

CAR SHARING SERVICES In and near CHICAGO -- 2003 to 2/2008



Residents of Chicago, and adjoining suburbs such as Evanston and Oak Park, who only need to use an auto occasionally, have the option of not owning a car and instead using one of two car sharing services. These car sharing services, which will expand to more communities through time and are also offered in several other major cities, can also help other families, who need one auto regularly and a second one on occasion, limit their auto ownership to one auto. Using a car sharing service generally reduces overall auto usage, thereby helping the environment, while saving the individual/household substantial dollars. The user of a car sharing service avoids paying the cost of owning an auto, maintenance, fuels, insurance, and in some congested communities parking.

Following is some basics regarding the two car sharing services in the Chicago area. Their web sites are listed so that you can investigate further on your own.

I-Go www.igocars.org

I-Go Carsharing is a non-profit organization incubated by the Center for Neighborhood Technology. It has over 50 Chicago area locations, spread among lakefront communities from Rogers Park to South Shore, with others in in-land communities with rapid transit stations, plus others in Evanston and Oak Park. Drivers must be between 21 and 75 and have had good driving records. The application fee plus first year membership costs \$75, with an annual renewal of \$25. Autos can be reserved by phone or over the internet. The Standard plan costs \$6 an hour (no charge for midnight to 6 a.m.) plus 50 cents per mile driven. The Standard Plus plan costs \$8.25 per hour, with 25 free miles per reserved hour (no per hour charge or free miles from midnight to 6 a.m.). I-Go has "Discount" autos that may be rented for a full day for \$60, plus taxes, with 200 free miles included, but autos are available at only a few locations. If you are found at fault for causing an accident you will be responsible for a \$500 deductible.

Zipcar www.zipcar.com

Zipcar is a for-profit corporation. If you are a member you can also reserve their cars in New York, Boston, Washington, D.C., San Francisco, Minneapolis, Toronto or Vancouver, when in

those cities. While not in Chicago as long as I-Go, they have established locations in most, but not all the Chicago neighborhoods where I-Go has sites, plus Evanston, but not Oak Park. Their locations are not yet as numerous as I-Go.

Autos can be reserved by phone or internet. Drivers must be at least 21. Application plus first year annual fee is \$75, with annual fee at \$50 thereafter. Hourly rate is \$9, with a daily maximum of \$66, with 180 free miles any time you reserve and use a car, with a charge of 35 cents per mile thereafter, though you get 20 miles an hour free if your reservation goes to an additional day. If you have the car beyond the reservation there is a \$50 per hour fee. If you are found at fault for causing an accident you are responsible for a \$500 deductible. Any Zipcar can be reserved for a day or longer, whereas for I-Go one would probably want to use one of the more limited Discount cars. Zipcar has a few pickup trucks you may reserve for big haul jobs.