

Car Sharing Policy



More car sharing, less congestion



Prepared by: Streets Alive Yarra

www.streets-alive-yarra.org

facebook.com/streetsaliveyarra/

Foreward

Streets Alive Yarra is a community group who advocate for:

- shopping streets that build wealth for traders by attracting regular business from local residents;
- a network of safe streets that enable those who wish to use active transport to do so, thus freeing up space on the streets for those who prefer to drive; and
- evidence based and economically rational investment in transport infrastructure.

Our vision is for vibrant and profitable local businesses, owing to increased patronage, and traffic that still flows freely. Parking near shopping streets is easy to find because the first 5-10 spots on each side street are allocated for visitors and deliveries, with drivers guided to vacant bays by using sensors. We see our streets being safely, comfortably, and conveniently used by people from 8 to 80 years old, irrespective of whether they choose to walk, cycle, use public transport or drive.



Image credit: OCULUS Landscape Architecture and Urban Design

Streets Alive Yarra was founded in 2017 and now has over 1,200 likes on Facebook, increasing by ~ 20 per week. A network of local champions develop concepts and proposals for how to improve their local street or precinct. Streets Alive Yarra is also Yarra's Walkability Action Group (WAG) representative for Victoria Walks.

Further information is available at:

- www.streets-alive-yarra.org
- facebook.com/streetsaliveyarra/

Summary

The draft Car Sharing Policy should not be approved in its current form. It needs to be drastically redrafted before being sent out again for another round of public consultation.

The draft Car Sharing Policy fails to be internally consistent. For example, if the policy objective is to reduce the need for car ownership, then the policy should not create barriers to the introduction of more car sharing vehicles, either via an artificial cap on the number of vehicles, or irrational limits on the siting of vehicles.

Specifically, the policy should recommend placement of car sharing vehicles directly on residential streets. It should be just as easy to use a car sharing vehicle as it is to use a private vehicle, and this includes proximity to homes.

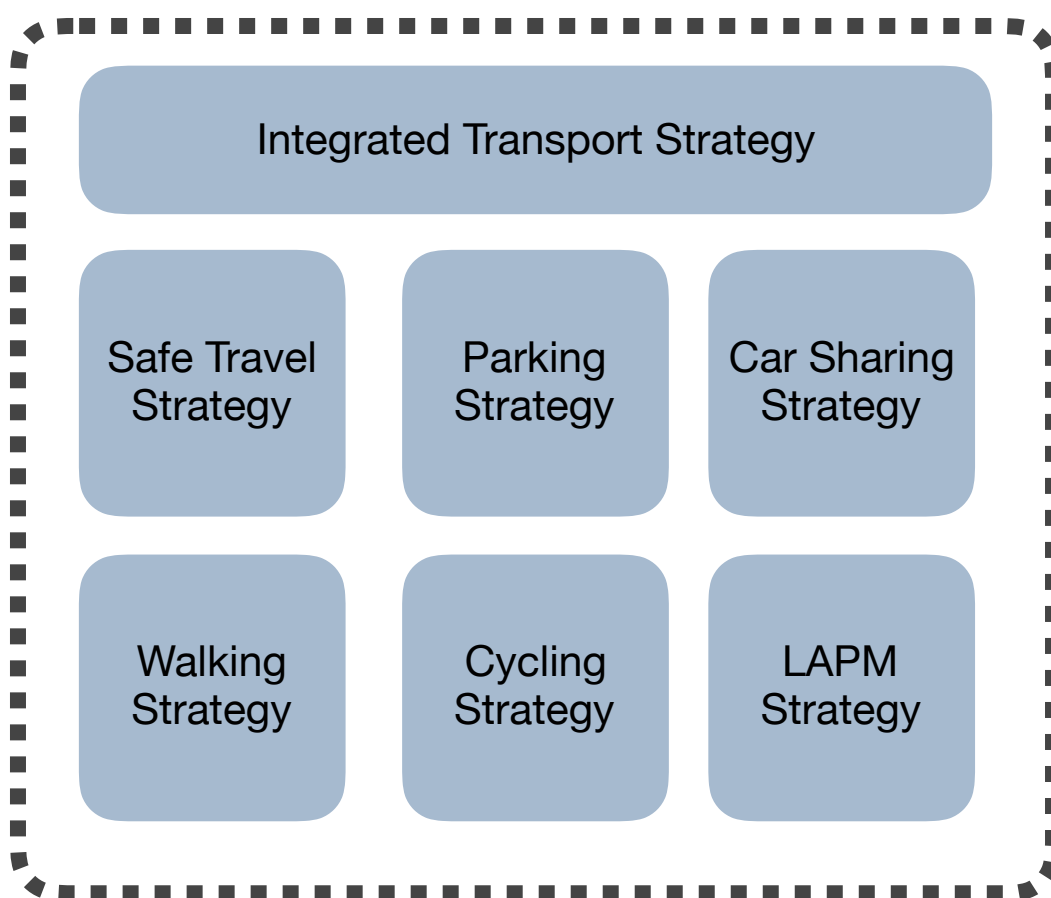
Similarly, the policy should eliminate the artificial cap on the number of car sharing vehicles and allow service providers to fully supply market demand. To be an attractive alternative to the private vehicle, car sharing services providers need to be able to offer sufficient quantity and range of vehicles near each group of customers; such as multiple small vehicles, a large vehicle and a van. This requires a much larger total number of car sharing vehicles in Yarra.

Introduction

Streets Alive Yarra welcomes the opportunity to offer feedback on the draft Car Sharing Policy.

The primary deficiency with the draft policy is that it does not exist within the framework of an Integrated Transport Strategy. Without a holistic, internally consistent set of transport strategies, stand-alone strategies such as the existing Parking Strategy or the draft Car Sharing Policy can be criticised for lacking adequate justification for ambitious, yet rational policies or targets.

The solution is for the City of Yarra to develop a cohesive, consistent set of strategies, that clearly state the public benefits of reserving public land for car sharing:



The second deficiency is that the draft policy does not comply with the goals of the City of Yarra Parking Management Strategy Action Plan.

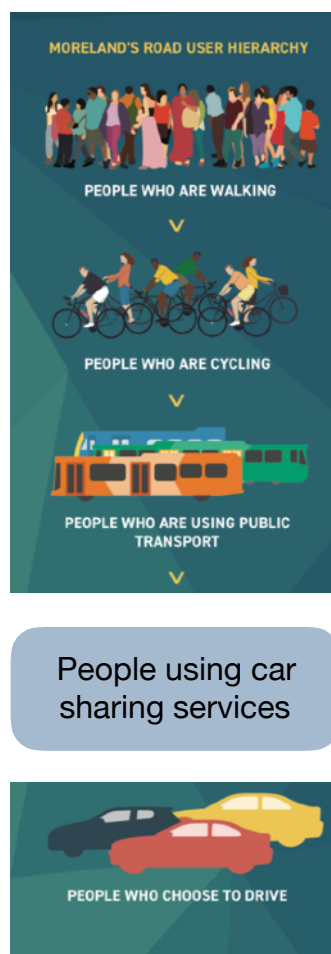
3.2 Goals

The overall **goals** of the City of Yarra Parking Strategy are to:

1. *Reduce the number of cars needing to park in residential streets;*
2. *Enable a reduction in the road pavement space used for parking where a community benefit can be achieved particularly where pedestrians, cyclists, public transport and persons waiting for public transport will benefit; and*
3. *Plan and manage transport and urban development to minimise the need for people to have to drive cars so that the demand for parking is contained and managed effectively.*

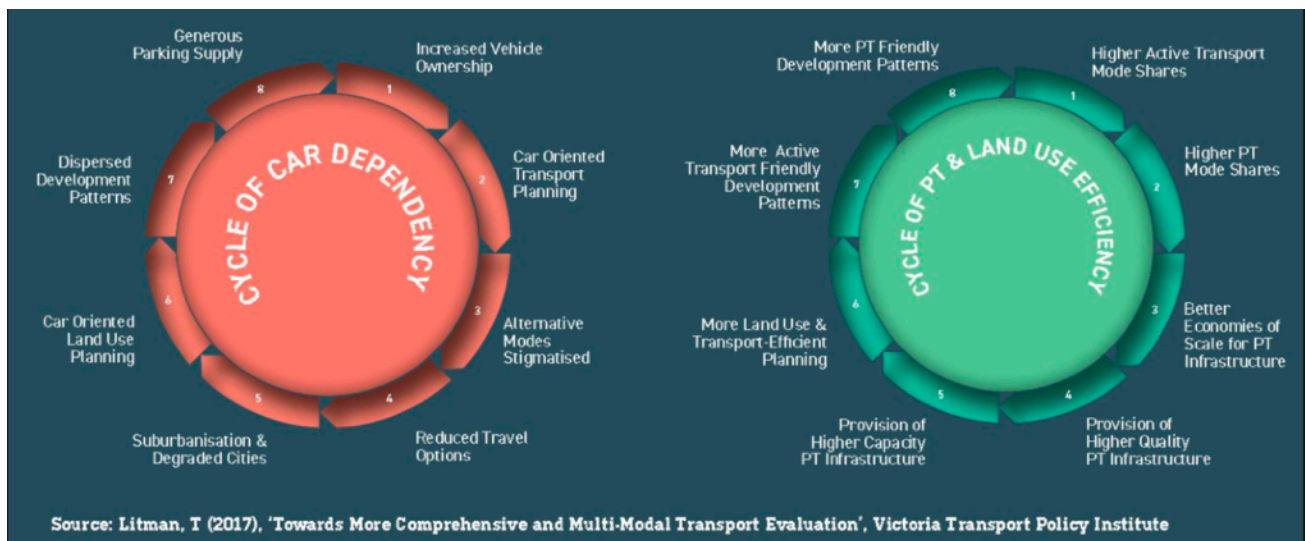
Source: <https://www.yarracity.vic.gov.au/-/media/files/services/parking/parking-management-strategy.pdf>

To comply, the draft policy needs to enable car sharing service providers to offer an attractive service. In other words, the draft policy needs to propose far higher quantities of car sharing vehicles and much better locations for car sharing vehicles, at the expense of parking for private vehicles. Specifically, the policy should publish a clear parking hierarchy, consistent with the overall land use hierarchy or road user hierarchy.



Source: Moreland draft transport strategy, modified by Streets Alive Yarra

The policy would be strengthened if it followed the lead of the City of Moreland and clearly stated that it aims to help break the “cycle of car dependency”:



Source: City of Moreland draft parking strategy

The draft strategy also appears to be internally inconsistent because it refers to Council’s “Parking Management Strategy (2013-2017)” whereas the Council website:

<https://www.yarracity.vic.gov.au/services/parking>

only publishes the “Parking Management Strategy Action Plan 2013 – 2015”:

<https://www.yarracity.vic.gov.au/-/media/files/services/parking/parking-management-strategy.pdf>

Cap on numbers

The draft targets of 231 or 283 vehicles by 2023 proposed in section 7.2 are far too low. It is irrationally inconsistent with the stated target of enabling ratepayers to transition away from private vehicles.

For example, If each car sharing vehicle can replace ~ 5 private vehicles, then the policy should target a total quantity of car sharing vehicles roughly equivalent to 1/5 of the present number of private vehicles. For example, if Yarra has ~ 90,000 residents and ~ 40,000 vehicles, then 20% is ~ 8,000 car sharing vehicles. This should be the target and, if necessary, can also be a cap.

Car sharing has a positive impact

Clause 7.3 should be deleted. It is completely unsubstantiated and contradicts the introductory statement of “reducing the need for car ownership”. Car sharing does not have a negative impact, it has a positive impact.

Siting of parking

Section 9 needs to be completely re-worked.

To comply with Safe Systems principles, Council Parking Hierarchy requires a complete overhaul. A Safe System assessment would clearly identify that on-street parking on shopping strips creates hazards that impose significant risks on road users, such as dooring, and would recommend the relocation of parking away from shopping strips and toward the first 5-10 spots on each side street. Specifically, the first spot on each side street should be for loading and deliveries, the next few spots should be metered to support shoppers, and the last couple should be for car sharing. The remaining spots on the side street can then be used by private vehicles.

Clause 9.2 (i) needs to be completely re-worked. Demand for metered spaces is only high because the price is too low. Pricing can be used to balance supply and demand. If the City of Yarra implemented demand responsive pricing for all metered parking bays, then 85% occupancy could be maintained even if the number of parking bays changed.

Section 9.3 (Other Streets) needs to be completely re-worked. Again, demand is a function of pricing. Demand is only high because the price is artificially low. The charge for annual residential parking permits is well below the market rate. Any service that is offered below market rate is subsidised. Council should not be subsidising the parking of private vehicles. Pricing is a tool that is available to Council. If Council controls demand by using pricing then it is easy to re-allocate some spots for car sharing, especially as adding car sharing will actually reduce demand in the medium term.

Consider the alternative scenario. If Council was presently charging the market rate for on-street parking, e.g. \$1,000 per year for 30,000 permits, it would have an annual revenue of \$30m. If Council had an extra available budget of \$30m, it is difficult to believe that Councillors would vote to spend this money to subsidise private parking, instead of spending it on other Council services.

Unjustified burdens on private enterprise

In Attachment 1, clauses 1.1.3., 1.1.5., 1.1.6., 1.1.8., 1.1.10., 1.1.11., 1.1.12. and 1.1.13. should be deleted. These clauses are unjustifiable burdens on private enterprise. How are the metrics meant to be quantified? How are the service providers meant to comply? Council should allow business and competition in the free market to respond to market demand. For example, in Clause 1.1.12., Customers should have the right to hire a car for > 2 days.

In Attachment 2, Clause 2.2 should be voluntary. Council should not create unnecessary barriers to the uptake of car sharing vehicles. If retained, any data supplied to Council should be openly accessible to ratepayers.

In Attachment 2, Clause 2.4.1 needs to be re-worded. The statement 'demand for on-street parking is high' is not accurate without the proper context, i.e. 'demand for on-street parking is high if it is priced 98% lower than market rates'. Even, better, all parking spots in Yarra should have restrictions, requiring some form of payment for use, either via meters or via paid parking permits..