

The pool that's always open: MVRPC RIDESHARE



Think about your daily commute.

If you drive alone, it can be expensive and end up costing you thousands of dollars each year in gasoline, parking, and vehicle maintenance. According to AAA*, owning and operating a new vehicle will cost a driver an average of \$8,469 annually, or \$706 each month (2017 figures).

However, there's a smarter way to commute! The Miami Valley Regional Planning Commission (MVRPC) sponsors the RIDESHARE Program, which is available for free to anyone who lives, works, or attends college in Montgomery, Greene, Miami, Preble, Darke and Clinton counties.

RIDESHARE applicants receive a matchlist of others who live and work, or attend college, near them. Applicants can contact them to work out a commuting schedule, pick-up/drop-off points, and so on. If an applicant doesn't have a car and just needs a ride, they'll be matched with someone who has a vehicle and is willing to share the ride. The commuters then determine reimbursement arrangements.

"Carpooling even just one or two days a week will save money, help improve our region's air quality, and reduce traffic congestion," said MVRPC executive director Brian O. Martin, AICP. "The RIDESHARE Program is just one way to connect with others who are interested in commuting together. We also encourage commuters to reach out to family and friends to see if there are others traveling the same way."

For those who commute more than 25 miles one-way, vanpooling could be an option. Vans are available for rent on a monthly basis to groups of 4 to 15 people commuting to a worksite. MVRPC currently offers a monthly subsidy for new qualified vanpools.

"We have several vanpools that travel from Columbus, Cincinnati, and their surrounding suburbs to Wright-Patterson Air Force Base. Many participants have been vanpooling for years, because they realize the benefits of sharing the ride," continued Martin.

Since the Miami Valley is home to the nation's largest paved trail network, with over 340 miles of connected paved trails, biking is another commuting option. Biking

to work or college, especially if it's a shorter commute, is an easy, cost-effective way to incorporate exercise into your day. Why ride a stationary bike when you could commute by bike?

Biking with others -- for comradery, safety, or just a shared interest in biking -- is a great way to meet new people and take advantage of the Miami Valley's extensive bike trails, paths and lanes. When completing your RIDESHARE Program application, indicate if you are seeking to form a bikepool.

MVRPC's RIDESHARE Program is part of the statewide initiative called Gohio Commute. The website recently was updated and now offers a mobile-friendly platform, direct messaging to others with whom the user has matched, and the ability to track trips to gauge the environmental impact. Gohio Commute covers much of the state of Ohio to better connect commuters who travel between regions. You can visit www.MiamiValleyRideshare.org, or call 1-800-743-SAVE (7283) for more information.

* Source: AAA <http://newsroom.aaa.com/auto/your-driving-costs/>



Benefits of sharing the ride:

- Saves money.
- Reduces wear and tear on your personal vehicle.
- Lowers your stress level by allowing passengers to sleep, read, or relax while riding.
- Reduces traffic congestion since fewer vehicles on the road means a freer-flowing commute.
- Improves the environment since fewer vehicle emissions means cleaner air.
- Connects you with new people/co-workers to be your "commuting companions."

How to Register:

- Register online: MiamiValleyRideshare.org
- Register by phone: 937.223.SAVE or 1.800.743.SAVE
- Email us: Rideshare@mvrpc.org

