

## Resolution of Council

**23 March 2026**

### **Item 3.2**

#### **City of Sydney's Response to the NSW Government's Draft Share Bike Regulations**

##### **Minute by the Lord Mayor**

To Council:

Share bikes are now an essential part of Sydney's transport landscape, with almost 4 million trips recorded in our area last year. They provide an affordable and sustainable transport choice, reduce congestion and leverage the investment in safe cycling made by the City of Sydney.

**However, with the growth in share bike popularity the City has experienced oversupply. There are too many share bikes cluttering footpaths and restricting access due to minimal regulatory oversight, despite the City repeatedly calling for stronger State regulation since 2017.**

I'm pleased the NSW Government has recently released draft regulations to establish a statewide framework for managing e-mobility share schemes including share bikes. But in their current form, the draft regulations do not provide councils with the funding, or tools required to play their part in creating a safe, accessible and orderly share bike system.

City staff are working collaboratively with nearby councils and have many of the same concerns about the draft regulations. This is our chance to get the regulation right for our communities.

## Positives in the draft regulations

Parts of the draft regulation and associated documents are encouraging:

- **Mandatory helmets and visible IDs on every bike**, improving safety and accountability.
- **Go-slow and no-go zones**, where Councils can dictate where share bike companies are required to program the e-bikes motors to stop or go slower.
- **Better share bike safety standards**, including speeds and power.

## Key problems with the draft regulations

The City's analysis of the draft regulations highlights critical gaps and misalignments with the City's expectations. These are as follows:

### 1. A funding model that does not reimburse Councils

The NSW Government proposes a levy of \$0.80 per trip on share bike companies but only allows councils to directly receive \$0.20 per trip, with the remainder going to Transport for NSW (TfNSW). This leaves councils with not enough funds to deliver bike parking, undertake parking enforcement and monitor schemes.

Transport for NSW propose to return some of their share to councils with a grants process, but there is no detail, no timeline, no guarantee the maximum levy will be charged no commitment to returning funds to the area they were collected from. This approach risks wasting money on grant administration instead of supporting the orderly share bike system our community needs.

***Councils need funding to recover the cost of managing share bikes, and fees/fines should come directly from the share bike companies to Council.***

### 2. No real caps on share bike fleet sizes and number of operators

The draft regulations say Councils can set share bike fleet caps and refuse operators, but they allow Transport for NSW to overturn these decisions at any time. This loophole is intended to avoid a patchwork of different operators across Local Government Areas (LGA), but it is an awkward solution and blocks councils from managing the impacts of share bikes in their own areas.

The City believes a cleaner approach is for the NSW Government to take responsibility for the overall system, while councils set the target fleet numbers for their local area, as we are best placed to understand what our streets can safely accommodate. Natural fluctuations will occur as bikes move around, and a coordinated State-led system can manage this, particularly during peaks and major events.

To gain community trust, the NSW Government must also ensure operator numbers and service quality meet expectations. Starting the new system with two high-quality operators is a practical step that supports user choice and encourages healthy competition.

***Caps of share bike numbers and operators needs to be overseen by Transport for NSW with advice from councils.***

### **3. The ability to refuse shared e-scooter schemes**

Despite well-documented safety concerns and examples of cities, and even whole countries, abandoning shared e-scooter schemes, the NSW Government continues to signal its intention to legalise e-scooters. While it was reassuring to hear Minister Graham state recently that e-scooters will not be legalised until problems with e-bikes are under control, the City remains concerned that the current guidance still anticipates future e-scooter legalisation.

***Councils need the explicit power to refuse shared e-scooters from operating in our areas.***

### **4. Inadequate plan for orderly share bike parking and enforcement**

Minister Aitchison recently praised the City's approach to installing Designated Bike Parking Areas (DBPAs) on-street, and we continue to identify new opportunities for DBPAs, including some near traffic signals. However, the draft Parking Guidelines released with share bike regulations state that DBPAs near signals are "typically not suitable" and also discourage them on State and some regional roads - directly contradicting the Minister's comments and the successful approach already used by the City.

The Guidelines also do not align with Transport for NSW's existing rules, which gives councils responsibility for these decisions. Councils are well-placed to determine suitable DBPA locations and have multiple channels to seek Transport for NSW input when required.

The draft regulations do not provide workable powers for councils to enforce share bike parking outside DBPAs. Instead, the consultation material implies the Public Spaces (Unattended Property) Act 2021 (the PSUP) is the solution to this issue, despite a recent review of the Act showing that it is not an appropriate mechanism to enforce share bike parking.

Given the number of share bikes operating in our area, some high-demand DBPAs may require added infrastructure, such as simple devices that keep parking orderly. We are proposing a universal, docking-style approach. This differs from other cities, where docking systems typically align with a single bike-share provider. As this infrastructure increases costs, it further strengthens the need for councils to receive a fairer share of funding from share bike companies.

***The NSW Government needs to align the Parking Guidelines with the Minister's intent, give councils clear authority over installing DBPAs and enforcing share bike parking and ensure funding arrangements allow us to deliver DBPAs, including universal docking-style infrastructure where needed.***

### **5. Weak customer service standards**

The draft regulations require operators to report data and complaints, but do not set standards about appropriate complaint handling. Without reviewing these requirements, the City has no way to ensure operators will be required to perform to an acceptable standard or to use complaint handling as a factor when deciding which companies are suitable to operate in the City.

***The regulations need to be updated so that share bike companies must meet clear customer service standards, including timely complaint resolution and transparent reporting, so that only share bike companies who provide a reliable, responsive service can operate.***

## **6. Lack of technology specifications - topple detection, noise limits and geofencing**

The City continues to see issues with toppled share bikes blocking footpaths, loud audible signals disturbing residents and poorly parked share bikes. These problems particularly affect people walking and using mobility aids and undermine safe and orderly streets.

Share bike company requirements to pinpoint the location of individual share bikes very accurately supports efforts for orderly bike parking (geofencing). It means that councils can create more precise parking areas that show up clearly in the share-bike apps. This helps riders park correctly within designated spaces and prevents bikes from spilling outside the intended area. Riders would also be unable to end or “log off” their trip until their bike is fully inside the approved parking zone, further improving compliance.

This level of accuracy would allow the City to properly enforce bikes that are left outside the required parking areas. In addition, it makes it possible to set up reliable zones where bikes are not allowed to be ridden at all, or where their motors automatically slow down or switch off.

The draft regulations do not adequately address technology requirements. There is no rule requiring operators to detect toppled bikes, despite this technology existing for e-scooters, nor any requirement for timely operator response. There are also no limits on device noise. Without these safeguards, bikes will continue to create access hazards, generate unnecessary noise, and fail to park correctly, leaving councils without the tools needed to manage public space impacts.

***The NSW Government needs to update the regulations to require toppled-bike detection with timely operator response, quieter devices, and accurate geofencing so share bikes can be safely, quietly, and responsibly be integrated into our streets.***

## **THE RT HON CLOVER MOORE AO**

Lord Mayor of Sydney

Moved by the Chair (the Lord Mayor), seconded by Councillor Miller –

It is resolved that:

- (A) Council note the release of the NSW Government's draft share bike regulations and acknowledge both the positive elements and the significant concerns identified in the subject Minute;
- (B) the Chief Executive Officer be requested to prepare a formal submission to the NSW Government on the draft regulations, advocating for:
  - (i) a fair funding model that delivers an adequate share of per-trip fees directly to councils to cover the cost of on-the-ground management of share bike schemes including bike parking infrastructure, compliance monitoring, and the installation of universal docking-style parking where needed;
  - (ii) a State led system, with input required from local government and other land managers on:

- (a) target number of share bikes: with adjustments of fleet for daily/weekly peaks, seasonal variations or events; and
    - (b) maximum number of operators: Two high quality operators across inner Sydney for the first few years, with agreed service and customer service requirements;
  - (iii) clear local decision-making powers and ability to enforce, ensuring councils retain authority over the number, placement and enforcement of Designated Bike Parking Areas and have the ability to refuse shared e-scooter schemes;
  - (iv) modernised bike technology standards, including toppled-bike detection and mandatory operator response times, minimum share bike location accuracy (geofencing is within 2 metres or better);
  - (v) quiet-operation standards to prevent excessive device noise, particularly in residential areas; and
  - (vi) strong customer service requirements, including mandatory reporting on complaint types, locations, response times and resolution outcomes, measures to report on and ensure affordability for users and clear performance standards so that only operators who meet acceptable service levels can continue to operate;
- (C) the Lord Mayor be requested to write to the Mayors of nearby councils, including Woollahra, Inner West, Waverley, Bayside, Randwick and North Sydney, with a copy of the subject Minute and to encourage a unified approach to advocacy on key elements of the draft regulations; and
- (D) the Lord Mayor be requested to seek an urgent meeting with the Minister for Roads and Minister for Transport to outline the City's concerns and the changes required to ensure the regulatory framework for share bikes is safe, effective and aligned with local needs.

The Minute, as varied by consent, was carried unanimously.

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