

Testimony for the City Planning Commission
Car Share Zoning Text Amendment Hearing
by
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My name is Nicolas Ronderos and I'm Director of Urban Development for Regional Plan Association, a private, nonprofit research and planning organization serving the greater New York metropolitan region.

RPA supports the proposed Car Share text amendment as a step that would help improve the efficiency of automobile use and parking space, help reduce carbon emissions and acknowledge a service on which many New Yorkers increasingly rely.

As recognized by the Department of City Planning, car sharing is a service that can improve the mobility of New Yorkers, providing them with a wider range of affordable transportation choices, while helping increase parking availability within neighborhoods. The city's proposed city-wide zoning text amendment would clearly define car share vehicles parking requirements in off-street parking garages and lots in suitable locations.

The off-street parking regulations in New York City were written nearly a half century ago, and did not anticipate the recent emergence of car sharing. No clear rules for where car share vehicles can or cannot locate are in place and clarification is needed. The proposed regulations for accessory parking and public parking facilities precisely address this lack of guidance and standards. The proposed zoning text amendment would define car sharing in the Zoning Resolution and establish clear guidelines allowing car sharing vehicles to park in public parking facilities, as well as in parking facilities accessory to residential, commercial and other uses.

This "tiered" approach to propose car share limitations by zoning district is a good compromise between the benefits of the new car sharing characteristics and the concerns of the communities regarding parking spaces for all vehicles. By providing greater flexibility to higher density areas and more restrictive limitations to less dense areas the proposed amendment reaches the right balance between transit and vehicle ownership in areas of the city that require cars. In fact, future consideration should be given to eliminating the cap for car sharing as a percentage of allowable off-street parking in high-density areas of Manhattan, Queens, Brooklyn and the Bronx.

The potential benefits of car sharing far outweigh its drawbacks. As an affordable alternative to car ownership and complement of transit service, car sharing is poised to increase mobility. Community benefits include reduced neighborhood

parking demand and reduced driving by car sharing users reducing congestion, greenhouse gas emissions and air pollution.

RPA believes that the Car Share Zoning Text Amendment is a step in the right direction taken by the Bloomberg Administration as part of its technical revisions of the Zoning Resolution and is a welcome development for modernizing the code.

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