

## **Free-Floating Car-Share Program - Increase Access to the Number of Permits**

**Date:** October 11, 2023

**To:** Infrastructure and Environment Committee

**From:** General Manager, Transportation Services

**Wards:** All

### **SUMMARY**

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The purpose of this report is to seek City Council approval to increase the number of free-floating car-share permits an individual car-share organization/company can acquire under the free-floating car-share program. The current program allows individual companies to purchase a maximum of five hundred (500) free-floating car-share permits out of the total two thousand (2000) permits made available by the City of Toronto. If approved, individual companies would be able to acquire up to one thousand (1000) free-floating car-share permits each on a first-come, first-serve basis.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

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The General Manager, Transportation Services recommends that:

1. City Council authorize up to 1000 Free-Floating Car-Share parking permits be issued to a car-share organization/company on a first-come, first-serve basis.
2. City Council amend City of Toronto Municipal Code Chapter 925, Permit Parking, as follows:
  - a) by deleting from Section 925-5.1 A(2) the number "500" and inserting the number "1000"; and
  - b) by deleting from Section 925-5.1 B(5) the number "500" and inserting the number "1000".
3. City Council authorize the City Solicitor to introduce the necessary bills to give effect to City Council's decision and City Council authorize the City Solicitor to make any necessary clarifications, refinements, minor modifications, technical amendments, or by-law amendments as may be identified by the City Solicitor or General Manager, Transportation Services, in order to give effect to Recommendations 1 and 2, above.

## FINANCIAL IMPACT

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An anticipated revenue increase of \$0.539 million is expected from the increase in the number of parking permits per car-share organization/company in 2024 which will be included for consideration in the 2024 Operating Budget Submission.

The Chief Financial Officer and Treasurer has reviewed this report and agrees with the financial impact information.

## DECISION HISTORY

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City Council, at its meeting of October 2, 3 and 4, 2017, referred Item PW23.8 on "Free-Floating Car-Share Pilot and Interim Policy" to the General Manager, Transportation Services for further consideration and to report back to the January 31, February 1 and 2, 2018 City Council meeting.

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2017.PW23.8>

City Council, at its meeting of January 31 and February 1, 2018, referred Item CC36.14 on "Revised Free-Floating Car-Share Pilot and Interim Policy" to the General Manager, Transportation Services for further consideration and to report back to the April 11, 2018, Public Works and Infrastructure Committee meeting.

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2018.CC36.14>

City Council, at its meeting of April 24, 25, 26 and 27, 2018, adopted, as amended, the "Revised Free-Floating Car-Share Pilot and Interim Policy" (Item PW28.11).

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2018.PW28.11>

City Council, at its meeting of May 22, 23, and 24, 2018, through Member Motion 41.54, directed the General Manager, Transportation Services, to further consult with the free-floating car-share industry and to report back directly to City Council if any changes are recommended to improve the pilot.

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2018.MM41.54>

City Council, at its meeting of July 23, 24, 25, 26, 27 and 30, 2018, adopted, as amended, the "Update on Free-Floating Car-Share Pilot and Interim Policy" (Item CC44.33). <http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2018.CC44.33>

City Council, at its meeting of June 29 and 30 2020, adopted with amendments, the "Free-Floating Car-Share Pilot - Review" (Item IE12.7).

<https://secure.toronto.ca/council/agenda-item.do?item=2020.IE12.7>

## COMMENTS

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Car-sharing has continued to flourish as a mobility option in the City of Toronto. Car-sharing programs offer a number of benefits to individuals, businesses, the environment, neighbourhoods, and transportation network, including:

- reduced vehicle ownership rates;
- reduced household transportation costs;
- reduced vehicle kilometres travelled (VKT);
- reduced greenhouse gases and emissions; and
- increased walking, cycling, and transit use.

The Free-Floating Car-Share program, after being piloted for a period, was approved as a permanent program on July 1, 2020. Under the program, individual companies are allowed to access a maximum of five hundred (500) free-floating car-share permits out of the total 2000 permits made available by the City of Toronto. Once a car-share company applies for a permit, a windshield decal is issued for each car-share vehicle registered under the program. As a condition of the permit, the following rules are in-place within permit parking areas / streets:

### *1. Excluded Areas*

Streets and areas that are at 100 percent capacity or more for residential permit parking are excluded from the car-share company's service area via geo-fencing within the respective car-share company's trip reservation system. A list of excluded streets/areas that are at 100 percent capacity or more for residential permit parking is provided by the City at the beginning of the permit period and updated every six months.

### *2. Parking Limit*

A car-share vehicle must not be parked continuously in any one place for a period exceeding seventy-two (72) consecutive hours.

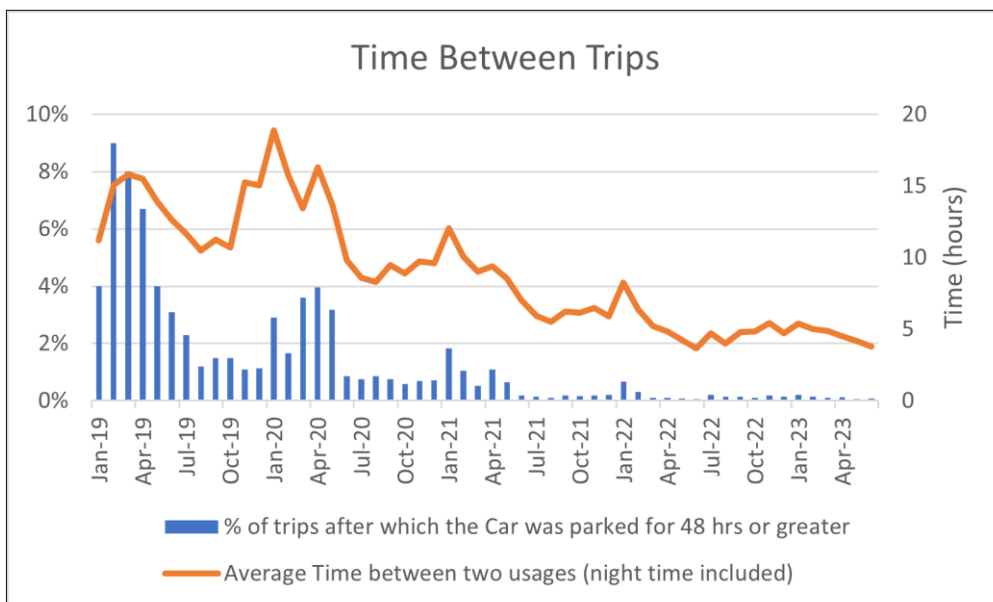
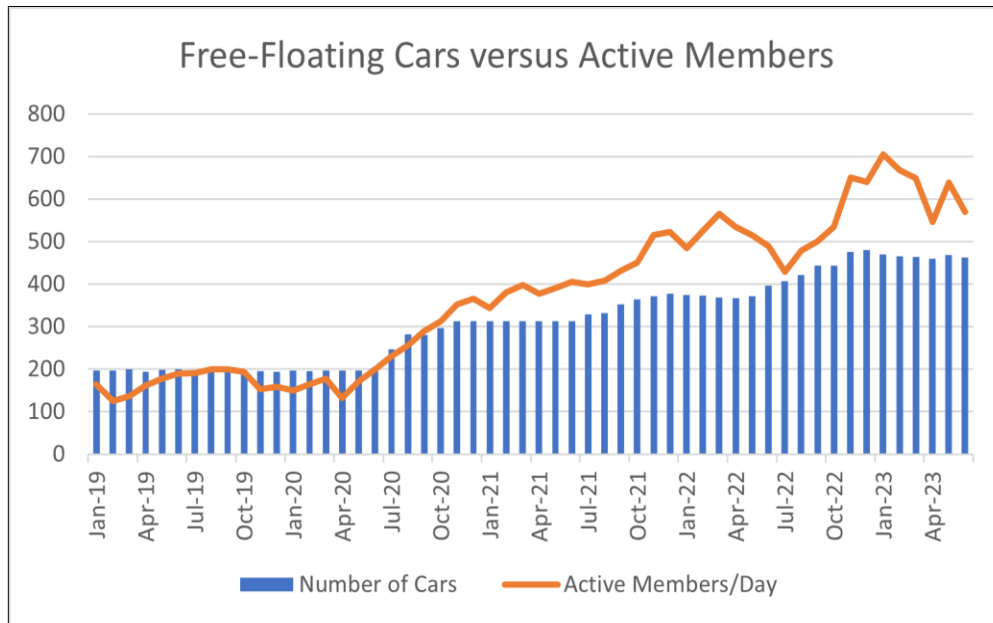
### *3. Clustering of Car-Share Vehicles*

No more than two car-share vehicles from the same company is allowed to park on a street block (i.e., a street block is defined as that physical portion of the road between two consecutive intersections). The car-share company must move its vehicle(s) within two hours of becoming aware of its car-share vehicle(s) clustering or after receiving notification from the City or a resident.

To date, Communauto FLEX has been the only car-share company to participate in the program and their operations have been highly successful and popular among the residents of Toronto. Since Communauto started operations in the City of Toronto, they have experienced year-on-year growth in membership. As of Spring 2023, the number of members is significant; approximately twenty-six thousand (26000) residents have signed up to the service which is a 52% growth in membership from 2022. Many of these members use the service regularly - on average there are 570 active users per day. The service commonly runs out of available cars, particularly on weekends, and the time period that cars are parked between trips rarely exceeds 10 hours (which is inclusive of overnight hours). The two graphs that follow illustrate how the active

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membership of the free-floating program has increased over time and how time between vehicle reservations has decreased illustrating a growing demand for the car-share service.

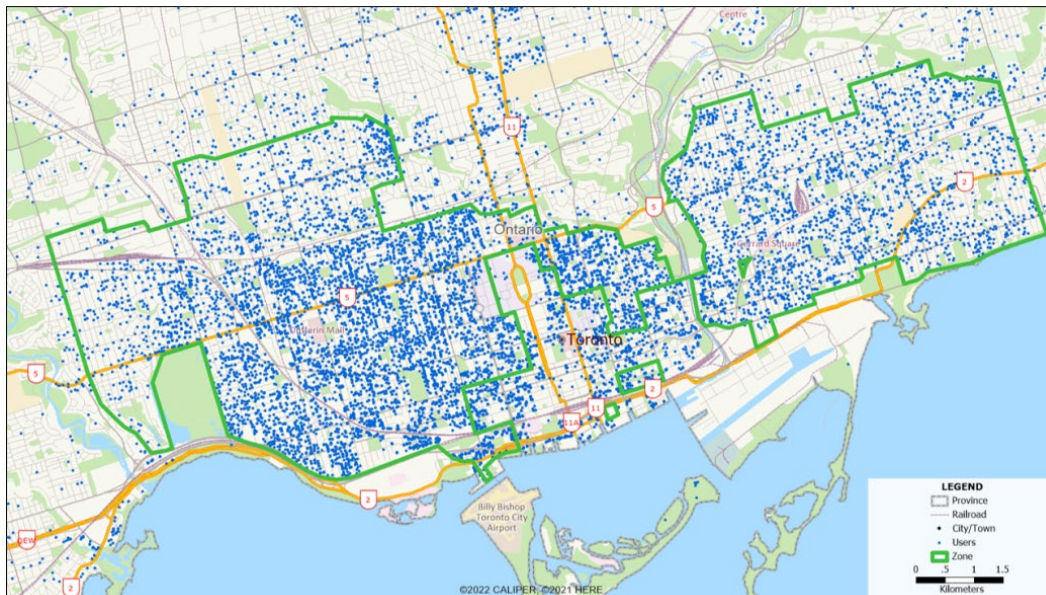


Communauto has expressed the desire and capacity to grow their fleet to match the demand but have indicated that the cap on available free-floating car-share permits (i.e., maximum 500 per company) is a significant barrier.

The demand for their free-floating car-share service far exceeds their fleet cars. Current members of the program want to access cars on the weekend, but often find that they are sold out. The lack of supply also causes members to keep cars for longer over the weekends since they know the vehicle will be sold out once they need a car on a Saturday or Sunday. The ability for members to access a vehicle when they need it is

essential to avoid members from purchasing a personal car and often an on-street permit. The map below illustrates where members of the Communauto service live across Toronto.

We can see that the free-floating car-share service has been embraced by residents of Toronto and increasing the number of available permits may be helpful in extending the service city-wide.



For the duration of their operations in the City, Communauto has provided a valued service to residents of Toronto and has continued to comply with the terms and conditions of the free-floating car-share program. To ensure that the City continues to reduce vehicle ownership, household transportation costs, vehicle-kilometres travelled, and reduce greenhouse gases and emissions, it is important to make the necessary adjustment to the free-floating car-share program to support and help companies like Communauto grow their service to benefit the users of the service and the City.

It is therefore recommended that the number of Free-Floating Car-Share permits that each individual car-share organization / company can purchase be increased from 500 to 1000, on a first-come, first-serve basis. At this time, consideration is not being given to increasing the total number of free-floating car-share permits in the program beyond 2000 approved by City Council.

## CONTACT

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**SIGNATURE**

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