

FAQs: Point-to-Point Car-sharing Demonstration Study

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Q: What are the blue and white cars that say “car2go”?

They are part of a demonstration study for point-to-point car-sharing. You may have seen them first in the District of Columbia. In May 2016, Arlington County began trying out the system with car2go, setting up a fleet of vehicles that may be used as part of the cross-jurisdictional service between Arlington County and Washington, DC. The exciting new feature of this service, compared to other kinds of car rental or car-sharing, is that you can pick up a car2go car in one part of the cross-jurisdictional area and leave it in another. This also allows you to take a car for one part of trip and take another form of transport for another part of your trip. The maximum vehicle fleet size in the Arlington County area is 200 vehicles and car2go will rebalance cars in excess of this number.

Q: How do I use car2go?

Similar to other car-sharing services, first you become a member by joining online. Then car2go issues you a membership card. With that card, you can unlock any car2go vehicle by tapping on the sensor mounted to the windshield; then you get in, start your trip and take the car to your destination. The system works the same way in Arlington as it does in DC, Austin, and other cities where car2go operates. You don't need to pay meters if you use them, and if the car needs gas the company provides a gas card so you never pay for gas out of pocket. You are charged for vehicle use by the minute, only for the minutes you use.

Q: Where can I park with a car2go car?

You can park anywhere you could legally park your own car – parking lots, street spaces, garages, in your friend's driveway. However, you can only start and end trips in legal, public on-street parking spaces within the cross-jurisdictional area (Arlington, VA and Washington, D.C.). When you park in legal on-street spaces, you won't have to pay the meter because it's been paid in advance by the company to make it more convenient for users. For Washington, D.C. specific parking requirements please refer to <http://washingtondc.car2go.com/dc-car2go-faqs/>

Q: Can I take a car into DC?

Yes, trips started in Arlington County can be ended in Washington, DC, and vice versa.

Q: Will this program generate more traffic?

At least 10 studies of car-sharing services across the country found that car-sharing reduces vehicle ownership rates by allowing people to shed household vehicles or postpone purchases. The findings show around 9-13 vehicles removed from the road for every new car-sharing vehicle. Several studies also indicate that car-share members drive at least 25% fewer miles overall after they join while significantly increasing their walking, biking, and carpooling. Each of these effects is believed to contribute to a community's ability to manage and mitigate traffic congestion.

Q: Why does this car get to park in my zone?

car2go pays the County for their vehicles to park in Residential Parking Permit (RPP) zones, so users can take the cars all the way home if needed or visit friends in your neighborhood. The system relies on the home zone being inclusive of as much of the community as possible. This helps prevent bunching of vehicles in some areas and not others, but it also makes the system useful to members who may want to pick one up near home, near work, near family's house, near school, at the movies

or at the park. The more that people find the system useful, the more likely it is that households will shed or postpone purchase of a vehicle, and this will help Arlington realize the benefits of car-sharing.

Q: How long will these cars stay parked in one place?

Typically, car2go vehicles only stick around in one place for a matter of minutes or a few hours, through the natural functioning and rebalancing of the system by its users. But just in case this doesn't happen on its own, car2go will move vehicles that stay in RPP zones for 24 hours, and 36 hours in other parts of the county. These instances will be reported to staff and help staff and car2go identify how to make the system work better.

Q: Does car2go work the same as Zipcar or Enterprise car-share?

Zipcar and Enterprise car-share currently operate traditional station-based car-sharing in Arlington, where a vehicle occupies a reserved space, and the trips start and end from that space. Some of these cars are on-street, some are parked in garages. car2go vehicles do not require reserved parking spaces and they can be picked up in one place and dropped off in another.

Q: Is car-share the same as Uber? Lyft?

No, car-share is not the same as Uber or Lyft. Uber and Lyft are drivers-for-hire, a service most similar to taxis. Car-sharing doesn't employ drivers. Car-sharing is a variation on car rental, but it does a few important things to make it easier to integrate into a lifestyle with many transportation options:

1. It distributes the cars conveniently throughout the community, rather than just in a few car rental locations, so it doesn't take a car to get to a car;
2. It charges by the minute or hour, so you only have to rent a car for precisely the time that you need one; and
3. It bundles all costs (gas, maintenance, insurance, parking, taxes, and more) into the rate, which allows drivers to see the costs clearly when they make each choice to drive, or weigh it against other travel options.

Q: Why does the County support car-sharing?

Car-sharing has the potential to reap benefits for our community, including:

- Reducing vehicle miles traveled on our roads
- Increasing walking, bicycling and carpooling
- Making first-mile last-mile connections to transit
- Improving transportation options for those who are least likely to own a car
- Reducing household transportation costs
- Reducing greenhouse gases and particulate emissions.

Q: How can I give feedback on this demonstration study?

You can send an email to carsharing@arlingtonva.us or visit arlingtonva.us and search for "car2go" to provide feedback through an online comment form (if you are providing feedback on cars parked on your street, please provide the license plate number, street name and the name of the next cross street). You may also request that County staff and car2go come to visit you at your next Civic Association meeting, where we can explain the program, answer questions, and take down detailed feedback on your personal or business experience with the program.