

Green Mobility Comes to Halifax

"I believe that business can change the world and that it is a noble thing to do," says Pam Cooley (left). "It's an amazing reflection of how you can move through the world."

Pam Cooley is the president and co-owner of CarShareHFX, a young, award-winning company based in Halifax. Cooley co-owns the business with Peter Zimmer, who works as the general manager. Both are committed environmentalists and life-long community activists.

The premise of car-sharing is simple: use a car only when you need to, save money and live a greener life. For a flat yearly fee and a small hourly rental, members have access to a fleet of fuel-efficient cars or vans, on an hourly or daily basis. Fees are all-inclusive. Vehicles are parked in nine central locations on the Halifax peninsula and in downtown Dartmouth. Access is 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Members book their vehicles online or by telephone.

In January, CarShareHFX won gold as the best new company of the year at the Halifax Chamber of Commerce Business Awards. The company's registered name, CarShareAtlantic, reflects the owners' ultimate hopes to expand across the Atlantic Provinces.

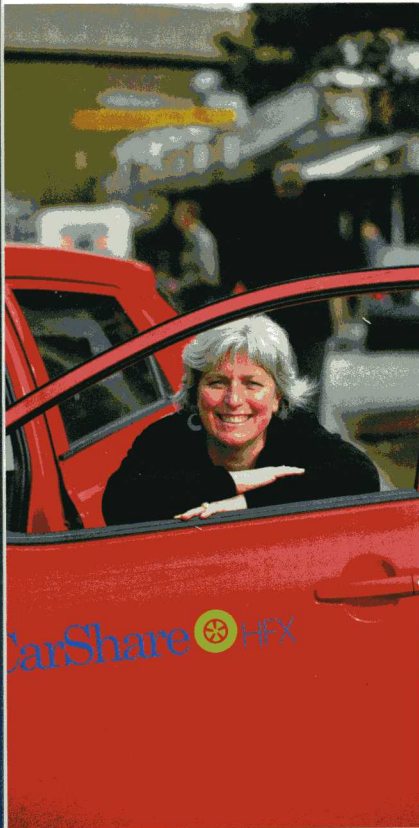
"CarShare is a terrific business that is both entrepreneurial and environmentally progressive," says Colin MacLean, CEO of the Waterfront Development Corporation. "We are inspired by their vision, and pleased to be a partner."

CarShare is ideal for those who deliberately choose a car-free life, but need regular transportation. "CarShare is absolutely perfect for me," says Halifax MP Megan Leslie, of the New Democratic Party. "The riding of Halifax is bigger than people might think it is. I can walk or take a taxi or bus downtown, but once I need to get off the peninsula, I need a car."

CarShare's newest client is the provincial Department of the Environment. Using CarShare, says Solveig Madsen, an environmental analyst with the Department, "supports a new transportation option in our community that is environmentally preferable to individually owned vehicles."

In the future, Cooley hopes CarShare will be part of "regional mobility strategies" at all three levels of government and across the business communities. "We want a people culture," concludes Cooley, "not a car culture."

By Marjorie Simmins



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