

GoGet Carshare Response to the Draft National Urban Policy for Australia

As the first and leading professional carshare service provider in Australia, we welcome the opportunity to respond to the Australian Government's draft National Urban Policy.

Our submission focuses on issues relating to urban transport sustainability. With over 20 years of experience, we possess extensive knowledge and expertise in transport sustainability, reducing congestion, and decreasing car dependency. We offer several recommendations for additions to the National Urban Policy.

We note that when we refer to 'carshare', we refer specifically to professional round-trip carshare (represented by GoGet, Flexicar, Popcar and Kinto in Australia). We do not advocate for a peer-to-peer carshare (represented by Uber Carshare, Turo and DriveMate), as this model is far less environmentally sustainable than professional round-trip carshare¹²³.

Summary of round-trip carshare benefits

- Carshare members reduce their annual vehicle kilometres travelled (VKT) by up to 50%⁴ reducing congestion on our roads and CO2 produced
- Carshare members increase their use of active and public transport⁵
- Carshare vehicles are typically newer than the private vehicle fleet, making them safer and more environmentally friendly. The older versions of cars lack such safety features as side airbags and much stronger crash structures and better crumple zones and they have a much higher fatality rate⁶⁷⁸
- For residents who do not need a car to commute, carshare is cheaper than owning a private car, so it reduces the cost of living for households. Carshare also is a valuable tool in replacing seldom-used secondary cars

There is an opportunity to include professional round-trip carshare into a national urban policy to help drive a reduction in transport emissions and enhance urban liveability - by decreasing congestion and improving air quality.

¹ Boyle, P. (2016). The impact of car share services in Australia. International Car sharing association.

² Litman, T.. (2000). Evaluating Carsharing Benefits.

³ Hartl, B., Sabitzer, T., Hofmann, E., Penz, E. (2018). "Sustainability is a nice bonus" the role of sustainability in carsharing from a consumer perspective

⁴ Boyle, P. (2016). The impact of car share services in Australia. International Car sharing association.

⁵ Boyle, P. (2016). The impact of car share services in Australia. International Car sharing association.

⁶ Children's Hospital of Philadelphia. (2020). Study finds younger and older drivers more likely to drive older, less safe vehicles

⁷ Power, J. (2017). Secondhand danger: Old cars increase risk for younger drivers, research shows.

⁸ Rhoades & Morrow. (2022). Do Older Cars Cause More Accidents?

Policy recommendations

Stop subsidising private cars through Novated Leases to achieve urban sustainability and return lost tax revenue

Novated leases allow employees to acquire vehicles using their pre-tax income, resulting in tax savings for buyers. This effectively means that the government subsidises private car ownership, which contributes to private car dependency and undermines urban sustainability.

The ongoing subsidisation of private car ownership contradicts efforts to promote sustainable urban mobility. Private vehicles significantly contribute to congestion, pollution and urban sprawl. Additionally, subsidies for private cars undermine the viability, and discourage the adoption, of more sustainable transportation options such as public transport, active transport, rideshare or carshare.

We recommend ending novated leases. Another option is to support the ability for residents to novate sustainable forms of transport, such as public transport, bikes/e-bikes/micro-mobility, and professional carshare. This will expand novation companies' portfolios and encourage the uptake of more sustainable transport options associated with the goals of the national policy.

Professional carshare (and other sustainable transport options) can provide access to vehicles instead of ownership. For instance, GoGet has successfully partnered with businesses to provide access to vehicles for their employees on a flexible, as-needed basis. This model allows employers to systemically transition to more sustainable transportation options.

Implement a National Road User Charge

Introducing a national road user charge is essential to accurately reflect the true cost of road use, including wear and tear, congestion, environmental impact, and urban and social consequences. This charge ensures that those who drive more in private cars, contributing more to urban sustainability issues, pay their fair share. It also encourages these users to adopt alternative sustainable transportation modes. Road user charges can also fund infrastructure improvements and support public transport projects.

We recommend that public transport and professional carshare should be exempt from or receive a discounted road user charge to encourage adoption of sustainable transport modes and disincentivise private car trips. Additionally, the way carshare fees are structured resembles a road user charge, as users pay for every hour and km of car use, which is a contributing factor to why carshare members decrease their annual vehicle kilometres by 50%⁹.

⁹ Boyle, P. (2016). The impact of car share services in Australia. International Car sharing association.

Introducing a national road user charge will also protect the government's revenue when Australian road users switch to electric vehicles (EVs) in the future. Currently, road use fees are primarily collected through petrol fees, leaving a funding and policy gap as people transition to EVs. The road user charge should be introduced urgently, considering the government's policies facilitating the transition to more sustainable vehicles. For example, the New Vehicle Efficiency Standard incentivises people to transition to EVs, which is a welcome move. However, EV buyers need to be aware of potential future cost implications of their EV transition to ensure long-term viability. This is necessary to break the cycle of free road use these vehicles are currently enjoying, which, albeit with lower emissions, still contributes to congestion.

Create mode share targets for metropolitan areas

The federal government should set mode-share targets for metropolitan areas that Local Governments would aim to achieve by providing the right infrastructure.

One of the ways to achieve these targets would be by reducing parking supply in developments, promoting active transport options, and ensuring access to professional carshare services to decrease vehicle ownership.

The State government would be able to implement those targets in their local Zoning and Land Use Planning and Development guidance. The local government would, in turn, use those targets in the Development Control Plans/Planning Schemes that can enable more sustainable development. That way, the Federal government sets leadership and clear direction for state and local governments to follow.

Target example - Create targets for sustainable transport options with densification

Considering the high impact that private transport has on the urban environment, it is crucial for the federal government to take the lead in setting the targets or standards for sustainable transport in or near new developments and areas of future densification. Continuing to build parking for private cars in unsustainable numbers will hurt housing affordability, encourage private car use, and lead to unliveable congestion and even higher emissions.

This current Policy draft lacks clear, actionable targets necessary to drive nationwide efforts to reduce carbon emissions and decrease car dependency in areas where there is public transport and other sustainable transport services (e.g. carshare, rideshare, micromobility). Establishing such targets is essential for creating a unified approach to sustainable transportation across all levels of government.

Some councils are leading the way in creating sustainability targets. For example, the City of Port Phillip (VIC) utilises carshare alongside other initiatives to manage the overall number of vehicles in the area, even as the population grows.¹⁰ Federal level policy will ensure all

¹⁰ City of Port Phillip. (2023). Car Share Policy.

levels of government have clear direction and the tools they need to make meaningful changes.

By setting clear targets and standards for sustainable transport, the federal government can ensure that sustainable transport becomes a cornerstone of urban development. This will reduce emissions and promote a more efficient and liveable urban environment for the generations to come. A cohesive national strategy will support local governments in implementing effective measures, fostering a culture of sustainable transport, and improving the quality of life in our cities.

Other Suggested changes

Although professional carshare is a proven tool to reduce congestion, car ownership and emissions in Australia, the draft policy has not acknowledged professional carshare. Below are the quotes from the guide, in which we believe shared mobility should be mentioned in “Our urban areas are sustainable”. Suggested changes are **in red**.

- Page 31. “Urban areas play a pivotal role in combating climate change by transitioning to zero emissions by 2050. Modal shift to **public, active and shared transport**, reducing household energy use and sustainable building materials all contribute to lowering emissions in our cities.
- Page 31. Cities can lead the climate solution by promoting sustainable transport. Reducing transport emissions is crucial for achieving urban emissions reduction targets. Promoting active travel, public **and shared** transport, transitioning to electric vehicles are vital strategies to curb emissions and improve air quality. Cycling and walking are healthy forms of transport that use energy, land, financial, and material resources wisely with minimal impact on neighbourhoods, city and town centres, urban bushland, air and water quality. They offer a low-cost form of transport and improve access to services and activities for people with otherwise limited transport choices. Measures like establishing mode share targets are needed to create cleaner and more sustainable cities. These strategies not only contribute to environmental sustainability but also enhance public health outcomes and the liveability of our cities.
- Page 31. Buildings and construction activities are significant contributors to urban emissions. Improving the energy performance of homes and buildings helps to bring down emissions and support health outcomes through improved thermal comfort. Improving energy efficiency standards, adopting sustainable building materials, and implementing innovative design practices are essential steps to decarbonise the built environment. Retrofitting older buildings will also be critical to get Australia to zero emissions. By prioritising sustainable and circular practices in construction, cities can significantly reduce their carbon footprint and contribute to achieving global climate goals. **Integrating professional carshare into new developments can significantly reduce parking needs. By incorporating carshare, developers can build at least 10 fewer parking spaces for every carshare vehicle included. This reduction in parking infrastructure translates to multiple benefits: lower construction costs, reduced development emissions, and ultimately, the potential for more affordable housing.**

- Page 35. Possible actions. Collaborate with the business sector to achieve sustainable outcomes. Collaborating with carshare, ride share and other circular economy mobility businesses to promote more sustainable and healthier lifestyles

Background: Benefits of Professional Carshare

Decreasing emissions and congestion

Professional carshare acts like an opt in road user charge, which causes members to prioritize other transport modes and reduce Vehicle kilometres travelled (VKT). Studies in Australia have shown a 50% VKT¹² reduction from members who give up private car ownership and choose carshare, which leads to a substantial reduction in emissions and congestion.

Removing cars from the streets

Carsharing is a powerful tool for achieving environmental sustainability in cities. By reducing the overall number of cars on the streets, it frees up valuable space for green areas. This transformation helps rejuvenate urban environments, fostering healthier and more pleasant communities. Generally, cars in Australia are used from ten to eleven hours per week¹¹. This means that vehicles need to be stored somewhere within our cities for 90-95% of the time. Each carshare vehicle parked in a dedicated on-street space can effectively replace at least 10 privately owned vehicles: this reduces CO2 produced during the manufacture and destruction of these vehicles¹².

Our members significantly decrease their car ownership, as seen in Figure 1.

Car Ownership Before GoGet and After GoGet

Australia, 2023

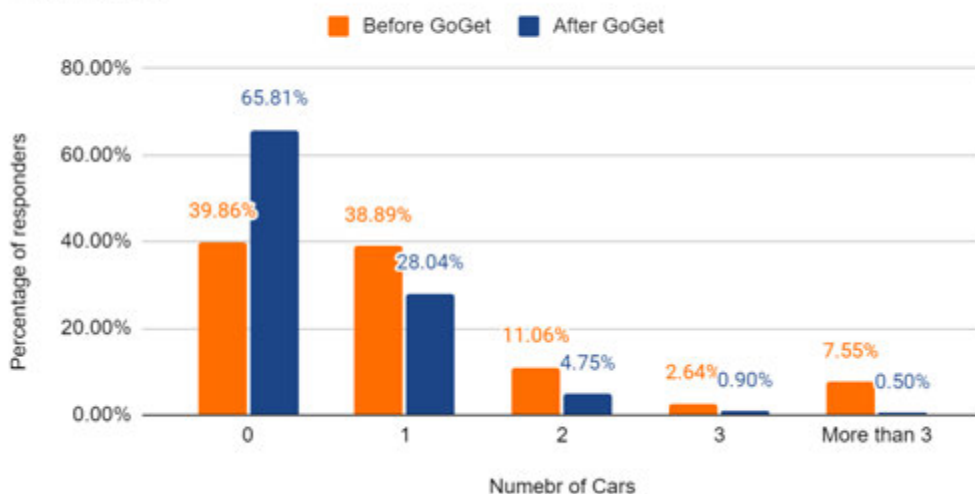


Figure 1 Car Ownership in Australia reduces after joining carshare, 2023

¹¹ Fraire, G., Smith, S. G., Zinkiewicz, L., Chapman, R. L. Sheehan, M. C. (2007). At home on the road? Can drivers' relationships with their cars be associated with territoriality? Journal of Environmental Psychology

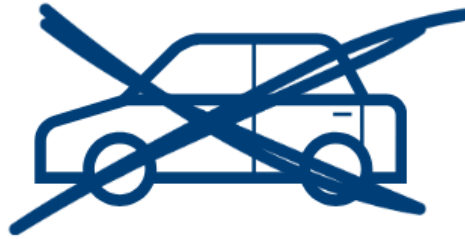
¹² Boyle, P. (2016). The impact of car share services in Australia. International Car sharing association.

- 68% of GoGet members do not own a car, which is a 26% decrease in car ownership since people joined GoGet.
- Respondents owning one car decreased by 11% from 39% to 28%.
- Ownership of two cars dropped by 6% from 11% to 5%.
- The percentage of respondents owning more than three cars fell to a very small number: only 1.4% from 10% before GoGet.

As of June 2024, there are 79 members per car on average. This is a significant improvement in comparison to private car ownership. 55% of our members have not bought a car, thanks to GoGet carshare.



**79 Members
per one car**



**55% of members have
deferred a car
purchase**

Reduction in car ownership saves a significant amount of space on the streets. In NSW, GoGet members saved 1,874,409 km of street parking.



**1,874,409 km saved
in street parking**

Figure 2 shows a real example from the City of Sydney of how carshare helped free up street space for greenery and trees.



Figure 2 The City of Sydney Council was able to take away parking space and replace it with the green area – Google Maps

Decreasing emissions in developments

By integrating carsharing services into residential developments, Australian cities can reduce private parking spaces, leading to more affordable housing and promoting sustainability.

On-site carsharing lowers the need for private, off-street parking spaces, allowing developers to allocate less space to parking and more to units, green spaces, or amenities. This reduces construction costs, emissions embed during the construction, and fosters housing affordability.



Figure 3 Carshare reduces need for parking

Conclusion

GoGet thanks the government for working toward creating a more sustainable Australia. We urge the government to take further steps towards sustainability by reducing car dependency. Specifically, we recommend stopping private car subsidies through novated leases, implementing a national road user charge, and setting federal mode-share targets. Additionally, we strongly encourage the inclusion of carshare in the National Urban Policy (mostly to the section “Our urban areas are sustainable”), as carshare significantly reduces vehicle kilometres travelled, lowers emissions, and encourages the use of active and public transportation.

We are committed to collaborating with the government to promote sustainable transportation options and support the transition to a greener, more liveable urban future.

Christopher Vanneste

Head of Space
GoGet Carshare

Katya Eagles

Council Policy Liaison
GoGet Carshare