to effectively implement Hamilton Bike Share, SoBi Hamilton and the City of Hamilton have been committed to a coordinated public engagement program using multiple platforms and events. Through this public consultation process, the location and scale of hubs throughout the system have been analyzed and received input.

This process has been integrated with other planning elements to create the most desirable, effective implementation possible, and set the program up for success. The red icons in Figure 1 show the new hubs directly resulting from this public engagement and account for over 10% of the total. What this figure does not show are the many original hubs which were affirmed to be properly placed by the public who voted and submitted positive comments. The tools reflecting this public approval will be discussed in detail within the subsequent sections of this report.







This report aims to summarize the methods of engagement and, where possible, provide measurements used to finalize bike share hub locations and obtain residents' feedback. This approach identifies the tool, gives a brief explanation of its use, and describes its benefits. By considering all of these tools, techniques, and communications, the public engagement process can be viewed as both effective and relevant.

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“Bike share is the fastest growing transportation mode in the world, complementing existing public transit and providing first and last mile connectivity by filling in transit gaps. It’s a healthy, sustainable, and affordable form of public transportation”

- Peter Topalovic





# SOCIAL CYCLIST

my.socialcyclist.com  
Phone Application

This digital engagement-based platform was developed by Social Bicycles to aid in launching their various bike share programs worldwide. It has been a keystone to their digital public engagement strategy and is shown in Figure 2 as hub suggestion view.

This program gives users the opportunity to vote in support of bike share locations, as well as suggest new hub locations. The platform also provides a forum for users to discuss other opinions and concerns.

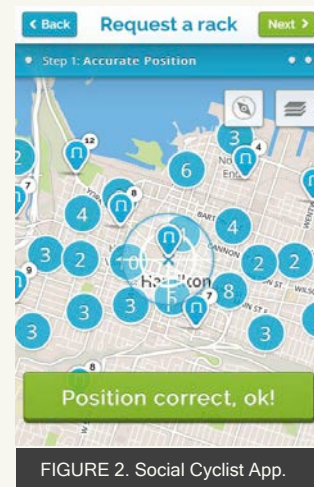


FIGURE 2. Social Cyclist App.

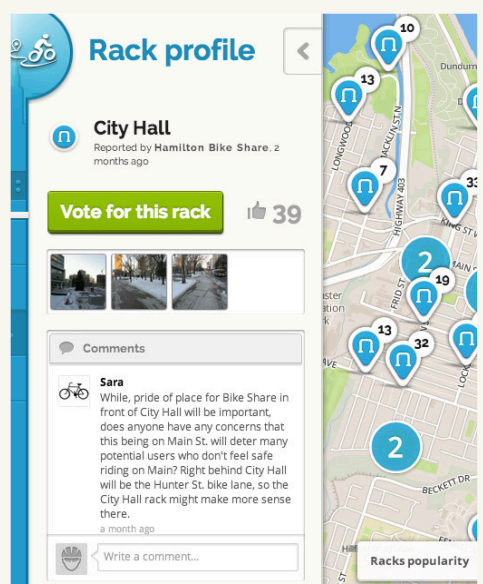


FIGURE 3. Comments section of Social Cyclist.

759  
275  
1945

UNIQUE VISITORS  
USERS VOTED  
VOTES PLACED  
DURING ENGAGEMENT PERIOD

## CONVERSATION

Social Cyclist gives a unique opportunity for users to submit comments on locations and converse with other users on the program. This aspect engages users in a dialogue allowing for both quantitative and qualitative analysis of the locations and system design. Figure 3 contains an example discussion with more examples available in Appendix A.

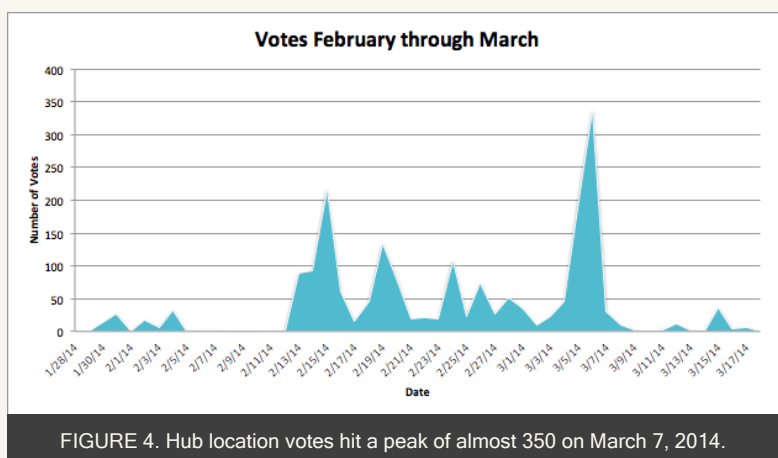


FIGURE 4. Hub location votes hit a peak of almost 350 on March 7, 2014.

## DISCUSSION

Upon commencing our public engagement period, users were promptly encouraged to place their votes and suggestions on the web and app platforms. As seen in FIGURE 4, to kick off the voting period, hub locations hit a peak on February 15th at just over 200. Votes again hit a peak of almost 350 on the last day of the engagement period, March 7th. Though the window has now closed for voting, engagement will continue for years to come as users interact with this bike share system.



### Get Social!

The City of Hamilton is getting a bicycle sharing system, and as part of our public engagement plan, we need your input!

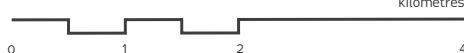
- Vote on current hub locations by placing a green sticker
- Propose a new hub location by placing a yellow sticker
- Use the tabs to write short comments.

Social Bicycles is implementing a 750 bicycle system in the City of Hamilton by the summer of 2014. We are currently in the pre-launch stage of the project and would like your input for hub locations within phase one. Let's get a conversation going with this map, these stickers, and your community.

For the digital platform of this map, **Social Cyclist** is a mobile application available on the Apple Store and Google Play, or online at [my.socialcyclist.com](http://my.socialcyclist.com), where input will also be gathered until March 31st. Alternatively, drop us a line at [info@hamiltonbikeshare.ca](mailto:info@hamiltonbikeshare.ca) or 905-546-2424 Ext. 2553.

#### STICKERS

proposed hub locations



# 150 1000

## PEOPLE PLACED STICKERS

## CITIZENS ENGAGED

## PRINTED MAP

Physical maps with attached sticker sheets prompted the public to vote for locations or suggest new locations for Bike Share hubs. The image above is the map that was printed and placed at strategic locations around the city.

## LOCATION

## # DAYS

City Hall	14
Bike Hounds	>14
Café Domestique	7-14
Upwind Downwind Conf.	1
Farmer's Market	7
Bennetto Rec Centre	7-14
Volunteer Hamilton	7-14
Freeway Coffee House	7-14
Bike Locke	>14
Mohawk College	>14
Mohawk Sustainapalooza	1
McMaster University	1

## DISCUSSION

The use of these physical maps became a launching point for conversation in the communities. Several locations requested a map as a method to both provide feedback and show support for the Bike Share project.

Being high traffic areas, these locations had the opportunity to expose hundreds of Hamilton residents to the bike share program and create awareness through its visual prominence.

# TWITTER

The Twitter social media platform has been expanding dramatically in recent years, and played a key role in developing a comprehensive communications and engagement strategy for Hamilton Bike Share. Messages from several influential accounts in the region each coordinated re-tweets that broadened the audience. The network design of Twitter relationships allows the audience to be constantly expanding with every post. During our engagement period, thousands of users were reached with valuable and up-to-date information about the program and campaign while having an opportunity to provide comments and suggestions through the platform.

287  
76

TWEETS and  
RETWEETS

FAVOURITED  
TWEETS

DURING ENGAGEMENT PERIOD

## SAMPLE POST

**SoBi Bike Share** @socialbicycles · Mar 6  
 Today is your last day to send in station suggestions to @HamOntBikeShare via @SocialCyclist. Make your voice heard! [cbc.ca/news/canada/ha...](http://cbc.ca/news/canada/ha...)  
[View summary](#) [Reply](#) [Retweet](#) [Favorite](#) [More](#)

 **Jen** [redacted] · Mar 6  
 @socialbicycles @HamOntBikeShare @SocialCyclist Somewhere in Westdale, near Bayfront park, near McMaster, Gore park, the library, Locke  
[Expand](#) [Reply](#) [Retweet](#) [Favorite](#) [More](#)

LOCATION	FOLLOWERS	TWEETS / RETWEETS	MESSAGE
@SocialBicycles	1,348	25	Information messages about bike share and message re-tweets
@CityofHamilton	8,166	197	
@SmartCommuteHamilton	1,273	9	
@SobiHamilton	228	41	Bike share conversations with other users
@SocialCyclist	184	0	

## DISCUSSION

While the use of twitter is a strong platform for informing the population, it also provided the opportunity for the public to give feedback, repost the information to their followers, and reach a wide range of invested individuals. Many users were able to provide their own opinions in re-posts which engaged their followers in a specialized way.

City of Hamilton, Smart Commute Hamilton, and Sobi Hamilton all have a strong local reach for relaying details about the program, whereas Social Bicycles and Social Cyclist have followers from all around the world who thus received news about Hamilton and its newest transportation venture.



# FACEBOOK

A Facebook page provides a good platform for engaging people in projects and programs while linking them to other key information. The bike share was posted directly to four Facebook pages: Hamilton Bike Share, Social Bicycles, Smart commute Hamilton and Open Streets. These are branded webpages that have campaigns and media of various forms and additionally carried content about Bike Share hub locations.

PAGE	LIKES	RELATED POSTS	USER INTERACTIONS
Hamilton Bike Share	68	2	2
Social Bicycles	3,169	3	40
Smart Commute Hamilton	403	3	105
Open Streets	1,659	2	648

Shared or Liked Post

Saw Post

## DISCUSSION

With support from the Smart Commute and Open Streets Facebook pages, the opportunity to reach an established viewership was already present. Social Bicycles also has an established viewership that reaches thousands of viewers worldwide.



**sobi**  
SOCIALBICYCLES

**Social Bicycles**  
3,179 likes · 85 talking about this

photo

Like Follow Message

**Product/Service**  
Social Bicycles is the next generation of bike share technology. We combine recent advances in wireless technology with the freedom bike sharing provides.

About - Suggest an Edit

Photos Likes Videos

## EMAIL MESSAGES

info@hamiltonbikeshare.ca

This e-mail account was established and monitored by Social Bicycles. People were directed to contact this account with comments about the bike share and hub locations. The data for this analysis was extracted from between the dates of Feb 14, 2014 and March 6, 2014.

# 19 E-MAIL REPLIES

See Appendix D for sample e-mails.

### Email Subjects Included:

- Need for more bike infrastructure
- Public and private costs
- Various location inquiries



The relatively low number of comments and suggested points received by e-mail is likely related to the ease and accessibility of the digital app. The comments received to the e-mail were positive in tone and the vast majority were related to locations for potential hubs to make the program a success.

## PHONE CALLS

905-574-2424 x 2553

This phone number was monitored by the TDM co-op student at the City of Hamilton. People were directed to contact this number with comments about the bike share and station location.

## DISCUSSION

This phone number was the least used of all engagement channels. Those who called made inquiries as to where hubs were being placed.





## COMMITTEES

### Bike Share Committee

**30** engaged committee members were in attendance at one of our many Hamilton Bike Share Adhoc Committee Meeting held on February 12, 2014. Many of the attendees have all been previously involved with bike share research or cycling issues in Hamilton and shared the common passion of seeing this bike share program succeed in their city.

The group was first given a brief overview of bike share's evolution worldwide as well as within Hamilton. Following was an in-depth discussion of key issues including program logistics, the public engagement strategy, and ways to best process feedback concerning hub locations. This committee created a launching pad for future engagement and brought many insightful viewpoints to the table.

### Hamilton Cycling Committee

**12** active members of the Hamilton Cycling Committee were present on March 5, 2014 to discuss local cycling matters as they do every month in City Hall. Falling within the Public Engagement period, the opportunity was made available to present an overview about Hamilton Bike Share and gain input from a concentrated group.

Much like the Bike Share Committee meeting, topics relayed ranged from hub location analysis to a break down of system logistics and launch timelines. This committee is often a catalyst for improvements within the city for both infrastructure and education/promotion of cycling, so having their perspective and sharing information was very advantageous in this engagement process.

# MEDIA RELEASE

The following are several articles which discuss the Bike Share Program. This sample was only collected after the City of Hamilton - Public Works media release February 14, 2014. The media release can be found in Appendix E.

In the media release people were directed to:

- my.socialcyclist.com
- hamiltonbikeshare.com
- Email: info@hamiltonbikeshare.ca
- Phone: 905-546-2424 ext. 2553

# NEWS COVERAGE

Over the course of the engagement period, several local media outlets such as Hamilton Spectator, CBC Hamilton, and Raise the Hammer built anticipation and spread newly released information through wide-reaching articles. Each news platform listed here are read by many Hamiltonians each day.

## HAMILTON SPECTATOR February 14, 2014

“Bike share program hits the road this summer”

This article was essentially a copy of the City of Hamilton’s media release, presenting all the same information with no additional information or opinion.

## CBC HAMILTON February 15, 2014

“Bike share program coming to Hamilton this summer”

This article presented the media release in addition to previous contextual information, including other cities using the system and commitments from city council. Embedded in the article was a poll, where readers could answer the question: “Will you use Hamilton’s new bike share service?”

32 %	Absolutely. Sign me up right away!
30 %	Yes, if the network of stations suits my travel needs
15 %	I’ll probably try it out for fun, but not use the service on a regular basis
10 %	Bike share is not for me, but it’s good for the city
8 %	I hope the program fails after the first year
6 %	I’m not sure

TOTAL VOTES: 146



## RAISE THE HAMMER February 20, 2014

“Hamilton Bike Share is NO BIXI”

This article explains key differences between the Bixi system (as used in Montreal) and Social Bicycles. This article also explains in detail the funding model and what the City of Hamilton is getting in this investment. While this article does NOT directly link to other public outreach features, it does link to overarching sites and develop knowledge and interest in the bike share system.

## CBC HAMILTON March 5, 2014


“Want a bike share station near you?  
Tell the city by Thursday”

This article presented leading stations and a general location for where people are voting for stations at this time.

This directed people to:

- Vote on [my.socialcyclist.com](http://my.socialcyclist.com).
- Vote through Social Cyclist's app, available for free on iTunes and Google Play stores.
- Provide suggestions via email at [info@hamiltonbikeshare.ca](mailto:info@hamiltonbikeshare.ca).
- Provide suggestions via phone at 905-526-2424 ext. 2553.

## Hamilton bike share program good to go for spring

By  Molly Hayes

The wheels are turning to get a bike share program fully operational in Hamilton by spring.

With a report going to the public works committee on Monday, the city is in the final stage of securing a contract with **Social Bicycles (SoBi)** to begin installation of a public bike share program.

SoBi — a New York-based company — was the "successful proponent" of a request for proposals earlier this year.





FIGURE 5. Shown is a sample render of the bike racks with colours yet to be finalized.

## MOVING FORWARD

As we bring together this culmination of public engagement research, a number of core conclusions can be made to aid us in moving forward with next steps. From the adoption of Social Cyclist as a powerful online engagement tool, to the use of existing platforms such as twitter and facebook, as well as the support of local news and advocacy groups, it is clear that the public is highly engaged and was keen to provide helpful feedback.

It has been encouraging to see the affirmation from Hamiltonians as to the pre-determined hub locations as they gave valuable input from a local context. As the newly proposed hubs are examined outside of the Phase 1 service area, as seen in Appendix F, the direction and density of future expansion becomes obvious and can be expected within the next few years.

Now that branding and design concepts are in the process of being finalized, anticipation is building around these high-tech yet minimal forms of transportation. As seen in Figure 5 and 6, the hubs and bikes will hold the sleek and functional allure that Social Bicycles has built a reputation around while maintaining a strong Hamilton sense of identity with logo placement and branding colours. There is no doubt that these bikes will be an efficient means to reaching your destination and an absolute pleasure to ride.



FIGURE 6. This is the final render of the Sobi Hamilton bicycles.

**SOBI HAMILTON**



# APPENDICES

## A SOCIAL CYCLIST SAMPLE FORUM

Social Cyclist gives a unique opportunity for users to submit comments on locations and converse with other users on the program. Below is a sample discussion among four users regarding the City Hall hub location.

Sara	While, pride of place for Bike Share in front of City Hall will be important, does anyone have any concerns that this being on Main St. will deter many potential users who don't feel safe riding on Main? Right behind City Hall will be the Hunter St. bike lane, so the City Hall rack might make more sense there.
Leola	I agree with Sara above, but having high visibility in front of city hall makes a statement and sends a strong message about Hamilton's philosophy. It is easy enough to ride around back of city hall and adjoining streets that are much quieter and better to bike on.
Nathan	In front of City Hall - with McMaster moving in across the street this makes the most sense. Once there... we need to get a bike lane on Main Street... or a shared lane with the buses (not as ideal).
Dawn	Yes, in front does make more sense, but we have *got* to get a separated bike lane on Main for safety's sake, both in reality and perception. And it really is no big deal to roll around the plaza to Hunter, lots of us already do that.

## B Raise the Hammer Relevant Comments

This article explains key differences between the Bixi system, used in Toronto and Montreal, and Social Bicycles. This article also explains in detail the funding model and what the City of Hamilton is getting in this investment. Below are two relevant comments posted after the article.

### SeanM Posted

I signed up for a year of Bixi here in Toronto, even though I have two bikes - a winter beater and a lighter hybrid that I use for the summer and for longer excursions. The idea of Bixi was appealing for those days that I wanted to bike, but only a one-way trip; cycling is always faster for me than the streetcar. But I let my annual membership lapse as the bike station closest to me (two short blocks) was moved to Queen West. There was not just the small coverage area (roughly Bathurst to Parliament and south of Bloor) and the low number of bikes, but the poor spacing of Bixi stations downtown that made it difficult to find bikes in the evening and drop them off in the morning. When you're stuck looking for a spare dock with the next closest station two blocks away, you're going to be a less likely repeat customer.

Toronto - where commuter/utilitarian cycling has become more popular - should have started with a minimum of 3000 bikes in a somewhat larger area - west to Dufferin Street (serving Little Italy, Trinity-Bellwoods, Liberty Village, Dufferin Grove), north to at least Dupont (properly serving Annex, Seaton Village) and east to cover Riverdale and Leslieville, with double the downtown bike docks.

But Hamilton is a much smaller city with a less-established utility cycling culture, so 750 bikes to start seems about right. Offering reservations - like car-sharing - seems like a great idea. The minimalist bike corrals make a lot of sense as well - hopefully there is a good surplus of spaces to prevent having to find another spare one farther from the destination. I hope SoBi succeeds as a model for smaller cities elsewhere (looking at you, Kitchener-Waterloo) to introduce bike sharing. Hopefully a phase two expansion takes it east, at least as far as Kenilworth, to feed the Cannon Street bikeway.

Finally, it would be nice to see a safe way to get from Downtown to Westdale/McMaster (which seems to be a focus of this initial phase), without going around via the TH&B trail.

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### Rednic Posted

It would be nice if some of the employers along Burlington asked for stands as well. Gift cards at no frills would also be nice, not everyone has or wants a credit card. (the operation sounds hi tech enough to allow this).

People were directed to contact this account with comments about the bike share and station location. The data for this analysis was selected between the dates of Feb 14, 2014 and March 6, 2014.

Hi there

I'm presuming there will be a bike station at Gage Park? Looking at the station map on the Raise The Hammer blog, it would appear that the east end of the city is being completely shut out. Is this correct?

[http://www.raisethehammer.org/article/2089/hamilton\\_bike\\_share\\_coming\\_this\\_summer](http://www.raisethehammer.org/article/2089/hamilton_bike_share_coming_this_summer)

Why are there no stations past Wentworth? Can you please clarify this for me? Thanks, and I look forward to your reply.

---

Welcome to Hamilton!

I live on the corner of [REDACTED], and I am so excited that you are planning a bike rack there. I don't know what your process is, but my family would be happy to volunteer a patch of our front yard to support a bike rack if you need it.

Let me know!

---

I would like to see a bike station on (preferable) or near Concession Street in Hamilton, Ontario, Canada. Our business district is a short walk from the top of the Wentworth Stairs (a great connection between our area and your stations near Wentworth Street in the lower City. A designated bike route also runs along the mountain brow adjacent to the stairs..

---

I would like to suggest locating a bike share station at Hill Street Park on Hill Street between Dundurn Road South and Locke Street South. On the same block is the Hill Street Park, a popular playground and green space; Hill Street Dog Park, which generates a lot of traffic; and Hill Street Community Garden. The block is thus a minor recreational "hub": it is also very nearby the First Unitarian Church of Hamilton, at 170 Dundurn Road South, which opens space up for community meetings and events. As the location of a car share parking spot, the church might itself be a good alternative for a bike share station location.

---

Can we get a Hamilton bikeshare location at Tim Hortons Field? It would be great to rent a bike and ride it to a Ticats Game

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Hi. I'm very excited for this to launch! Places I'd like to see the bikeshare/sobi stations would be:

Bayfront park

Pier 4

Van wagners beach

Entrances/near access to bike trails where convenient (chedoke golf course, corktown/du-rand neighbourhoods to link up with rail trail, etc)

At/near conservation areas that have bikeable roads and paths (ie) fifty point, dundas valley, confederation park Mohawk college and mcmaster campuses

Thanks for your consideration and best of luck with the program!



## D Engagement Period Media Release

The City of Hamilton, in partnership with Social Bicycles, will be implementing a bike share program in Hamilton early this summer. The program will offer a system of 750 bicycles and 80 stations and is funded by Metrolinx Quick Wins. SocialBicycles will operate the system under a non-profit operating entity and will be funded through a hybrid approach of local sponsorship and user fees.

“We’re excited to add this travel choice to our existing range of transportation options to make travelling even more convenient and sustainable,” said Peter Topalovic, Project Manager of Transportation Demand Management with the City of Hamilton. “Bike Share is the fastest growing transportation mode in the world, complementing existing public transit and providing first and last mile connectivity by filling in transit gaps. It’s a healthy, sustainable, and affordable form of public transportation.”

Hamilton Bike Share is in the initial stages of implementation, preparing for a system launch in early summer. Planners at Social Bicycles and the City of Hamilton are currently collaborating on station site selection. The public can provide suggestions on station locations through Social Cyclist ([socialcyclist.com](http://socialcyclist.com)), a public planning app developed by Social Bicycles and available for free in the iTunes or Google Play stores. Input will be gathered on a rolling basis until March 6th. The community can sign up through the app, online through [my.socialcyclist.com](http://my.socialcyclist.com), or provide suggestions via email: [info@hamiltonbikeshare.ca](mailto:info@hamiltonbikeshare.ca), or phone: 905-546-2424 ext. 2553.

Once the process is completed the City will announce the final locations of the bike stations.

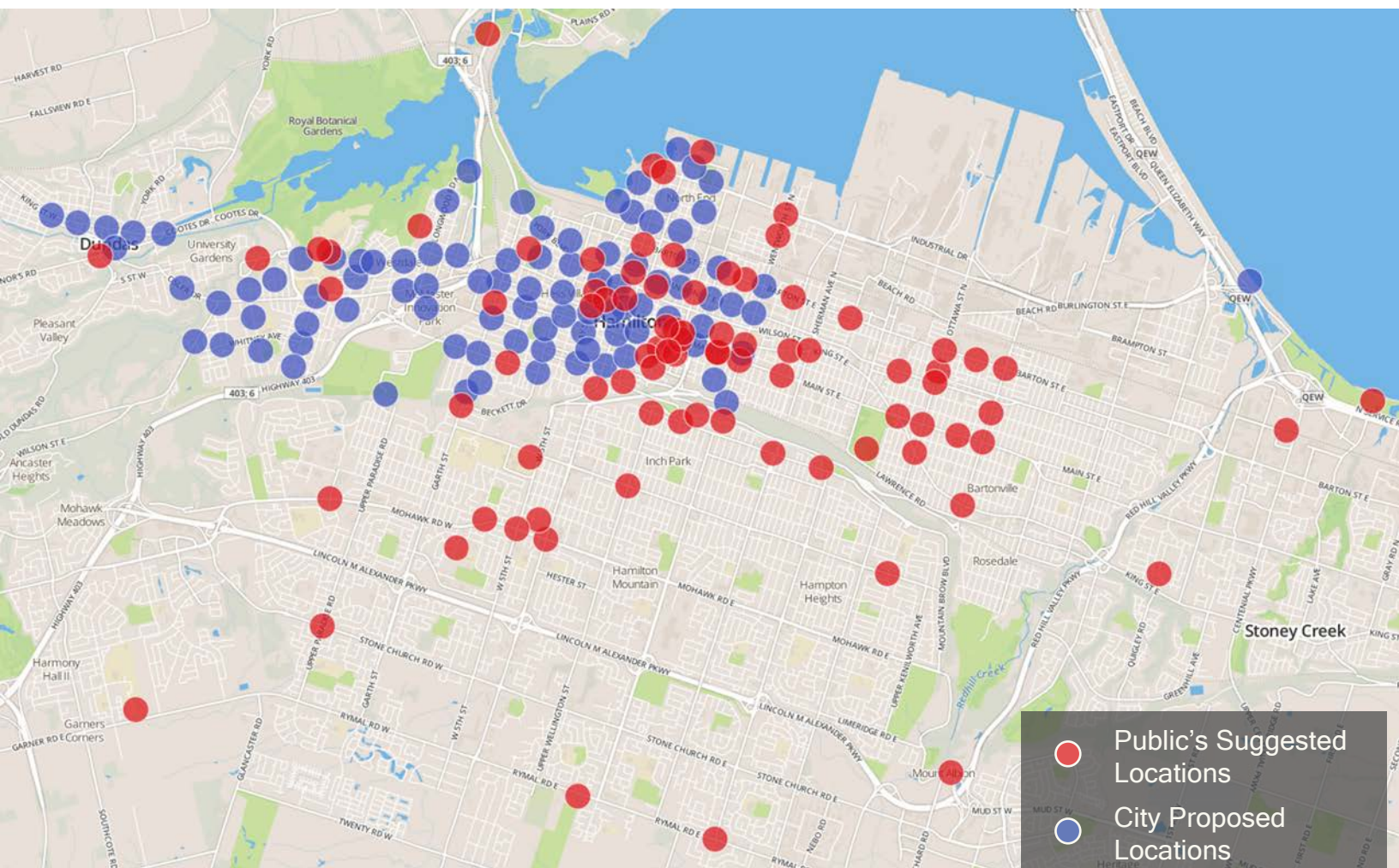
Social Bicycles offers a next generation bike share product that builds upon the foundations set by earlier systems. Their ‘smart-bike’ approach reduces costs while increasing features. Previous technologies require the installation of ‘smart-docks’ and kiosks to control check-ins and check-outs. By putting all the locking technology on the bike itself, Social Bicycles can install stations at a fraction of the cost. This makes for a more financially sustainable system and a scalable technology that can grow with demand. Social Bicycles feature a robust step through frame, integrated lock, shaft drive, responsive solar lighting, and mobile communications.

“We are pleased to partner with the City of Hamilton to bring bike share to this community. We appreciate Hamilton’s collective commitment to providing a safe, low-cost, and healthy transportation alternative to Ontario residents,” said Social Bicycles CEO Ryan Rzepecki.

## E Pre-engagement, total suggested, and finalized locations

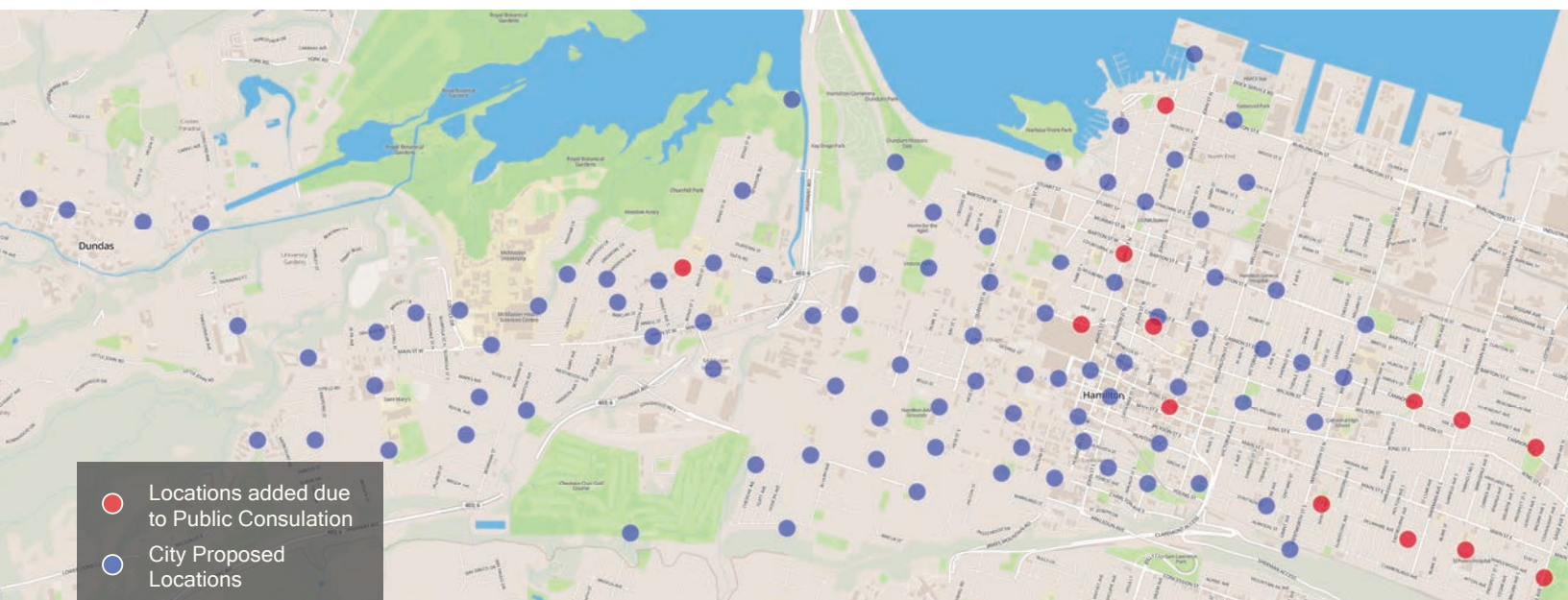


Pre-engagement hub location map.



Map of all hub locations.





Finalized sytem map.