Post Exhibition - Car Sharing Policy

File No: X111618

Summary

This report seeks Council approval of the Car Sharing Policy ('Policy'). At its meeting on 25 November 2024, Council resolved to exhibit the draft updated Policy. It was exhibited for public comment from 10 December 2024 to 21 February 2025, with extra time to account for end of year and school holiday periods, and with minor extensions granted on request. Final submissions were received on 28 February 2025. The City of Sydney ('the City') received a total of 80 responses: 55 'quick poll' responses, 22 survey responses and 3 written submissions (2 individual and one organisational). The City also engaged directly with approved car share operators in the review of the updated Policy prior to exhibition.

The Policy was adopted in 2011 and last updated in 2016. The Policy has been reviewed to enable alignment with City strategies including Sustainable Sydney 2030–2050 Continuing the Vision, the Community Strategic Plan, the Access Strategy and Action Plan – Continuing the Vision and the Electrification of Transport in the City Strategy and Action Plan, alignment with changes in NSW Government policy and regulation, consideration of emerging trends in mobility, such as electric vehicle charging, and responses to reduce transport related carbon emissions, trends occurring in the car sharing industry, the use of the car sharing system in the City of Sydney, and implementation impacts and options to improve outcomes and/or operational efficiency.

There are around 880 car share spaces across the City of Sydney Local Government Area, accounting for roughly 2% of the around 41,000 on-street parking spaces.

The objectives of the Policy are to increase use of car sharing, and to ensure that the City’s car sharing program is well-governed and transparent. The review found that the Policy is generally operating well, with use of the system stable, the number of operators and competition increasing and with car share operators generally meeting the minimum usage requirements in their spaces. The objectives of the Policy are fit-for-purpose and continue to provide a solid basis for the management of the car sharing system in our area, including enabling on-street parking spaces more efficiently, reducing vehicle traffic and emissions and increasing social inclusion. The review determined a few areas for updating, included in the draft Policy, notably to improve management of the system and to set an emission reduction target in line with the City's Net Zero by 2035 target.

Submissions overall showed support for the City's approach, particularly support for the zero emission target, with some participants requesting the target be sooner than 2035. Others provided comment that there are too many car share bays, and that more on-street electric vehicle charging is needed.

Amendments to the Policy following exhibition were minor: to clarify the City's position and approach with the term 'electric' in section 2 changed to be 'zero emissions' and updates to 3.2 Consultation in response to the NSW Government's Temporary Delegations to Councils to specify the City's approach to engagement and approvals. Attachment B identifies the proposed changes to the exhibited drafts with tracked changes.

Recommendation

It is resolved that Council:

(A) note the submissions and feedback received through the public exhibition period as shown at Attachment A to the subject report;

(B) adopt the Car Sharing Policy incorporating amendments following the public exhibition process, as shown at Attachment B to the subject report; and

(C) authority be delegated to the Chief Executive Officer to make amendments to the Car Sharing Policy to correct any minor drafting errors and finalise design, artwork and accessible formats for publication.

Attachments

Attachment A. Engagement Report - Car Sharing Policy

Attachment B. Car Sharing Policy (showing changes)

Background

1. In 2007, the City began providing dedicated parking bays to car share operators as a trial. Council adopted a Car Sharing Policy in 2011. This was reviewed in 2016. This Policy has been reviewed and updated and a draft exhibited for public comment.

2. The review found that the Policy is generally operating well in terms of use and management, with use of the system stable, the number of operators and competition increasing and with car share operators generally meeting the minimum usage requirements in their spaces.

3. The objectives of the Policy are fit-for-purpose and continue to provide a solid basis for the management of the car sharing system in our area, including enabling on-street parking spaces more efficiently, reducing vehicle traffic and emissions and increasing social inclusion.

4. The use of car share over the last 3 years (in number of bookings) is stable, with some variation throughout the year (bookings tend to be higher in summer and spring months). Use declined significantly during the Covid-19 pandemic, but recovered as activity increased. There are currently four approved car share operators.

5. GoGet continues to have a strong market share, with around 70% of spaces.

6. Car Next Door exited the system in late 2024 and nearly all their spaces are now reallocated to the other 4 existing operators.

7. Car share companies apply to the City for dedicated on-street parking spaces by, when invited, nominating a location, which typically responds to increased nearby membership or usage. The number of car share bays in the city has increased from around 600 on-street spaces in 2016 to around 880 in 2025. This is around 2% of our (non-city centre) on-street spaces.

8. The proportion of on-street spaces allocated to car sharing spaces currently ranges from as low as 0.8% in Area 13 (Centennial Park and South Paddington) to 4.3% in Area 19 (Kings Cross).

9. The Policy treats ‘high coverage areas’ (more than 3.5% of spaces) differently, with a higher threshold for an operator to gain an additional space in that area, and a combined cap of only four new spaces implemented in any month. Only 2 areas are currently classified as high coverage, however another three are just below (at 3.4%). The net effect is likely to be to encourage operators to apply for spaces in areas with fewer spaces, which is a positive outcome for spreading the coverage across our area.

10. Car share operators are required to provide monthly reports on numbers and types of members (residents and business) per postcode as well as usage of vehicles itemised by location. This enables the City to determine whether the use of spaces is justified. Overall, car share operators are meeting minimum usage criteria outlined in the Policy.

11. The City charges car share operators a one-off fee to partially cover the costs of applying to be an operator (2024/25 $1,880) and a one-off fee to partially cover the cost of new spaces (administration, installation of signage and line marking; 2024/25 fee $2,710). Each car share vehicle must also have an Authorised Car Share Vehicle Permit (2024/25 $188 per annum). Note that fees are exhibited and set annually as part of the Operational Plan.

12. Car sharing reduces the number of cars people own and use, resulting in benefits for members and non-members. However, the continued allocation of on-street parking spaces to car sharing on an individual basis can sometimes contentious.

13. Car sharing reduces vehicle related emissions through reducing the number of vehicles people need to own, along with giving people access to newer (and lower emission) vehicles than they may be able access otherwise.

14. The Policy has been updated to strengthen the City's governance of spaces, competition and environmental performance, along with aligning the Policy with City strategies including Sustainable Sydney 2030–2050 Continuing the Vision, the Community Strategic Plan, the Access Strategy and Action Plan – Continuing the Vision and the Electrification of Transport in the City Strategy and Action Plan, and with changes in NSW Government policy and regulation. Notably the updated Policy:

    (a) sets an emission reduction target in line with the City's Net Zero by 2035 target;

    (b) enables a car share vehicle to be parked in nearby ‘permit excepted’ space if the dedicated space is illegally occupied;

    (c) introduces mandatory auditing of operator reports every 3 years;

    (d) caps the maximum parking space allocation of 5% of all parking spaces per parking area;

    (e) provides clarification for new operators to enter the system;

    (f) caps for the maximum monthly installation of new spaces; clarifies how applications for new car share spaces will be prioritised; and

    (g) clarifies the City’s approach for free floating car share scheme proposals.

Key Implications

Strategic Alignment - Sustainable Sydney 2030-2050 Continuing the Vision

15. Sustainable Sydney 2030-2050 Continuing the Vision renews the community’s vision for the sustainable development of the city to 2050. It includes 10 strategic directions to guide the future of the city, as well as 10 targets against which to measure progress. This [choose an item] is aligned with the following strategic directions and objectives:

    (a) Direction 1 - Responsible governance and stewardship - The updated Car Sharing Policy proposes changes to strengthen and clarify the City's management of the car sharing system within our area.

    (b) Direction 2 - A leading environmental performer - Car sharing reduces transport related carbon emissions. The updated Policy further enhances the emission reduction contribution of car share by specifying that car share vehicles need to be zero emissions by 2035.

    (c) Direction 5 - A city for walking, cycling and public transport - Car sharing reduces transport related carbon emissions. The draft Policy further enhances the emission reduction contribution of car share by specifying that car share vehicles need to be zero emissions by 2035.

(d) Direction 6 - An equitable and inclusive city - Car sharing reduces the burden of car ownership on households, including the on-going costs associated with car ownership.

Organisational Impact

16. The updated Policy will not materially impact on the current on-going organisational impacts of managing and implementing the Policy as this is an existing Policy.

Risks

17. The review of this Policy has been assessed against the City's risk appetite and been found to pose minimal risk.

18. The updating of this Policy is part of normal business processes to ensure that the City can meet its obligation of providing and balancing kerbside space. The updated Policy better enables the City to manage its responsibilities reducing risk. The updates are minimal to an existing Policy. The only risk identified was not updating the Policy, which carry reputational, people, service delivery, sustainability and compliance risks.

19. The updated Policy is within the City's risk appetite/tolerance posing minimal risk to financial obligations (cautious to open risk appetite), sustainability (open risk appetite), service delivery (open risk appetite), people (minimal risk appetite), reputational (minimal risk appetite) and compliance (minimal risk appetite).

Social / Cultural / Community

20. The availability of car sharing provides casual access to safe and modern vehicles by households and individuals who may not be able to afford the upfront and on-going costs of an equivalent vehicle.

21. Car sharing enables access to vehicles on an 'as needed' basis.

Environmental

22. Car sharing enables the more efficient use of on-street parking spaces, as a vehicle is shared by people.

23. Car sharing has been shown to reduce second car ownership.

24. As car sharing members pay the marginal cost of their driving, they tend to drive less often and for shorter distances than private vehicle owners.

25. On-road emissions from car share vehicles are lower than the private fleet, because they have a much lower average age, and are subject to professional fleet maintenance.

26. The updated Policy specifies that car share vehicles need to be zero emissions by 2035.

Economic

27. Car sharing reduces the financial burden of car ownership (or second car ownership) on members.

28. This Policy affects those in the business of car share in our area.

Financial Implications

29. The City collects more than $160,000 in fees from annual permits for the dedicated spaces. The proposed changes to the Policy will not materially impact on existing operations or fees collected from annual permits.

30. In accordance with section 610F of the Local Government Act 1993, fees will be exhibited along with the City's draft operational plan as part of the annual review of fees and charges.

31. The on-going management and implementation of the current Policy is part of the existing operations of the City.

Relevant Legislation

32. Technical Direction, Traffic and Transport, TTD 2018/001 - 26 October 2018: Guidelines for on-street fixed space car share parking.

33. Transport for NSW Parking Permit Guidelines 2021 set out matters which need to be considered when permits schemes are developed and implemented.

34. In accordance with section 610F of the Local Government Act 1993, fees will be exhibited along with the City's draft operational plan as part of the annual review of fees and charges.

Critical Dates / Time Frames

35. The City's current Car Sharing Policy will remain in effect until such time as Council adopts a revised policy.

Public Consultation

36. The City consulted each eligible car sharing operator on the Car Sharing Policy, including on the opportunities and challenges of zero emissions fleet transition.

37. At its 25 November 2025 meeting, Council resolved to exhibit the draft Policy. It was exhibited for public comment from 10 December 2024 to 21 February 2025, with extensions granted on request. Final submissions were received 28 February 2025.

38. During the consultation period the 'Sydney Your Say' page was visited 368 times, with 21 people downloading the draft Policy.

39. The City received 55 quick poll responses, 22 survey responses and 3 written submissions (1 from an organisation and 2 from individuals).

40. Attachment A provides a detailed Engagement Report.

41. 91 per cent of respondents to the quick poll were very familiar or somewhat familiar with the concept of car sharing and its benefits.

42. 13 people provided open responses. Feedback from the open response and 3 written individual submissions showed that there was support for the zero emission target (5 comments) with some participants requesting the target be sooner. Other comments included: that there are too many car share bays (3), more on-street electric vehicle charging is needed (2), support for dedicated car share parking spaces (one), cargo bike parking (one), more car sharing spaces (one), a transition that includes hybrid vehicles (one) and more parking meters (one). Note comments that crossed multiple themes are reported in that theme.

43. One written organisational submission was received by GoGet. This is summarised in Appendix to the Engagement Report. The submission provided some suggested edits to the Policy, predominantly focused on providing flexibility to respond to market changes within the Policy. A key intent of the Policy is to provide transparency and certainty to car share operators and to the community. This requires the Policy to be clear about requirements of car share operators along with providing implementation caps to manage change on city streets.

44. Location specific comments have been passed onto the relevant City units.

Amendments to the Policy following exhibition.

45. Based on the nature of feedback provided the final Policy required minor amendments to clarify the City's position. Attachment B identifies the proposed changes to the exhibited drafts with tracked changes, with key amendments as follows:

    (a) The use of the term 'electric' in section 2 has been changed to be 'zero emissions'. This is to not preclude the type of fuel a car share operator should choose to adopt as long as it meets its zero emission target The City's Electrification of City Transport Strategy and Action Plan will remain the framework for the City's specific support for electric vehicles.

        (i) Change in bold: 2. Obligations of car share operators i. Vehicle Environmental Impact -- […] The aim is for car sharing vehicles to be **zero emission** by 2030, as part of the path to Net Zero Emissions by 2035. All car sharing fleets will need to be zero emissions by 2035.

        (ii) This is in response to direct engagement with a car share operator.

    (b) Update to 3.2 Consultation in response to NSW Government's Temporary Delegations to Councils. The update specifies the City's approach to engagement and includes approvals.

        (i) Deleted text: 3.2 Consultation. The City will consult with residents and businesses in the immediate vicinity of a proposed on- street space. Proposals to allocate on-street car share spaces will be considered by the Local Pedestrian Cycling and Traffic Calming Committee.

(ii) Updated text: 3.2 Community Engagement. Given the strong community interest in kerbside parking management, consistent with its Community Engagement Strategy, the City will ensure that businesses and residents in the immediate vicinity of a proposed on-street space have an opportunity to comment on car share proposals. [new paragraph] In 2023 the NSW Government delegated exclusive authority to local governments to make most parking changes on local and regional roads. Delegated City staff will make a final decision after the appropriate community engagement. [new paragraph] The City will refer to the Local Pedestrian, Cycling and Traffic Calming Committee matters where NSW Government delegations require the Committee's consideration. It will also take matters to the Committee where, after community engagement, it is clear there are a significant number of opposing views in the community. After recommendation by the Committee, delegated City staff will then make a final decision.

46. We will continue to work collaboratively and consult with specific stakeholders, including with car share operators.

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Chief Operating Officer

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