



Berkeley-Charleston-Dorchester Council of Governments

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NEWS RELEASE

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For more information, please contact:

Andrea Kozloski, Special Assistant to the Director
BCD Council of Governments
(843) 529-0400
andreak@bcdcog.com

Vonie Gilreath, Mobility Manager
BCD Council of Governments
(843) 529-0400
vonieg@bcdcog.com

BCD Council of Governments Launches Regional Rideshare Program

RIDESHARE ADVANTAGES: In this time of limited family income, increasing gas prices, concern over air quality and a need to manage traffic congestion, sharing a car ride to work or special event is more important than ever! To assist with these efforts, **Trident Rideshare**, a free Internet-based rideshare matching service for commuters and other ride-seekers, launched by **the Berkeley-Charleston-Dorchester Council of Governments (BCDCOG)** in partnership with the **Trident Area Agency on Aging** at www.Tridentrideshare.org. Funding is provided by the Federal Transit Administration.

WEBSITE IS EASY TO USE: For traveling to work or other events, the new website allows individuals to find ridesharing partners to carpool, bicycle, walk or share a taxi or bus ride. The prime feature of this exciting website is a carpool-matching program which allows users to find ridesharing opportunities. Several large employers in the region are online to participate.

TECHNOLOGY: The BCDCOG is utilizing the Greenride system developed by Ecology & Environment, Inc. of Lancaster NY.; Greenride uses map-based technology to manage the ridesharing program. Rideshare matches are based on the user's home and work location and personal transportation preferences. Registrants input which days of the week and travel times they need for ride sharing, as well as personal preferences like riding only with people of the same gender, or non-smokers. **The more people that register, the better the chance of finding a rideshare partner.** Step-by-step instructions will assist you in signing on and finding carpool matches and other transportation options.

REWARDS FOR USE: Raffles and other incentives will be available to encourage participation. You can register by going to tridentrideshare.com. For more information, call regional Mobility Manager, Vonie Gilreath, at 843-529-0400 or by email at vonieg@bcdcog.com.

STATISTICS:

Carpooling creates benefits both for the individual and the greater community.

Transportation is a rising part of household budgets, often as much as 20%. For some families, it approaches the cost of housing, as each member of the family has a car to drive themselves to work. Gas prices are rising, but carpooling saves on more than gas. AAA's index of cost of owning and operating a car is now at 54.1¢ a mile.

Every carpool takes one or more cars off the road, which eases congestion and demand for parking spaces. Driving less has the broader benefits of reducing air pollution, helping America achieve energy independence, and making the planet greener by reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

COMMON QUESTIONS ABOUT RIDESHARING

If I sign up with Trident Rideshare, how will my privacy be protected? The BCDCOG takes your privacy very seriously. While you provide basic information when you register (name, address, e-mail, and destination) this is all hidden from potential carpool matches. When notified of a possible match, all you see is a first name and last initial. For example, "Based on your home and work location and hours, Steve G is a possible match." You can choose to generate an e-mail through the Trident Rideshare site suggesting you meet to decide if you want to carpool.

How about my personal safety? We believe safety is paramount. Unless the potential carpool partner is someone you already know from work or your neighborhood, you should always arrange for an initial meeting in a very public place where you feel comfortable: a workplace cafeteria, a fast food restaurant. If you take personal responsibility and use courtesy and common sense, carpool matching is very safe.

Do I have to carpool every day? That's between you and your carpool partner. Most people are flexible, since carpooling even a couple of days a week saves you money. So if you like to shop after work on Thursdays, or have to leave early on Monday for your son's monthly visit to the orthodontist, just be courteous and arrange it in advance.

What if I don't have a car? You can still sign up for Trident Rideshare, and check off under preferences that you cannot be a driver. You may well find a match who's going your way.

Can employers close this service to include only their employees? Yes, please contact the mobility manager listed above for more information.

Can I use this service to go out of town? The individual trip planning options allow for destinations to be entered that are outside of the tri-county area.

Can I use this program to go to the Cooper River Bridge Run or Family Circle event? Yes.