



## FACT SHEET March 2010

Contact: Kit Powis (510) 273-3650  
(510) 220-0364 (cell)  
powis@rideshare.511.org

### 511 RIDESHARE FACTS -

- 511 Rideshare is a FREE Web and phone service that helps commuters form carpools and vanpools. **Its mission is to reduce traffic congestion, clean the air, and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.**
- 511 Rideshare is funded by the Federal Highway Administration (FHA), the U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT), the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) and the Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD).
- 511 Rideshare has an outreach staff that provides free assistance to Bay Area companies in planning and developing customized commute programs. Services can include a customized 511-powered RideMatch Web page with a unique URL that lets employees find carpool partners among co-workers.
- The 511 RideMatch database currently averages more than 19,000 Bay Area commuters. And, approximately 1,000 new registrants are added monthly.
- Commuters can register for ridesharing using the free and secure online RideMatch System by visiting [www.511.org](http://www.511.org), click **Rideshare** ([www.ridematch.511.org](http://www.ridematch.511.org)). The 511 RideMatch Service provides online tools for commuters to earn incentives while tracking travel patterns and reducing their CO2 emissions.
- The 511 Rideshare Web site offers commuters an interactive Park & Ride-lot map with information regarding locations, plus carpool and HOV lanes.  
[rideshare.511.org/511maps/](http://rideshare.511.org/511maps/)
- Current regional and county-based benefits include:

#### Vanpools:

- \$900 start-up incentives for vanpools
- Seat subsidies (\$300) for vanpools that have lost participant(s)
- County-based incentives are also available from partnering agencies
- Free WiFi routers available for new, qualifying vanpools
- Free parking/priority parking with specific counties/employers
- Free assistance from 511 staff to help fill empty van seats
- Access to HOV lanes and HOV toll booths on Bay Area bridges
- Reimbursement (\$75) to drivers for DMV-required medical exam  
(info at: [http://rideshare.511.org/vanpooling/vanpool\\_incentives.asp](http://rideshare.511.org/vanpooling/vanpool_incentives.asp))
- Commuter pre-tax benefits for vanpool expenses  
(info at: [http://rideshare.511.org/rideshare\\_rewards](http://rideshare.511.org/rideshare_rewards))



## Carpools:

- Free Ghirardelli® Chocolate coupons for (new or current) carpoolers (info at: [http://rideshare.511.org/rideshare\\_rewards/ghirardelli.asp](http://rideshare.511.org/rideshare_rewards/ghirardelli.asp))
- Access to HOV lanes and HOV toll booths on Bay Area bridges
- Ongoing rewards and incentives to new and existing carpoolers (promotions are profiled on 511.org [click Rideshare] and e-mailed to current registrants in the 511 RideMatch System)
- County-based incentives are also available from partnering agencies ([www.rideshare.511.org/rideshare\\_rewards/county.asp](http://www.rideshare.511.org/rideshare_rewards/county.asp))
- Employer-based incentives including priority parking, rewards, etc. (check with employer's HR/facilities/management)

## RIDESHARE DETAILS

- The 511 Rideshare Web site has a commute calculator that highlights how much a commuter may save by sharing a ride. Plus, the calculator measures emission caused by solo driving. The commute calculator also estimates emission reductions when people carpool to work. (Available online: [rideshare.511.org/calculator/](http://rideshare.511.org/calculator/))
- A solo commuter driving 30 miles daily spews approximately 300 pounds of pollutants into the air each year. (Source: [rideshare.511.org/calculator/environmental.asp](http://rideshare.511.org/calculator/environmental.asp))
- Carpools and vanpools can reduce the average 30-mile commute by 20-30 minutes each way when they take advantage of carpool lanes.

## RIDESHARE NEWS AND TRENDS -

- Vehicles account for about 40 percent of California's greenhouse gas emissions. In the Bay Area, an estimated 50 percent of all greenhouses gases — more than twice that from local industry — comes from personal vehicles, according to a study, "Climate Change and the Bay Area, 2006." (Source Inventory of Bay Area Greenhouse Gas Emissions. [http://www.baaqmd.gov/pln/ghg\\_emission\\_inventory.pdf](http://www.baaqmd.gov/pln/ghg_emission_inventory.pdf))
- In a survey of the 511 RideMatch database, 59 percent of respondents said saving money on gas was one of the main advantages of carpooling and vanpooling. Forty-four percent cited the ability to use carpool lanes was also an advantage, as well as reducing their impact on the environment (43 percent). Assistance finding a carpool or vanpool partner was selected by more than 80 percent of survey respondents as an incentive for ridesharing. Forty-six percent selected financial subsidies as an incentive, and 42 percent selected a guaranteed ride home in an emergency. (Survey by JD Franz Research, Inc.)
- According to a survey by Field Research Corp., transportation dominated Bay Area concerns, as it has every year over the past decade. One-third of the poll's respondents said transportation -- traffic congestion, the condition of roads and bridges, and public transit -- was the most important Bay Area problem. The issue was of particular concern in the North Bay, where 41 percent said transportation was their No. 1 concern. In San Francisco, 25 percent put transportation at the top. (Results released March, 2007)



- A study of nationwide commute trends shows that approximately 12 – 14 percent of commuters carpool. (*Commuting in America III* study based on U.S. Census data from 1990-2004; published October, 2006.)
- Carpools are increasing slightly in the western U.S, due, in part to a growing immigrant population. A 2005 study by UCLA's Center for the Study of Latino Health and Culture, found that recent Hispanic immigrants were five times more likely than non-Hispanic whites to carpool.
- According to the 2000 U.S. Census Bureau, 14 percent of California's commuters carpool to work.
- Transportation costs are the second largest expense in U.S. household budgets after home ownership. (Source: Association for Commuter Transportation)
- As low-to moderate-income working families move further from work to afford housing, they end up spending as much, or more, on transportation costs than they are saving on housing. (*A Heavy Load: The Combined Housing and Transportation Burdens of Working Families*, October 2006, by Center for Housing Policy.)