

PEG CITY CAR CO-OP ON-STREET PILOT PROJECT: REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

REQUEST:

Peg City Car Co-op (PCCC) is very grateful to the WPA for the opportunity to participate in an on-street pilot project to test the feasibility of placing four carsharing vehicles on public streets. With less than six months before the pilot end date, Peg City Car Co-op is requesting that the WPA and related City departments establish a regulatory and policy framework that will govern the relationship between carsharing providers such as Peg City Car Co-op and the City of Winnipeg.

Results to date:

Between August 1, 2020 and January 31, 2021 four cars were placed on Winnipeg city streets at 100 Hargrave St., 200 Hanbury, 575 McGee St. and 81 Roslyn Rd. The on-street parking locations allow members to pick up and return the car to the same designated parking spot. Over the first six months of the pilot a total of 1,153 trips were made in these four cars, for a total of 4,573 hours of usage. This is the equivalent of 60 cars taken off the road or parked during the same period. *(COVID-19 note: bookings were lower across the fleet by about 10-15% compared to what we would expect in the same period if it wasn't for COVID restrictions.)*

The four cars serve 401 members within a range of 500 metres, for an average of 100 members per car. The highest user density is located at Hargrave St. and Roslyn Rd. with a total of 174 and 171 members respectively, living within 500 metres of each vehicle. It is of note that the neighbourhoods with the most significant parking pressures are also the areas with the most carsharing members.

Peg City by the numbers:

Peg City Car Co-op (PCCC) started with 3 vehicles and 40 members in 2011. Today PCCC has 1900 members using nearly 60 vehicles in 10 neighbourhoods across Winnipeg.

Leading up to 2020, PCCC was growing at a rate of 30% each year, and in 2020, PCCC grew by 50%. This exponential growth in 2020 is attributed to increased public awareness about the benefits of car sharing compounded by the radical restructuring of peoples' day to day transportation needs since the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic.

PCCC expects to have 100 vehicles in the fleet and 3,250-3,500 members by 2022.

On-street Pilot Request Context:

A barrier to Peg City Car Co-op's growth is parking availability on city streets or on city owned property. Currently, PCCC must enter into parking arrangements with private land-owners, apartment management firms, or parking management firms and as a result the PCCC struggles to find parking in the neighbourhoods in which their service is growing the fastest. The lack of on-street parking options is impeding access to shared vehicles and growth of the PCCC service.

For example, currently Peg City Car Co-op has three vehicles in the Spence neighbourhood and serves over one hundred members and we plan to expand to more than six vehicles in the next two years to serve continued (and growing) demand. Peg City Car Co-op has similar expansion plans for all neighbourhoods it serves.

On-street parking meets several diverse policy objectives as set out by the City of Winnipeg including Our Winnipeg/Complete Communities, Parking Management Strategy and Winnipeg's Transportation Strategy. Peg City Car Co-op is supported by partners such as The Exchange Biz, Downtown Winnipeg Biz and CentreVenture and nearly 2000 members.

Urban carsharing plays a key role in changing driving behaviour and decreasing pressure on roads and parking infrastructure. As international research shows, carsharing reduces congestion by shedding as many as 15 vehicles per carshare vehicle, helps reduce vehicle miles traveled, and facilitates switching to other modes of transportation like transit, biking and walking. Behavioural changes in conjunction with more efficient and well maintained carsharing vehicles means that carsharing also helps reduce CO2 emissions.

Carsharing is becoming an essential transportation infrastructure for many Winnipeggers who are seeking more convenient, cost effective and environmentally friendly transportation options. Roads are tax supported infrastructure and expanding access to transportation options that are accessible, safe and meet people's needs efficiently is beneficial for everyone.

In many Canadian cities on-street parking for carsharing has already been built into city by-laws (Vancouver, Calgary, Halifax and so on) and Peg City Car Co-op is requesting that the City of Winnipeg consider the same.

Best practices overview:

To help frame the regulatory and policy framework, Peg City Car Co-op has compiled best practices from across North America. This document is not an exhaustive overview of said regulations and policies, but nonetheless provides an overview of key elements that make on-street parking programs successful. Broadly speaking, carsharing is most

successful in cities where carsharing is seen as an environmental and urban benefit rather than a source of revenue. Outlined are a few key focus areas.

Regulatory and approval process

It's important that regulations and policies are right-sized for the City and the operating carsharing organizations. Cities like Vancouver, which have well established and extensive regulations, are also high density metropolises with well established multinational carsharing organizations (zipcar, car2go). To ensure success in a smaller market such as Winnipeg, it is important that on-street parking is not over-regulated and has room to grow. A streamlined, efficient and transparent process to apply for on-street parking locations, with clear parameters set out for where vehicles can and cannot be located would allow the carsharing organization(s) to acquire permission for on-street parking in a timely manner.

For example, in Halifax the City's Parking Administrator reviews and approves on-street parking requests. In many other cities, carsharing organizations have a point of contact and work to find mutually acceptable parking locations.

Implications for Winnipeg:

- Locations are approved by the WPA and do not require adjacent property owner approval. Property owners and adjacent residents would be made aware of any parking changes in advance of carsharing station placement.
- Parking locations should limit residential disruption and be parked as close to the corner of a street as possible. Peg City Car Co-op will work with the WPA to find a parking location that is adjacent to an apartment building, park, commercial strip, or vacant lot. Attempts should be made to not park directly in front of single-family detached residential frontage.
- WPA can create reasonable and clear exclusion zones because of loading zones, school zones and other high conflict areas.

Cost

The most optimal situation is where the city sets prices for cost recovery, rather than trying to make money on parking provided to carsharing organizations. Cities like Halifax and Edmonton charge carsharing organizations fees for cost recovery only, ensuring that carsharing organizations are not hampered by unstainable parking costs.

Implications for Winnipeg:

- The carsharing company pays for any setup and administration costs.
- The carsharing company pays an annual fee for all parking locations

- In metered spots, WPA charges rates based on average private monthly lot costs, or a percentage of meter fees.

Parking caps

Onerous restrictions on the number of on-street parking spots for carsharing can lead to poor delivery of services and under-supply of vehicles. This is why it's important that no limit, or high caps are placed on parking locations. The key goal is to evenly distribute carsharing to limit impact on those who do not carshare, while meeting demand of carsharing users. Once again, Halifax has led the way with not setting strict limits on allocating parking locations. Larger cities like Vancouver have set some limits in metered locations.

Implications for Winnipeg:

- The WPA may set parking caps, but they should be reviewed yearly and be set high so as to not impede the growth of carsharing in a neighbourhood. Peg City Car Co-op, suggests a cap of 30 station-based locations per carshare organization, for the first year.
- The WPA can set limits to reduce clustering of locations and ensure distribution to limit impact on other users.

Enforcement

Enforcement is also a key factor in ensuring that on-street parking works efficiently and fairly. As such, designated parking locations should be enforced by local police, and traffic enforcement, with violators ticketed or towed. Most cities that provide on-street parking for carsharing enforce locations to ensure that locations serve the needs of carsharing users.

Implications for Winnipeg:

- The WPA should inform by-law enforcement of on-street locations and be prepared to monitor locations and enact strict enforcement in problem locations
- PCCC is equipped to be able to identify vehicle information so that tickets can be mailed to those who park illegally in designated locations

Summary

For carsharing to succeed and thrive in Winnipeg it will require the support of City Council and the administration. By supporting carsharing, vehicles will be taken off the road, reducing parking pressures, reducing congestion and providing more transportation options for Winnipeggers.

While some individuals may view on-street parking as a impostion and a removal of available parking spots, what PCCC is requesting actually facilitates the removal of vehicles by removing up to 15 vehicles for every shared vehicle and decreases demand for parking. Moreover, one carsharing vehicle can support up to 30-40 individuals. These individuals have a right to access vehicle transportation in a safe and convenient manner, similar to those who choose to own private vehicles.

Reference documents

Car Sharing Policy Review. August 2017

Halifax Regional Municipality By-law Number P-120 Respecting On-street Parking Permits.

Supporting Carsharing Vehicles in the City of Vancouver: North American Parking policies. August 2018