



Press release  
For immediate release

## **BIXI MONTRÉAL ACHIEVES A BALANCED BUDGET IN 2020**

### **The season was marked by the success of electric BIXI bikes and new travel habits**

**Montreal, November 17, 2020** – Two days after the end of the 2020 season, NPO BIXI Montréal confirms it will be reaching a balanced budget this year, despite the exceptional context generated by the COVID-19 pandemic. While outdoor exercise is a popular way to fight stress, especially at a time when social distancing and outdoor commuting are helping slow the spread of the virus, numerous initiatives have enabled BIXI to remain an ideal alternative for citizens this season, demonstrating its status as an essential partner in integrated mobility in the city.

*“In 2020, BIXI Montréal proved not only that it has all the necessary assets to remain a strong symbol of the city, but also its ability to adapt and innovate, even in times of crisis. As we have just navigated through difficult times, we are pleased to announce that BIXI will reach a balanced budget this year. This solid financial position is due to many factors, including the expertise of the team in place, employees’ dedication, and a flexible structure and rigorous management over several years of sustained growth. The season that just ended was marked by the addition of 1,000 new electric BIXI bikes to the fleet, which are very popular with our customers and are used 60% more often than standard bicycles,” says Alexandre Taillefer, BIXI Montréal’s Chairman of the Board of Directors.*

#### **CHALLENGES MET FOR 2020 AND SOUND FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT**

As evidenced by the operational surpluses accumulated over the past six years, BIXI Montréal has conducted its activities with rigour since its creation in 2014. These surpluses allow the NPO to assume operating risks due to unforeseen situations or fluctuations in seasonal conditions. Between 2014 and 2019, BIXI Montréal recorded a 307% increase in sales, a 146% increase in unique users and an 81% increase in traffic. BIXI’s customer satisfaction rate, which stood at 94% in 2019, is another irrefutable proof of how far they have come.

Despite the unforeseen situation in March which led BIXI Montréal to review its service under extremely tight deadlines and to deploy a reliable safety and security measures plan, the season was able to start on the scheduled date of April 15. In order to support healthcare workers and offer them an additional option to facilitate their commute to work, BIXI also offered a free 30-day subscription to all employees of public healthcare institutions in the Greater Montreal area.

Following a season marked by a lower level of traffic than in 2019, largely related to confinement and teleworking, BIXI Montreal confirms to have successfully met the challenges brought by this unusual season. While the drop in ridership reached more than 70% in April



compared to last year, user confidence was gradually regained with a monthly average drop of around 40% in the following months, closing the season with an 11% increase in ridership in November, thereby indicating a promising 2021 season.

### **HUGE SUCCESS OF ELECTRIC POWER-ASSISTED BIKES**

During the summer, BIXI Montreal was busy pursuing the deployment of its electric bikes network in collaboration with the City of Montreal, the boroughs, private partners and its new exclusive partner for electric power-assisted bikes, Hilo, a new subsidiary of Hydro-Québec that offers a turnkey, smart home service.

These 3-speed, blue-coloured bikes can reach a speed of 32 km/h, allowing users to cover a greater distance, faster. They require less effort for the user, especially when facing steep inclines.

- On average, electric BIXI bikes were used **60% more often** than standard bikes on a daily basis (4.3 times vs. 2.7 times).
- The average distance of each electric BIXI trip was **70% higher** than that of standard BIXI trips (4.8 km vs. 2.8 km).
- Average travel time was **27% longer** (19.2 minutes with electric BIXI vs. 15.1 minutes with standard BIXI).

*“During the pandemic, the electric BIXI service was able to position itself as an additional option that is pleasant, practical, fast, accessible to all and affordable, making many citizens’ lives easier. We are also pleased to have been able to add electric stations and bikes this year, despite this unfavourable context,”* points out Christian Vermette, BIXI Montréal’s General Manager.

Always on the lookout for trends and having a well-defined vision of the future, BIXI stood out once again this year for its dynamism in terms of technological innovation and leadership.

**Moreover, this fall the BIXI bikes electric project was awarded Destination Centre-Ville’s prize under the “Public Service” category.**

Currently, BIXI has a grand total of 1,000 electric BIXI bikes, which means that Montreal has the **largest fleet of self-service electric power- assisted bicycles in Canada** and one of the largest in America. With the goal of continuing to democratize bicycle use, BIXI Montréal and the city plan to **add 1,150 new electric power-assisted bikes in 2021 and 2022**. The commissioning of the power stations and electrically assisted bicycles has also led to job creation in Quebec at a time when support for the local economy is at the heart of citizens’ concerns.

Éric Alan Caldwell, responsible for urban planning and mobility on the city of Montréal's executive committee, added: *"More than ever before, the city of Montréal continues to believe deeply in the importance of active transportation in the city's overall supply and will do everything possible to ensure its long-term vitality. This season is coming to an end and BIXI has*



*demonstrated its relevance and resilience in providing Montrealers with access to mobility, even in times of crisis. Our administration will continue to support BIXI to maximize its service throughout the territory."*

### **CHANGING TRAVEL PATTERNS: MORE RECREATIONAL RENTALS AND LONGER, MORE LOCAL TRIPS**

In general, the current context has led users to discover the joys of bike-sharing for their activities outside of work, and to travel more locally. This season, BIXI has noted an increase in trips to outlying neighbourhoods, as well as longer trips, both in terms of time and distance.

More than just a means of transportation, BIXI has allowed the citizens of Greater Montreal to take their minds off their daily routine and to rediscover their city and neighbourhoods this year. Mobile and Internet provider Fizz, partner of BIXI Montréal, even solicited both its community and that of BIXI, inviting them to imagine routes linking local businesses, murals, parks and beautiful streets dotted with stations, creating unusual patterns on the map of Montreal. Users were then invited to draw their own neighbourhood by creating their own routes.

### **BIXI THANKS ITS VALUABLE PARTNERS**

BIXI Montreal would like to take this opportunity to thank Valérie Plante and the entire City of Montreal team for their trust and commitment, as well as its partners, who have supported its mission in 2020 despite this period of uncertainty: Fizz, Cogeco, the ARTM, and Rachelle Béry. BIXI also salutes the invaluable contribution of Hilo, Lyft, PBSC Urban Solutions and Devinci, who made the deployment of its electric bikes network possible.

*"As BIXI's exclusive partner for electric power-assisted bikes, Hilo is pleased to have contributed to their success. They offer an innovative and intelligent way to get around an urban area, and we are pleased to see that the public has quickly adopted them. As for our partnership, it was a natural fit since our two organizations share common values and an innovative and eco-responsible environmental vision", commented Sébastien Fournier, Hilo's President and CEO.*

*"On behalf of BIXI Montreal, I would like to warmly thank all employees for their extraordinary commitment throughout this unprecedented season. As a result of their dedication, we have been able to offer our customers an experience that meets their expectations in a safe environment. More than ever during this crisis, Montréal's bike-sharing service has proven to be an ideal mode of transportation and we look forward to seeing you in 2021," concludes Mr. Taillefer.*



## **Information**

Bérengère Thériault

### **ABOUT BIXI MONTRÉAL**

BIXI Montreal is a non-profit organization created by the City of Montreal to manage its bike-sharing system. As of fall 2020, the network includes 7,270 standard bikes and 1,000 electric BIXI bikes throughout Montréal, as well as in Westmount, Montréal-Est, Mont-Royal, Longueuil and Laval. For more information, you are invited to visit [BIXI Montreal's website](#).

### **ABOUT FIZZ**

Launched in 2018, Fizz is a new kind of mobile and Internet provider that hands over control to its members thanks to a fully online experience. With Fizz, things are fair and simple. Different is in.

### **ABOUT HILO**

Hilo is a Hydro-Québec subsidiary whose mission is to develop innovative, value-added products and services to its customers, thus contributing to positioning Hydro-Québec as a major provider of new energy services. In addition to smart home offerings, Hilo will soon offer services to help companies reduce their GHG emissions and energy costs. Other products and services will gradually be deployed, in the areas of electric mobility, intelligent storage and solar self-generation. Online orders can be placed today at [www.hiloenergie.com](http://www.hiloenergie.com).

### **ABOUT RACHELLE BÉRY**

The first Rachele Béry grocery store opened in Montreal in 1984, on the corner of Rachel and Berri streets, hence the name. Today, there are 11 neighbourhood grocery stores and over 60 health boutiques located in IGA supermarkets across Quebec. Over the years, Rachele Béry's mission has never changed. It remains to support wellness by encouraging discovery and promoting organic, natural and local products.

### **ABOUT THE ARTM**

The Autorité régionale de transport métropolitain was created by Bill 76, which changed the governance of public transit in the Greater Montreal Area. With a view to sustainable development and regional cohesion, the Autorité régionale de transport métropolitain plans, organizes, finances and promotes public transit and paratransit in the Greater Montreal Area in order to provide a simple, integrated, fluid and efficient mobility experience. To this end, it draws up a strategic development plan, a funding policy, a fare framework and service agreements that govern the development, organization and funding of these services. To do so, the Autorité works to mobilize the driving forces of the public transit community around a unified vision.