

Metro Transit Rideshare

FACTS FACTS FACTS FACTS FACTS

Alternatives to solo commuting

Workers save money, and arrive at work relaxed and ready to go. Employers get the benefit of tax breaks and more productive workers. These are among the many reasons that alternatives to solo commuting make so much sense.

Metro Transit Rideshare, in existence since 1977 and operated by the Metropolitan Council, promotes alternative transportation for commuters who live or work in the Twin Cities area.

Metro Transit Rideshare's mission is "to reduce the number of single-occupant vehicles on the roads and highways by providing information and services for alternatives to drive-alone vehicles." Alternatives include bus, light rail, bike, carpools, vanpools, telework, flexible or staggered work hours, and other travel-demand management strategies.

Online ridematching

Keeping up with the needs of commuters in the region, Metro Transit Rideshare has an online interactive ride-matching service. The Web

program operates 24 hours a day, seven days a week and allows commuters to register their home address, work address, and work hours, and find other people who want to carpool or vanpool.

One of the biggest advantages for commuters is that they can update their individual profile online and access potential matches as often as they need.

People who carpool or vanpool get benefits such as free, discounted or preferred parking and the ability to use high-occupancy-vehicle (HOV) lanes on the region's freeways, in addition to saving money on gas, insurance and other commuting costs.

Preferred parking

Metro Transit Rideshare works with companies, schools, private and public parking-ramp and surface-parking owners, cities and others to provide discounted, free and preferred parking spaces for registered carpools and vanpools.

Locations are primarily in the downtown St. Paul and downtown Minneapolis areas, with many companies in the suburbs also participating in the program.

Programs provide tax benefits to employers

In addition to reducing worker stress, some commuting programs provide tax benefits to employers. For example, the Metropass program allows employers a tax advantage of up to \$105 per month per employee if they underwrite the cost of annual unlimited-ride transit passes for all employees. Currently more than 140 companies are enrolled, making nearly 128,000 employees eligible for Metropass.

Another program, Commuter Check, provides vouchers that are redeemable for transit passes, tickets or tokens and to pay for vanpool fares. The vouchers are provided tax-free to employees in amounts up to \$105 per month.

TransitWorks!

TransitWorks! is a program that allows employees at participating companies an automatic 5 to 10 percent discount off the retail price of transit fares. A company representative simply orders the quantity and type of SuperSavers (31-day passes or stored value cards) needed for employees each

month. More than 500 companies throughout the Twin Cities offer this program to their workers.

What about emergencies?

All commuters who ride the bus or train, or who carpool, vanpool, bike or walk at least three days a week to work or school are eligible for the Guaranteed Ride Home Program. Registered commuters receive two vouchers every six months valued up to \$25 each. The vouchers are valid for a bus or train ride, or reimbursement of a cab fare, in the event of an emergency.

Employers receive free assistance

Metro Transit Rideshare provides a Commuter Benefits Specialist to work with employers and schools – at no charge – to identify the most effective commuting strategies for their workplaces. An interactive CD-ROM also is available for employers to learn more about available Metro Transit Rideshare commuting programs.

Council supports travel-management organizations

Metro Transit Rideshare provides support and funding for

five Transportation Management Organizations (TMOs) in the region. They include:

- 494 Commuter Services
- Downtown Minneapolis TMO
- Anoka County TMO
- St. Paul TMO
- Midway (St. Paul) TMO

TMOs focus on the needs of the business community and commuters in specific geographic areas. Metro Transit Rideshare focuses on the needs of business and commuters on a regional level.

Metro Transit Rideshare also hosts monthly meetings for all agencies working with businesses on travel-demand management (TDM) strategies. The meetings are designed for TDM professionals to meet, share information, brainstorm, and work on current and future projects.

The goal is to ensure funds for business outreach and other programs are used efficiently. Participants include Metro Transit Rideshare staff, TMOs, transit agencies and vanpool operators.

Annual promotions spur participation

To encourage carpooling, transit, biking and other commuting alternatives, Metro Transit Rideshare sponsors an annual Commuter Challenge event. The event engages busi-

nesses to promote commuting to their employees and offers hundreds of prizes.

Metro Transit Rideshare holds another annual event, the Commuter Choice Awards, to recognize companies, schools and individuals for their innovations in developing, implementing and supporting commuter transportation programs.

For more information

- Visit Metro Transit Rideshare at: www.metrotransit.org/rideshare/aboutrideshare.asp
- You can also call 612-373-3333 (Option 4) for more information.
- Links to TMOs and other commuting alternatives: www.metrotransit.org/otherTransOpts/index.asp
- Related fact sheets:
 - [Regional Transit Services](#)
 - [Metro Transit](#)
 - [Metro Mobility](#)
 - [Central Corridor](#)
 - [Hiawatha Light Rail](#)
 - [Transportation Planning](#)

Pub. 14-06-052 Oct. 2006