

CITY OF BURNABY

TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

*HIS WORSHIP, THE MAYOR  
AND COUNCILLORS*

**SUBJECT: CAR-SHARING IN BURNABY**

**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

1. **THAT** Council authorize staff to explore the potential of implementing reserved on-street parking for car-sharing vehicles at three locations, in consultation with the Co-operative Auto Network, as outlined in this report.
2. **THAT** Council forward copies of this report to Tracey Axelsson, Executive Director, Co-operative Auto Network; and John Beaudoin, Manager of Transportation Demand Management, TransLink.

**REPORT**

The Transportation Committee, at its Open meeting held on 2005 April 20, received and adopted the attached report seeking approval to implement reserved on-street parking in support of car-sharing.

Respectfully submitted,

Councillor Nick Volkow  
Chair

Councillor D. Evans  
Vice Chair

Councillor L. Rankin  
Member

COPY: CITY MANAGER DIR. ENGINEERING DIR. PLANNING & BLDG.
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**TO:** CHAIR AND MEMBERS  
TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

2005 April 12

**FROM:** DIRECTOR PLANNING AND BUILDING

OUR FILE: PL 94000 - 01

**SUBJECT:** CAR-SHARING IN BURNABY

**PURPOSE:** To seek approval to implement reserved on-street parking in support of car-sharing.

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**REPORT**

**1.0 BACKGROUND**

At the Transportation Committee meeting of 2005 February 9, representatives of the Co-operative Auto Network and TransLink requested the City's assistance in expanding car-sharing services in Burnaby, by designating up to 10 on-street parking spaces for car-share vehicles. The Committee referred the issue to staff for a report.

**2.0 WHAT IS CAR-SHARING?**

Travel by car differs from other modes in that so much of the user's cost is paid up-front, in terms of vehicle purchase, insurance, etc. Even under a lease arrangement, the incremental cost for individual trips is relatively low, when compared to the fixed cost of vehicle ownership. Once a person has made the choice to buy a vehicle, the low incremental cost for individual trips tends to encourage the use of that vehicle (even if only to justify the initial purchase cost).

Car-sharing provides an alternative, in which all user costs become incremental, trip-based costs. The car is purchased by a central organization. Members in that organization can then book and use the car for individual trips. They are charged for their actual use (time and distance), which includes a contribution towards the car's initial purchase price, on-going maintenance, etc.

Car-share vehicles are parked in designated spaces throughout an urban area, so that members do not have to travel far to pick up their vehicles. Parking sites tend to be in areas of higher density and greater transit service, to maximize access to the vehicles.

Car-sharing began in Switzerland in 1987, and came to North America in 1993. Car-sharing services are now available in 50 North American cities, and 600 cities world-wide.

Car-sharing is different from car-pooling, such as that operated locally by the Jack Bell Foundation. A car-pool vehicle is still associated with one person, and, therefore maintains the higher up-front costs and lower incremental cost for individual trips. A typical car-pool vehicle serves the auto needs of between two and six people, on a relatively fixed schedule, and only for commuting. A typical car-share vehicle serves the auto needs of about 18 people, at the times of their choosing, for any trip purpose.

In Greater Vancouver, car-sharing services are offered by the Co-operative Auto Network (CAN). From its beginning eight years ago, this non-profit organization has grown quickly to a current membership of 1,800 people sharing 92 vehicles.

In Burnaby, CAN vehicles are presently parked near the Metrotown and Edmonds SkyTrain stations (one car at either location). This puts them within walking distance of many people in these high-density areas. It also makes them accessible to many others, via the transit services that converge on those locations. CAN presently has 40 members in Burnaby.

Car-sharing has also been incorporated into the UniverCity development at Simon Fraser University, as part of the Cornerstone development. This may have been the first instance in the world of a development being permitted fewer parking spaces on the basis of a package of measures that included provision of a car-sharing vehicle. Others have since picked up on this idea, and CAN now gets regular inquiries from developers. Car-sharing allows for a lower development cost, and less provision of unneeded parking space. The City of Vancouver is now proposing to make this a permanent feature of their Parking By-Law, allowing one car-sharing stall to eliminate the need for three regular stalls.

However, the focus of this report is on vehicles that require a designated on-street location, making them accessible to all members rather than just those living in a particular development.

One of CAN's partners is TransLink. TransLink is promoting the provision of CAN vehicles at SkyTrain stations. For example, a vehicle parked at Edmonds SkyTrain station can be used as follows:

- For commuting (e.g., a commuter can travel by transit to Edmonds SkyTrain station, and then drive a CAN vehicle to an area where the road network does not yet support transit service, such as the eastern Big Bend area).
- During the day (for business or personal trips made from the commuter's work place).
- Evenings and weekends (by CAN members living near Edmonds SkyTrain station, or able to get there by transit).

## 2.1 The Benefits

Car-sharing provides benefits to the members, and to the larger community. Studies have shown that car-sharing:

- Reduces the need to purchase additional vehicles. A survey of CAN members found that 28% gave up their vehicles just prior to joining CAN, and only 14% of CAN households own vehicles.
- Increases travel by transit and bicycle.
- Reduces emissions per distance driven, since the CAN fleet is more fuel-efficient than the overall car fleet.
- Reduces vehicle-kilometres travelled by car (thus reducing pollution, easing congestion, etc.). For example, on an annual basis, a typical CAN member travels about 90% less by car than an average driver.

CAN members list the cost savings, environmental benefits, and ease of use (vehicle maintenance is handled by CAN; not individual members) as the most important benefits that they get from membership.

## 3.0 WHAT IS NEEDED NOW?

As noted, the best way to operate car-sharing is to have an on-street parking space reserved for each car-sharing vehicle. The public location means that the vehicle is accessible to all members; not just those of a particular building. The location also increases the visibility of the service, thus allowing for higher membership levels and greater benefit to the community. Furthermore, the public location means the vehicle is accessible at any time of day.

So far in Burnaby, this is only possible at Edmonds SkyTrain station, where a publicly-accessible location was identified within the SkyTrain right-of-way. In contrast, the existing car at Metrotown SkyTrain station is parked on-street, without benefit of a

designated space. It is, thus parked in whatever space is available when a member returns the car, thus making it difficult for the next member to find the vehicle.

If the service is to expand to other locations in Burnaby, publicly-accessible *off*-street parking is generally not available. (Even where there is land below the SkyTrain alignment, it is not necessarily accessible from the street in a safe manner. Nor does it necessarily preserve on-street parking, as an off-street space would still need a curb cut to access the street.) The best option for full access is a reserved on-street space.

With this in mind, CAN and TransLink are asking that the City designate several on-street parking spaces as reserved for CAN use. Spaces would be designated with the traditional “no stopping” sign, amended as illustrated in *Figure 1* to permit car-sharing vehicles. The initial sites (one vehicle each) would be near the Patterson, Metrotown, and Lougheed SkyTrain stations. Other locations could be added in future, and would not necessarily be restricted to SkyTrain stations. However, the total number of reserved parking spaces is expected to be small, perhaps on the order of ten spaces over a three-year period.

**Figure 1: Typical Signage for Car-Sharing**



#### 4.0 DISCUSSION

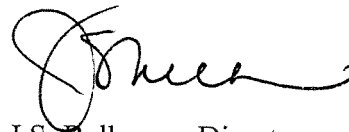
By changing the cost of car ownership and usage to a model that is entirely trip-based, car-sharing promotes the use of alternative modes including transit, cycling, and walking. It is, therefore consistent with the philosophy of the Burnaby Transportation Plan. Aside from being a direct financial benefit to the members, it benefits the general public through reduced vehicular use (and, thus less congestion, pollution, and noise). The Burnaby Transportation Plan also indicates that the City will promote the use of low-emission vehicles, which can also be achieved through promotion of car-sharing.

Supporting car-sharing requires very little from the City, consisting only of the installation of new “no stopping except car co-op” signs at the reserved parking spaces. Being essentially the same as our existing “no stopping” signs, the visual impact on the surrounding area will be insignificant. This approach has already been implemented in other cities, such as Vancouver and Portland, that support car-sharing.

As with all curb designations, City staff would review the potential on-street car-share parking locations to determine if they are compatible with other City interests, such as safe traffic operations, pedestrian circulation, transit movements, etc. Following this review, a further report would be forwarded to Council with recommendations.

## 5.0 CONCLUSION

It is recommended that City staff be authorized to explore the implementation of reserved on-street parking for car-sharing vehicles, in consultation with the Co-operative Auto Network. It is further recommended that copies of this report be sent to Tracey Axelsson, Executive Director, Co-operative Auto Network; and John Beaudoin, Manager of Transportation Demand Management, TransLink.



J.S. Belhouse, Director  
PLANNING AND BUILDING

SR/jc

cc: City Manager  
Director Engineering