



American Planning Association
New York Metro Chapter

Making Great Communities Happen

APA NY Metro Chapter Policy Statement Car Sharing Zoning Text Amendment, Draft Proposal, July 2010

The New York Metro Chapter of the American Planning Association appreciates the opportunity to provide professional input on the proposed Car Sharing text amendment currently before the New York City Planning Commission. We are a professional and educational association of more than 1,450 planners working in New York City, Long Island, Westchester, and the lower Hudson Valley.

The professional planners of the New York Metro Chapter recognize that increased access to vehicles on a short-term as-needed basis would provide City residents with significant transportation, cost of living, and quality of life benefits, and potentially reduce demand for parking spaces. To the extent that the availability of Car Sharing encourages reduced rates of car ownership, potential reduced automobile use may help to alleviate congestion and associated air pollution. Underscoring the potential benefits of Car Sharing the American Planning Association -recently updated the organization's Transportation Policy Guide to include support of Transportation Demand Management programs, such as Car Sharing, to maximize efficiency of the complete transportation network.

We therefore applaud the Department of City Planning for formally recognizing Car Sharing in the Zoning Resolution.

We encourage the Department of City Planning and the City Planning Commission to consider, as part of the current text amendment or future amendments, to relax some of the limitations on Car Sharing in the proposed zoning text. Specifically, we recommend the following:

- Eliminate the maximum number of spaces allowed to be used for Car Sharing. This will allow the demand for Car Sharing to decide how many spaces are allocated in a given parking facility. Car Share companies will have no incentive to pay for spaces to house shared cars that will not be used, so relatively few Car Sharing spaces will likely be provided in areas where private automobile ownership is widespread. However, in areas where there is the highest population density, this efficient use of passenger vehicles can be better accommodated. Capping the number of Car Sharing spaces reduces the potential benefits, including reduced parking demand that the proposal aims to facilitate.
- Allow Car Share spaces to reduce the number of required spaces by a 2 to 1 ratio in zoning districts that include minimum parking requirements. This is significantly below the findings that car sharing reduces auto ownership by nearly 7 cars per available shared car, further supporting New York City's sustainability initiatives.

We further encourage the Department of City Planning and the City Planning Commission to continue their ongoing parking studies and to continue to pursue progressive policies which facilitate efficient transportation options in New York City.