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Zipcar's Impact On How People Use Cars Is Enormous

After a year of Zipcar availability in Baltimore, a survey finds that Zipcar membership means less driving, more public transportation, more exercise, and better quality of life for everyone.

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Zipcar debuted in Baltimore a year ago. The company has since gathered feedback from the new Zipcar drivers there to determine exactly what happens once car sharing is introduced in a city. As it turns out, the effects are rather drastic, seriously curtailing both car ownership and car use, while pumping up how often people take public transportation.

After asking Charm City Zipcar users about their driving habits, they found that only 12% had taken more than five trips by car in the last month, down from 38% before joining Zipcar. But that doesn't mean people aren't going anywhere. Zipcar members are walking more (up 21%), biking more (up 14%), and using public transit more (up 11%).

Even more meaningfully, 72% of Zipcar members said being able to share cars makes it less likely that they purchase or lease a car in the future, and nearly a fifth of the Zipcar members had actually sold their vehicles since joining. Almost half of the members said that they avoided buying a car because of their Zipcar services.

These aren't just good stats for the recently public company to show that people love their service. It shows that car sharing--by Zipcar or others--can have a strong effect on a city's car ownership rates and public-transit use. That means less traffic, easier parking, and a generally more pleasant living experience for all citizens. As the benefits of taking cars off the roads start to become more clear, expect more and more municipalities to start working with car-sharing programs, or even launching their own.

[Hat tip: [Clean Technica](#)]

[Image: Flickr user [3n](#)]

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