Urban sharing in San Francisco

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Why did we select this snapshot?

The San Francisco Bay Area is seen as the cradle of the sharing economy and collaborative consumption, where large sharing platforms, such as Airbnb, Uber, or TaskRabbit originated. The city is supportive of ideas related to the gig economy, which is viewed as a major facilitator of employment in the future. The currently low unemployment rate in San Francisco (2.7%) is partially attributed to the gig economy.

Key findings

In 2012, Mayor Edwin M. Lee announced the formation of the Sharing Economy Working Group (SEWG), which mainly explored regulation of short- term rentals and its key outcome was the establishment of the Office of Short-term Rentals, which currently regulates accommodation sharing.

Sustainability challenges faced by the city:

- growing cost of living. housing shortage, number of cars, safety and equity

Focus areas

Mobility: mobility sharing is dominated by the TNCs Lyft and Uber, while peer-to-peer car sharing remains marginal. Lyft and Uber have become a regular transportation option for San Francisco residents and visitors. New systems for short-term e-bike and e-scooter rentals may have a significant impact on the future development and structure of TNCs. Autonomous vehicles are imminent in the near future, and have a potential to disrupt both TNCs and the public transit.

Accommodation: the accommodation sharing market, also called by the city representatives “short term rentals,” is dominated by Airbnb, VRBO and Home Away, which unite their forces in combating city regulations. According to the new regulation of 2018, the hosts 1) must be registered with the Office of Short-term Rentals; 2) must not rent out a separate unit for less than 30 days; 3) must not rent out their own homes for longer than 90 days per year.

