

CORKTOWN

CARSHARE

Corktown Carshare Tele-Operations Pilot Community Engagement Plan

Background

Corktown Carshare, which initially launched as part of the Michigan Central / Newlab Accessible Streets Studio in 2021, is operated by Sway Mobility. As part of this launch Sway worked with a community engagement consultant and approached numerous community organizations to increase awareness about the program. This included neighborhood block clubs such as the East End Block Club and Corktown Historical Society, businesses such as Honey Bee Market, and organizations located in Corktown such as the Ford Resource and Engagement Center and the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local 58. The original location for Corktown Carshare was the parking lot at IBEW Local 58's union hall on Abbott Street.

This initial pilot phase demonstrated the importance of location, visibility, and accessibility. This second pilot is designed to address aspects of these important criteria.

Project Team and Pilot Design

The project team for this pilot is Sway Mobility and Mapless, a provider of tele-operation systems. Tele-operation allows a driver that is not in the vehicle but located remotely to operate the vehicle as if in the vehicle by starting, stopping, turning, etc. The Mapless tele-operator will initially be located in Pittsburgh but the pilot may include adding a station at Newlab in Corktown.

Initially Corktown Carshare will operate one pilot vehicle that will be available for drivers to use as a traditional carshare vehicle. Mapless will station the vehicle each morning at a predetermined location where it will be available to drivers. In the evening the vehicle will return to the Bagley Mobility Hub where it will recharge. The addition of Mapless' technology to the vehicle will allow for improvements to the initial pilot, including:

1. The vehicle can be stationed in a walkable, highly visible, and accessible location that is not constrained by the need to install a permanent EV charger;
2. These stations can be changed, modified, or added to over time to best reflect the demand for the program rather than being tied to a single location that required expensive infrastructure;
3. The vehicle can be stationed at different locations over the course of the week or even day, allowing supply to meet demand; for example, a car can be stationed near a workplace during the day but in a residential location nights and weekends;
4. The pilot will provide the data and experience necessary to scale the program because the vehicle is driven remotely (although for the initial pilot phase it will always include an on-board safety driver), with one tele-operator able to attend to multiple cars over the course of a day, resulting in lower operating expenses to ensure the economic sustainability of the program.

5. In aggregate, these enhancements will allow for more accessibility to the program for a wider population of Detroiters.

Community Engagement Stakeholders

Corktown Carshare, from the initial pilot period, has been designed to bring an additional transportation option to the community. Carshare provides access to a vehicle to households that may not be able to afford a private vehicle (which AAA estimates costs over \$12,000 per year), which is critical given the nature of urban planning and the relatively low vehicle ownership rate in Detroit versus other major cities.

Corktown Carshare, which will initially use a Kia Niro EV, also provides drivers access to and experience driving an electric vehicle, which is important as the industry transitions to electrification. This access will help to demystify EVs, which given their higher reliability and lower operating costs are ideally suited to low and moderate income drivers.

With only one vehicle funded for this stage of the pilot, the program will not be available to the general public but will be marketed to residents in several multi-family residential properties that are in close proximity and have affordable housing units. One of these is the transitional housing for residents of Clement Kern Gardens, which was one of the potential locations for Corktown Carshare in 2021 (the planned renovations precluded its participation).

The multi-family properties identified for the pilot include:

- Left Field (48 affordable units of 120 units)
- The Corner (20 affordable units of 102 units)
- Elton Park (30 affordable units of 52 units)

Sway Mobility is requesting, as part of the Transportation Innovation Zone permit, the temporary but exclusive use of one parking space in the public right of way near the intersection of Michigan Avenue and Trumbull to serve these residential drivers.

To ensure the performance levels needed to sustain a carshare program, additional community partners may be stations for the pilot. These include:

- Newlab at Michigan Central
- IBEW Local 58

Community Engagement Opportunities

Direct engagement with the community is expected to include:

- Demonstrations at the residential properties and with other community organizations to enroll drivers,
- Potential participation in events such as the Michigan Mobility Conference at Newlab,
- Outreach to future potential station hosts to grow the program,
- A website to both provide additional info and market the pilot,
- Feedback mechanisms to collect driver feedback (in-app and surveys),
- Collaboration with Newlab and Michigan Central for briefings, event participation, etc.