

French car share project heads to Indy

CHICAGO, USA: A French electric car share programme has set its sights on the home of one of the top US racing events, Indianapolis.



Bolloré, which already runs a successful car share programme in Paris, plans to take 500 electric vehicles and 1,200 charging stations to Indianapolis, home of the iconic Indy 500 racing event. The cars will be available from early next year.

The US\$35m project is Bolloré's first car share venture outside of France. It will fill a pressing need for better public transportation in the sprawling mid-western city which, unlike the urban hubs of New York, Chicago and San Francisco, does not have a car sharing programme.

"This programme 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 in a statement.

Bolloré, which also develops electric batteries and 'smart' electrical grids, said it was drawn to Indianapolis by the mayor's commitment to electric vehicles.

"The success of the Autolib' in Paris, based on convenience, reliability and availability, has exceeded our expectations and reach our goal of transforming habits of car ownership, reducing pollution and relieving traffic congestion," chairman Vincent Bolloré said.

"The dynamic environment fostered by Ballard's administration along with the vibrant business and higher education community and impressive downtown development projects are key factors in our selection of Indy for this first US launch."

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

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

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

Source: AFP via I-Net Bridge

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