December 23, 2010

Administrative Information Technology Services

Re: Response to Letter of Inquiry

Project: Bike Sharing

Dear Michael,

On behalf of the Student Sustainability Committee for the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, I would like to thank you for responding to our call for letters of inquiry to use funds raised by the student Clean Energy Technology and Sustainability Fees to implement a project that improves the sustainability of our campus. Each letter was evaluated based on its sustainability impact (i.e. energy or sustainability impact, campus presence, project longevity, and budget) and broader impact (i.e. education and creativity). The Committee has adopted a focus of supporting projects representing technology diffusion or capacity development in campus sustainability. Within this round, the Committee over 40 letters requesting a total of $3 million – several times our annual budget.

The Committee is pleased to inform you that a project derived from your letter was selected to advance to the second stage of project consideration, and requests that you submit a proposal for funding of this project. Please use the provided template while preparing your proposal to the Committee and submit your proposal to us by January 30th. We encourage you to communicate with us during the proposal development process so as to create the best possible project, and to ensure that the goals of all stakeholders are met. Please note that the total dollar value of projects proceeding to this stage is over $700,000, and so all projects cannot be funded during this fiscal year. Based on received proposals, the Committee may choose to provide funding this fiscal year, to defer your project to the next fiscal year for reconsideration, or to deny funding. Examples of past proposals may be found on our website. All implemented projects will be expected to follow the relevant campus policies and procedures as well as any applicable State and Federal laws.

While the Committee is supportive of the concept of bike-sharing on campus, and has been approached several times with different bike sharing concepts, we have been unable to determine the viability of any of these approaches on our campus. However, we note that projects of this type are unlikely to ever be implemented without “project champions”, and we would like to support the campus commitment to implement a bike-sharing program by 2012. As a result, we request that you’ll setup a campus committee to conduct a feasibility study of bike-sharing alternatives for the Urbana campus, and serve as the committee chairs. Ultimately, this committee would be expected to develop a proposal for implementation, secure funding, and establish a bike-sharing program on campus. The Committee is willing to accept a proposal to fund the operations of this bike-share committee in the amount of upto $10,000. Eligible expenses would include consultant fees, honoraria, travel costs, software evaluation fees, and so on.

Your proposal would be expected to include a letter from a campus office (such as the Office of the Chancellor, the Office of the President, or the Division of Facilities and Services) to establish a Committee, as well as a list of stakeholders that would be represented on the Committee (preferably a list of individuals who would be invited). The feasibility study would be expected to identify the “best” bike-sharing option for this campus (whether involving automated stations or manual checkouts, number of bicycles, charges, integration with I-Card system, type of bicycles, maintenance needs, operational responsibilities, etc.), present a business case for its operation after installation and identify its value to the student body and in the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions. We note from your chart that students made up a very small fraction of users of the Minneapolis system, and the Committee would not be able to justify capital investment in such a program if students were not the primary users.

Thank you again for your work to make the campus more sustainable and we hope to work with you in the future.

Sincerely,

Suhail Barot,

Committee Chair