

South Central Planning and Development Commission



# RIDESHARE

## Getting You There

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### TRANSPORTATION DEMAND MANAGEMENT:

#### RIDESHARING

SCPDC TDM 2014-2019 Report

January 2020

State/Federal Aide Project No. H.011055

Prepared by South Central Planning and Development Commission

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**SCPDC**  
South Central Planning &  
Development Commission



**TRANSPORTATION DEMAND MANAGEMENT: RIDESHARING**  
**SCPDC TDM FINAL REPORT**  
**SEPTEMBER 30, 2019**  
**State/Federal Aide Project No. H.011055**

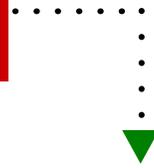
South Central Planning and Development Commission (SCPDC) is the designated Houma-Thibodaux Metropolitan Planning Organization (HTMPO). SCPDC received a grant in May 2014 from LADOTD to develop a Transportation Demand Management (TDM) program. Due to the nature of the funding source, the program is limited to only one aspect of TDM, reducing vehicular traffic via increasing ridesharing. The program focuses on two primary methods, carpool and vanpool programs, but, as further explained herein, by necessity must also focus on existing public transit services. Also, the grant is meant to focus on the HTMPO area. However, as explained in this report, the outreach efforts must include the larger region due to the dynamics of commuter traffic and the location of job centers.

### **THE SCPDC REGION**

The SCPDC seven parish region includes Assumption, Lafourche, St. Charles, St. James, St. John the Baptist, St. Mary, and Terrebonne Parishes. The region includes two Metropolitan Statistical Areas (MSAs), two MPO areas, one Micropolitan area and several rural parishes.

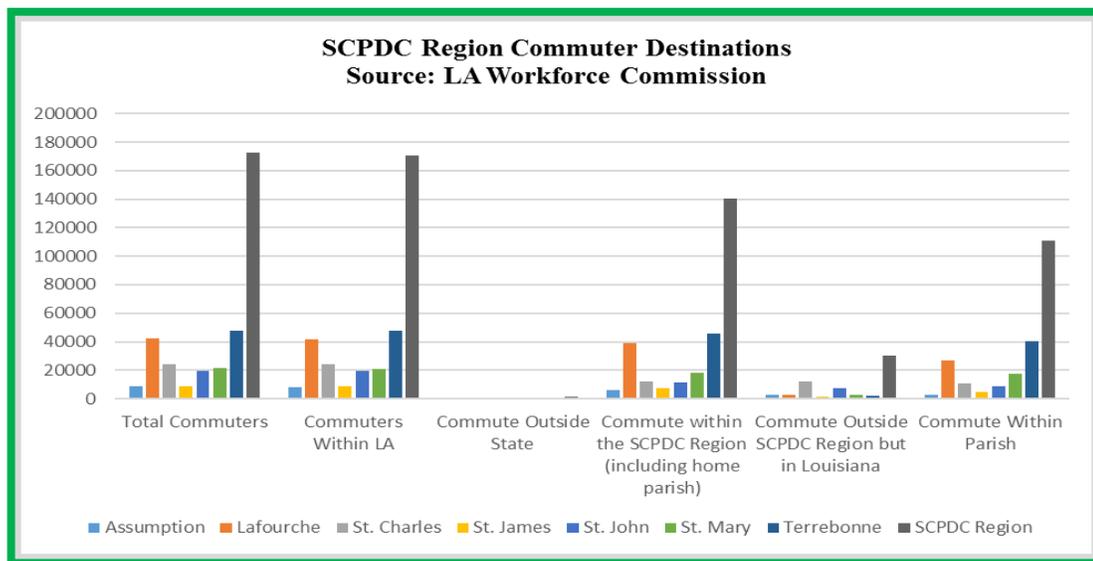
There are two different definitions of “urbanized” areas that are used to gather and classify data, often making it difficult to compare current data on employment and populations, which is essential in considering commuter patterns. The MPO definition is not established by the U. S. Census Bureau but rather through legislation pertinent only to the U. S. Department of Transportation and its agencies. It is not recognized by other agencies and is based on population density in connected census tracts. However, MSA is a definition employed by the Census Bureau and is used by most every other federal agency. The Louisiana Workforce Commission reports information by Parish, MSA (not MPO), and Workforce Regions. Reports include employment patterns, earnings, commuter patterns and major employers. Much of the data used in this report is derived from the LA Workforce Commission due to its availability to the staff planner and also its relevance to commuter patterns.

The HTMPO Area includes areas in Assumption, Lafourche and Terrebonne Parishes. Houma and Thibodaux are the area Central Cities. The estimated 2017 MSA population is 211,179 (statsamerica.org). However, the HTMPO area includes the most heavily populated areas of Terrebonne and Northern Lafourche Parishes and a small part of Assumption Parish. The total 2010 estimated population was 125,380 (FHWA).



The New Orleans-Metairie-Kenner, LA Metropolitan Statistical Area is composed of Jefferson, Orleans, Plaquemines, St. Bernard, St. Charles, St. James, St. John the Baptist, and St. Tammany Parishes. The 2017 estimated population for this area was 1,270,399. Three SCPDC parishes are in this MSA, St. Charles, St. James and St. John, but only parts of two, St. Charles and St. John are in the New Orleans MPO. (Sources: <http://www.statsamerica.org/anywhere/>; [https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/planning/census\\_issues/american\\_community\\_survey/products/2015\\_transportation\\_profiles/](https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/planning/census_issues/american_community_survey/products/2015_transportation_profiles/))

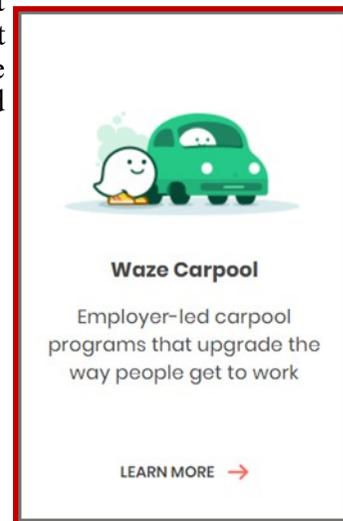
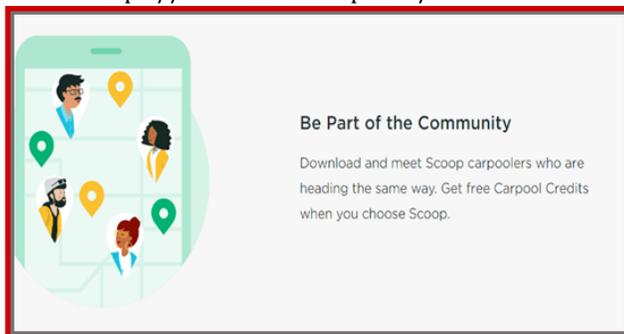
The SCPDC region had a 2017 estimated population of 404,416, of which 52% or 211,179 lived in the Houma Thibodaux MSA. Approximately 42% of both the District and the urbanized area were workers aged 16 and older. Of these workers, 82.17% of the South Central Region drove alone to work, compared to 79.4% for the metropolitan area, 81.7% for Louisiana and 75.3% for the United States (statsamerica.org). Most of the commuters are driving to places within the South Central Region and in particular within the parishes where they resides. The purpose of the TDM project is to decrease these numbers through promotions and marketing regarding RideSharing. The goal is to put more people into fewer vehicles.



The key components of a successful RideSharing program include a method to match riders (a shared platform), guaranteed or emergency ride home programs, and park and ride spaces. All of these are deficient in the SCPDC region at this time.

The SCPDC leadership decided not to invest in a **rideshare platform** during this first grant period. It was determined that until demand for such is known, funding would be better spent on research and market. SCPDC is also waiting to learn the outcome of such an effort among larger neighboring urbanized areas. Baton Rouge, Lafayette and New Orleans regions have grouped together to use one rider match program in the hopes of greater success along the I-10 Corridor. However, SCPDC is aware of free programs including Waze Carpool and Scoop cellphone apps that can be used in promoting carpooling. These apps help match would be carpool candidates based on where they live and destinations. The apps are dependent upon individuals signing up to participate and would not involve funding through the agency to maintain. More information is available on their websites and may be used in future promotions.

<https://www.takescoop.com/>



<https://www.waze.com/carpool>

Another way to match riders is through company Human Resource Departments or social media resources. This might include postings in breakrooms or promotions through HR staff. It could also include an employee Facebook group used to identify and match riders. SCPDC has promoted this in its outreach and will continue to do so.

The funds available to SCPDC cannot be spent on an **Emergency Ride Home** program, this would have to be driven by a participating employer. An Emergency Ride Home program offers a carpool or vanpool participant an alternate ride home should some family emergency or illness arise, unscheduled overtime or extended work hours occur, or the carpool/vanpool driver cannot make the trip home due to their emergency or changed work hours. The ride home might be paid cab fare or a public transit pass. Typical programs limit the number of paid emergency rides per person per year. At the time this process began in 2017, the South Central Region had limited cab services and the cost for a trip is high for a personal back up plan. Uber/Lyft style services were not available locally. Even today, such services are limited and not officially active in most of the region. Thus, it became necessary to promote public transit as one potential back-up plan for carpool and vanpool users. However, during the course of this project, SCPDC staff realized that the general public lacks

knowledge about the existing transit services or how to use them. For example, one of the problems in the South Central Region is that operating and capital funds offered to rural operators through LA DOTD's Section 5311 program require they use the Louisiana Transit logo on the vehicles acquired. These vans and small buses contain the name of the provider, typically a parish Council on Aging. Hence, the perception among the general public is that the service is exclusive to the elderly. Also while meeting with Nicholls State University students staff became aware that while some students knew about Good Earth urban service bus stops, they did not know where to find the transit routes and fees or how the service worked. If local transit services are to be promoted as an emergency back-up plan, education and outreach on ridesharing must include information on the availability of such services.

It is known that "Commute with Enterprise" is operating a number of commuter vanpools within the SCPDC region. Through this effort with employers or groups of commuters, Enterprise works into its schedule of fees emergency ride home services. SCPDC is exploring the possibility of partnering with this or a similar operation and public or private interests to set up a demonstration vanpool and/or carpool project. Preliminary contact with "Commute with Enterprise" has been made and a meeting is in the works.

**Park and Ride Lots** offer a safe place for carpool and van pool users to meet and leave cars while they commute to a final destination. There is only one official Park and Ride Lot at this time in the SCPDC region. Lafourche Parish provides park and ride space at its Farmer's Market/Tourist Information Center at the intersection of LA. Hwy 1 and U. S. Hwy. 90. The space is located in the highway right of way underneath the U. S. Hwy. 90 Bayou Lafourche bridge. It is felt establishment of more Park and Ride Lots will not only help elevate awareness and make it easier for carpool/vanpool riders to meet, but will be critical to a successful rideshare program.

SCPDC believes that LADOTD must develop information on its website that smaller planning districts and/or MPOs can tap into for promotion of ridesharing. LADOTD should consider working with the planning districts/MPOs to identify potential park and ride lots locations, and to develop one statewide ride sharing match platform. Unless the State takes the lead in developing a statewide effort, promotion and growth of ridesharing will fall off as smaller communities become discouraged by the lack of State initiative and support. Examples of such efforts can be found throughout the



*Lafourche Parish Park and Ride Lot*

United States. One example is the State of Vermont “Know and Go!” website <https://www.connectingcommuters.org/>. This website is under the auspice of VTrans, Public Transit Section of the Vermont Agency of Transportation.



## SUMMARY OF CONTRACT TASKS ACCOMPLISHED

This is a final report to SCPDC’s TDM grant in fulfillment of contract Task No. 7. Following is a summary of findings and work initiatives under the other six contract tasks.

### Task 1: Project Management Committee

SCPDC organized and held several Regional TDM Committee Meetings. However, it soon became apparent that most attendees were not as interested in ridesharing as in other TDM methods related to infrastructure, for example complete streets, intersection improvements and so on. SCPDC decided in July 2019 to make RideSharing a standard agenda item as part of its Regional Transportation Committee meetings. The transit operators are more focused on how to better move individuals or groups of people between places, versus infrastructure improvements. SCPDC did gain support for potential vanpool operations through participation in the Louisiana Workforce Commission’s Regional Business Services and the Louisiana Department of Corrections and Public Safety Local Re-Entry Program meetings. Representatives of these groups have started attending SCPDC’s quarterly Regional Transportation Committee meeting and it is hoped they will continue to do so. Both groups have expressed concern about getting people to jobs and training programs, something not easily done with the limited transit services available in the SCPDC region. SCPDC continues to discuss creation of vanpools with these groups and others.

## Task 2: Case Studies and General Research

Beginning in October 2017, SCPDC looked at nine other MPOs. Table 1 provides information on size and population of these MPOs as found on the U.S. DOT Transportation Planning Capacity Building Website Metropolitan Planning Organization Database located at <https://www.planning.dot.gov/mpos2.asp> on November 27, 2017. The Houma-Thibodaux MPO has a population of 125,380 people and MPOs with populations between 0 and 140,000 people were initially chosen, a total of 153 MPOs. This list was further decreased by selecting a smaller population range of 115,000 to 135,000, roughly +/-10,000 of SPDC's urban population. There were 35 MPOs in that range.

The list was again reduced based on square miles covered by the MPOs. The Houma-Thibodaux urbanized area covers approximately 175 miles. The final list included urbanized areas that cover 125 to 225 square miles, +/- 50 miles over/under Houma-Thibodaux urbanized area. There were a total of eight MPOs on the list.

SCPDC added the Central Texas COG to the case study list because the U. S. Economic Development Administration (another federal partner of SCPDC) partnered it with this COG, as they found similarities in economies and agency programs. The Central Texas COG covers a much larger population and MPO area, including Fort Hood.

It should be noted that one of the MPO urbanized areas, Duluth-Superior, spans a two state area, Minnesota and Wisconsin.

Of the nine regions reviewed, all recognize ridesharing and public transit as methods to improve transportation choices and reduce congestion. However, only two are actively conducting ridesharing outreach programs. In both cases, neither effort is linked to congestion management. SCPDC found that seven of the nine states involved in the case studies have statewide or regional efforts to promote ridesharing, and smaller MPOs can tap into these efforts. Statewide efforts include online maps of carpooling/vanpooling park and ride lots, online ride matching programs and promotion of incentives for employers/employees to take advantage of commuter tax credits and guaranteed ride home programs.

### **MPOS WITH RIDESHARE PROGRAMS**

The **Greenville** urbanized of North Carolina is located in Pitt County, part of the Mid-East Commission Regional Council of Governments, the designated MPO. In addition to Greenville, the urbanized area of Pitt County includes several smaller surrounding communities. According to American Fact Finder, in 2016, 8.6% of the Pitt County population carpoled. The majority of commuters drove alone, 83.9%.

The number of carpoolers within Greenville was slightly less at 7.5%. The State of North Carolina has adopted policies, and is continuing to modify same, aimed at reducing energy consumption statewide. As part of its efforts to meet the State mandates, the Greenville MPO is promoting weatherization, waste to energy conversion, LED lighting conversion and ridesharing. The MPO taps into the State rideshare program, “Share the RideNC!” The Emergency Ride Home feature only supports part-and full- time employees in Durham, Orange and Wake counties. The individual must have shared a ride, taken the bus, biked or walked to work on the day the emergency ride is needed. They must work for a state registered rideshare employer.

North Carolina promotes ridesharing through its recognized logo “ShareTheRideNC!” Their state website offers information on how to find carpool



partners through a statewide website, which matches potential riders. Tips on setting up a successful carpool are provided. Vanpool programs are also offered through four of the larger regional transit authorities. Information on commuter tax incentives is provided, too. While some information is obviously designed for the larger urbanized areas, smaller communities can tap into the “SharetheRideNC!” ridematch program and tips, and tools for setting up programs. Emergency ride home programs are offered through specific employers or regions. The statewide site allows those interested to learn more about such programs are offered. The link to the state website is as follows:

[https://www.sharetheridenc.org/Public/Home.aspx?CustomSubSite=None\\_](https://www.sharetheridenc.org/Public/Home.aspx?CustomSubSite=None_)

The **Macatawa Area Coordinating Council** is located within the West Michigan Regional Planning Commission area and it covers the Holland-Zeeland Michigan urbanized area. Holland is situated on Lake Macatawa, which is connected to Lake Michigan. Due to its ground-level ozone problems during warm weather, the MACC promotes ridesharing as part of its Air Quality improvement planning process. Allegan County, which is part of the region is in non-attainment regarding air quality. MACC promotes commuting, public transit, bicycling, walking, and telecommuting as part of its Green Commute Week. A Recharging Station Map is also available on their website. As part of the Green Commute Week, there is a school challenge and an employer challenge. The school with the highest percentage of students who using active transportation receives recognition.

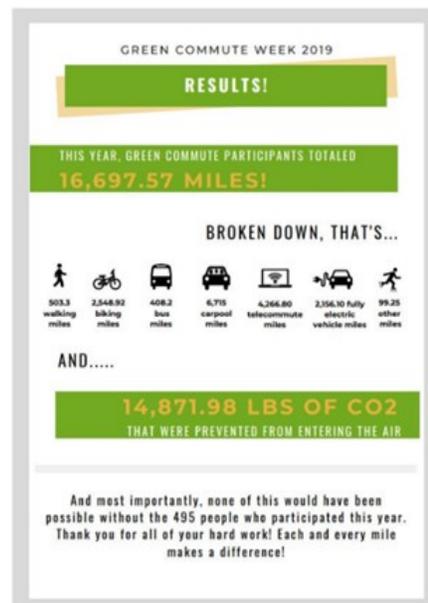
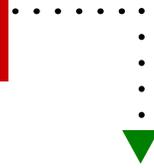


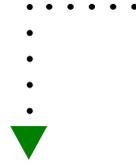
TABLE 1 CASE STUDY REGIONS

MPO	Square Miles	Population	Major city	TDM Documents Found Online	Notes	Contacted
Houma-Thibodaux MPO - LA	175	125,380	Houma			
Black Hawk Metro Area Transportation Board- Iowa	174	121,157	Waterloo	No	Hawkeye Comm. College and neighboring Cedar Falls home o UNiv. of N. Iowa @12k students	Yes – no answer yet
Columbia Area Transportation Study Organization (CATSO) - MO	181	134,591	Columbia	TDM Committee – work on parking issues	Site of University of Missouri @32k students	Working papers on parking issue online
Duluth-Superior Metropolitan Interstate Council (MIC) – MN, WI	190	131,954	Duluth	Duluth-Superior Truck Route Study, Hwy. 23 (Grand Avenue) Corridor Study	Port cities and long range plans emphasis on moving of people and freight, port land use plan.	Yes – no answer yet
Greenville Urban Area MPO - NC	188	134,966	Greenville	Included under “Targeted Planning” tasks in the UPWP, Congestion Management Strategies, 10 <sup>th</sup> Street Corridor Study, Transportation Activity Center - multimodal	East Carolina University @29k students	Yes – no answer yet
Grand Valley Metropolitan Planning Organization - CO	128	133,075	Grand Junction	Several Access Control Plans online, maybe included in Countywide Land Use Plan – couldn’t access	Headquarters of City Market (Kroger store brand) with over 1600 employees	Yes – no answer yet



**TABLE 1 CASE STUDY REGIONS**

MPO	Square Miles	Population	Major city	TDM Documents Found Online	Notes	Contacted
Macatawa Area Planning Council (MAACC), MI	212	119,125	Holland	Nothing online – but Michigan seems to have a statewide carpool effort going on.	Four small private and public regional campuses	Yes – no answer yet
Ouachita Council of Governments - LA	182	126,619	Monroe	Nothing online.	University of LA at Monroe @ 9k students	Yes – no answer yet, probably car/van pooling
Yellowstone County Planning Board - MT	223	126,372	Billings	Complete Streets Progress Report, Corridor and Circulation Studies	3 colleges, mining, trade and distribution center, retail center, medical corridor.	Yes – no answer yet
Killeen – Temple MPO (KTMPO) - Texas	1,224	365,892	Belton	Congestion Management Plan	Temple College, Texas A&M Coll.of Medicine, Killeen Teas A&M Univ. Central Campus, Univ. Mary Hardin, Baylor	Yes – No answer yet



Michigan DOT offers good tools and information under its “MI Commute” website pages. The state sponsors vanpools, which are operated by Enterprise Rideshare. Carpool lots are located at key highway intersections, and a location map is provided online. Local ridesharing offices are located in the most heavily populated areas. Online tools include ridesharing tips, and cost savings calculators. The state also offers transportation fringe benefits to employees who participate in vanpools. The website is [https://www.michigan.gov/mdot/0,4616,7-151-9615\\_11228---,00.html](https://www.michigan.gov/mdot/0,4616,7-151-9615_11228---,00.html).

### OTHER STATE RIDESHARE PROGRAMS.

Of the remaining seven MPOs, four are tapping into Statewide efforts to help them raise awareness and encourage rideshare. Louisiana, Minnesota and Montana do not have statewide efforts. However, the Minneapolis/St. Paul, Minnesota, area has a rideshare program funded and promoted by MetroTransit. Duluth-Superior does appear to be involved with its Wisconsin counties in establishing park and ride lots and other ride share promotions. Following is a summary of information found on State websites regarding ridesharing programs.

#### Colorado

Colorado Department of Transportation promotes carpool and vanpool programs under its “Commuting Options” page. Basic information is offered about these options and links are provided to the active carpool and vanpool programs that cover the major, most densely populated metropolitan areas of Denver, the North Front Range (includes Fort Collins), and Colorado Springs. Due to the size of the state, amount of public lands, and its terrain; smaller MPO areas, such as Grand Valley are remote and distances between cities can be great, thus the focus of ridesharing efforts is on the central and northeastern areas of the state.

#### Iowa

“Iowa Rideshare” is the statewide ride matching system. The Iowa Department of Transportation website offers tips and information on carpools and vanpools, park and ride locations, a tool to calculate savings, single trip matching services, and contest/incentive programs when available. The website is [iowarideshare.org](http://iowarideshare.org).

#### Missouri

In Missouri, the Department of Economic Development, Division of Energy, promotes ridesharing as a way to decrease energy consumption. The State’s Department of Transportation promotes carpooling under its “Being Green: Reduce Your Carbon Footprint” topic. The website offers a carbon footprint calculator, online maps indicating park and ride locations, and a statewide “Share the Ride” promotion. The website includes statewide and metropolitan area carpool match sites.



### **Texas**

Texas Department of Transportation offers information on its Transportation Demand Management page <http://austintexas.gov/tdm> for a variety of programs including ridesharing, public transit, bicycle and more. While many of the programs are specific to the larger urbanized areas, there is basic information about ridesharing that is useful to anyone trying to create a carpool or vanpool, along with some potential ways to find ride partners. The Texas Capital Area Council of Governments has developed a website [myCommuteSolutions.com](http://myCommuteSolutions.com) in partnership with area businesses and universities that offers excellent information to all. The COG offers an emergency ride home program along with other information on all forms of transportation in one place, public transit, bicycling, carpooling, vanpooling, intercity bus service, rail and more. A carpool matching tool is available too. While the COG's website is geared toward their service area, information and guides could apply anywhere.

### **Wisconsin**

Wisconsin's Department of Transportation offers carpool, vanpool, and park and ride information on its website. "Bike Buddies" is also offered for those wanting to travel with others by bicycle. It's RIDESHARE program matches commuters. There are also video testimonials from active ride share participants.

### **Task 3: Development of Marketing Material**

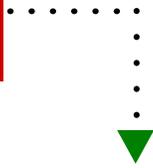
SCPDC developed marketing materials that are posted on its website and Facebook. Copies of the information are included in Appendix A. Completed materials can be updated as necessary. A display board will be developed to take to outreach sites.

### **Phase 4: Employer Outreach**

SCPDC conducted outreach at Terrebonne Parish and Thibodaux Chambers of Commerce meetings. It distributed the ridesharing materials to members of the LA Workforce Commission's Regional Business Services team, and to specific employers with whom the agency is involved with through other efforts. Information was distributed at July and October 2019 Community Resource Fairs in Lafourche and Terrebonne Parishes. Some of the information was also distributed at the Lafourche and Terrebonne Tourism centers. Outreach efforts were held at Nicholls State University in 2018 and 2019 during Welcome Back days and also during public informational meetings about the MPO Transportation Plan Update.

### **Task 5 Project Identification and Task 6 Project Implementation**

SCPDC will continue to work through the Regional Business Services Team and others to learn whether a vanpool effort might solve their client transportation needs. Potential funding sources are also being investigated. It is felt that a program might still be initiated with Nicholls State University. However, the limits on use of SCPDC's funding source and administrative transitions at the University made it difficult to finalize during the last two years.



For the future, it is felt that the next logical step would be to pursue establishment of park and ride lots throughout the SCPDC region. Key locations would be existing public spaces that are underutilized during the normal workday. Development of signage capitalizing on the SCPDC RideShare logo would be included. Outreach through the Louisiana Society for Human Resources Managers and other business groups will continue.

### **Recommendations for Louisiana**

On LA DOTD’s website there is a space under “RESIDENTS In My Community” that offers information on “Modes of Travel.” There is information posted under the topics Auto; Aviation; Bike & Pedestrians; Ferries; Mov. Bridges; Tolls; Public Transit; and Rail. There is no information on ridesharing. In conversations with other planning districts that have programs funded through DOTD to promote ridesharing, it has become clear that there is an interest in developing one statewide rideshare platform rather than each MPO or planning district purchasing and maintaining its own system. However, the fact that LA DOTD has not set a policy or implemented statewide efforts to promote ridesharing shows a lack of support for such efforts. Baton Rouge was seen as a model to being a statewide effort, but that region has access to more flexible funding for Air Quality due to its non-attainment status. Other smaller MPOs do not have such funding.

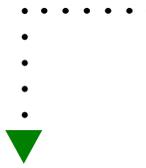
The focus of ridesharing should not be limited to the urbanized area. Employment centers in the SCPDC region are scattered about between rural and urban areas, just as are the commuters traveling to and from work. The message needs to be universal.

In conclusion, better collaborative efforts from LA DOTD on matters such as statewide marketing campaigns and a statewide ride match platform would create a much more robust and successful rideshare program, especially among smaller MPOs.

### **Recommendations for Future SCPDC RideSharing Program**

The following will be features of future LADOTD funded RideSharing programs.

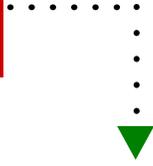
1. Development of Park and Ride locations for carpool and vanpool riders. SCPDC will look for existing public spaces that have excess parking spaces as a start. It will include development of a regional RideShare/Park and Ride logo to be posted at each site.
2. Development of a pilot vanpool program. There is interest in pursuing this option and funding may be available through a variety of sources. A team of interested persons will be put together to discuss pooling resources to develop the pilot program.
3. Continued marketing and outreach.



**APPENDIX A**  
**PUBLIC OUTREACH MATERIALS**

TDM 2014-2015 Report

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## Getting You There

## RIDESHARE



## Why Carpool?

Carpooling is a great way to save money. Use the [Commuter Cost Calculator](http://www.commuterolutions.com/commute-cost-calculator/) to find out your savings!

The American Automobile Association (AAA) calculates the composite average cost per mile for all vehicle types and publishes the data on its website each year. Use the [AAA calculator](https://exchange.aaa.com/automotive/driving-costs/#XAbca9tKhOT) to learn your estimated Annual Cost per Mile.

Carpooling helps reduce carbon emissions! You can calculate your carbon footprint with U. S. EPA's [Carbon Footprint Calculator](https://www3.epa.gov/carbon-footprint-calculator/).

Carpooling reduces traffic on our roads and the need for parking spaces.

Carpooling is an option that can give you great flexibility.

Carpooling is also a wonderful way to meet interesting people, get to know the people you work with, go to school with, and to make new friends.

According to numerous health reports and research, auto emissions can significantly increase the likelihood of health issues such as asthma, allergies, lung cancer, COPD, and more. Research data has also suggested that carpooling can be far less stressful than simply commuting on your own.

## CARPOOL PROGRAMS

Members of a carpool use private vehicles to share rides to and from common destinations like work or school. The carpool members get together and decide on ground rules for sharing rides including who will drive, sharing of costs, meeting points, and other details. If you are interested in participating in a carpool, connect with other interested people through work or school sites.

## Items to Consider in Creating a Carpool

- Decide if you are going to drive alternate days, drive every day, or ride every day.
- If it is not a shared driving arrangement, agree on a payment schedule.
- Set up a line of communication. Let the driver know in advance if your plans change (if possible the day before). Remember to give notice of days you won't be sharing the ride due to personal schedules and plans.
- Establish time schedules and pick-up points. Be prompt.
- Establish a rule for latecomers. Decide how long the carpool will wait for a passenger (usually no more than 5 minutes).
- Avoid side trips on the way home.
- Keep the car clean, well maintained, and filled with enough gas for each trip.
- Decide on radio use, smoking policies, and other similar concerns before you start carpooling. For example, will snacks and/or beverages be allowed?
- Have a back-up plan for emergency situations. For example, if your carpool driver must leave early for due to illness, a family emergency or unexpectedly has to stay late, what is the carpooling plan? What are your other transportation options?
- Develop an environment that encourages open discussion of carpool-related conflicts or problems.
- Establish a communication plan so adjustments can be made with minimum inconvenience.
- An agreement to a carpool is not a binding contract. If you find carpooling is not for you, give your group sufficient notice so they can make alternate arrangements or find a replacement.

For more information and assistance, contact  
 Martha Cazaubon  
 South Central Planning and Development Commission  
[martha@scpdc.org](mailto:martha@scpdc.org)  
 985-851-2900, Ext. 2030



Getting You There

# RIDESHARE



## PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION IN THE SOUTH CENTRAL REGION

The following providers offer transit service to the general public in the South Central Region.

### Rural Operators

**Assumption Parish Council on Aging**  
985-369-7961  
[director@assumptionparishcoa.org](mailto:director@assumptionparishcoa.org)

**St. Charles & St. John Parishes-  
River Parishes Transit Authority**  
504-313-0176  
[stacy.vansickle@transdev.com](mailto:stacy.vansickle@transdev.com)

**St. James Parish Transit**  
225-562-2304  
[humanresources@stjamesla.com](mailto:humanresources@stjamesla.com)

**St. Mary Community Action Agency**  
337-828-5703  
[afrank6333@aol.com](mailto:afrank6333@aol.com)

**Terrebonne Parish Council on Aging**  
985-868-8411  
[info@terrebonnecoa.org](mailto:info@terrebonnecoa.org)

### Special Services Providers

Several Councils on Aging provide Demand Response non-emergency medical trips for Senior Citizens and Disabled Persons. Contact each for more information.

**Lafourche Parish Council on Aging**  
985-532-0457  
[transportation@lvj.com.net](mailto:transportation@lvj.com.net)

**St. Charles Parish Council on Aging**  
985-783-6683  
<http://www.stcharlescoa.com/transportation.html>

**St. John the Baptist Council on Aging  
(non-emergency dialysis)**  
985-479-0272

**Urban Operators**  
**City of Thibodaux**  
985-850-4616  
[transit@tccz.org](mailto:transit@tccz.org)

**Terrebonne Parish Good Earth Transit**  
985-850-4616  
[transit@tccz.org](mailto:transit@tccz.org)

## PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

Public transit options in the South Central Region are funded through a combination of local, state, and federal funds. Transit options are most often based upon funding sources, population densities, demand for specific destinations, and availability of vehicles and staff. The kinds of services offered are divided between rural and urban operations.

**Rural operations** are offered in less densely populated areas where fixed route services are not cost effective. Populations are spread out and desired destination points might be miles apart. Typical rural services offer “demand response” trips scheduled by appointment. The rider calls in advance, usually at least 24 hours, requests a pick up time and location, and announces the desired destination. The operator develops a daily route and schedule based on where/when riders must be picked up and dropped off. Fares may vary depending distances travelled.

**Urban operations** offer fixed route services. These services are offered where a large number of people live within an easy walking distance to a bus stop. Service is provided along a set route with scheduled drop off and pick up locations. Riders get on and off at these designated bus stops. There is no need to schedule a trip in advance. Some of the more heavily used stops have benches and/or shelters. Fares are always a fixed amount, no matter the distance travelled. Paratransit service is offered within 3/4 of a mile from the fixed route to qualified passengers who have difficulty walking to the route.

**Other transportation modes** serving the South Central Region include the following:

- Greyhound offers intercity bus service with stops in Houma, Morgan City and Thibodaux. More information is posted on the website [Greyhound.com](http://Greyhound.com)
- AMTRAK’s Sunset Limited route offers stops at its Schriever depot, located at 145 Burlington Court. More information is posted on the website [Amtrak.com](http://Amtrak.com).

*For more information and assistance, contact  
Martha Cazaubon  
South Central Planning and Development Commission  
[martha@scpdc.org](mailto:martha@scpdc.org)  
985-851-2900, Ext. 2030*



## Getting You There

## RIDESHARE



## Why Vanpool?

- May reduce maintenance and insurance costs for each member's own vehicle.
- Shared cost of gas.
- IRS commuter subsidies are available for qualified vanpools. Ask your tax professional about the Transportation (Commuting) Benefits in IRS Publication 15-B.
- In some vanpools drivers receive free or discounted trips.
- Enhance corporate image with green commuting options.
- Reduce need to provide parking.
- Provide a higher return on overall emission reduction.
- Increase employee retention and attract new employees.
- Increase productivity: employees in vanpools are less tired and less stressed.
- Employees are more likely to arrive on time and use fewer sick days.

## Vanpool Examples

Although other rideshare programs may be available, Enterprise is one provider operating in South Central Louisiana. Their online promotional materials give a very good explanation of how vanpools can be set up. For more information, visit their website <https://www.commutewithenterprise.com/>. Enterprise also offers a short video on their Rideshare program: <https://t.meo.com/222224562>.

Don't forget to check out the Transportation (Commuting) Benefits in IRS TAX PUBLICATION 15-b. You and/or your employer might be eligible when you participate in a qualified vanpool program!

## VANPOOL PROGRAMS

Vanpooling is a simple, sustainable, and cost effective method of commuting to work. A vanpool consists of 6 to 14 passengers plus a driver who commute together on a regular basis. Vanpool programs vary, but the basic types include those in which the vans are leased, company-owned, or member-owned and operated.

Many vanpool programs lease a van through a third party vendor, which provides insurance coverage, maintenance program, and 24-hour roadside assistance. Some options might include provision of a fuel card. The third party vendor will also help to establish the vanpool itself, provide marketing materials, and help fill vacant seats whenever necessary. For employee-based vanpools, some providers help to calculate monthly passenger fees so everyone knows what they pay.

## Items to Consider in Creating a Vanpool

- Select a designated and appropriately licensed driver and back-up drivers.
- Many vanpool operations require drivers to complete a defensive driving course.
- Be sure to have all of the correct insurance coverage for the vanpool.
- One member of the vanpool is the designated "record or book keeper." The job is to collect the passenger fees and keep a log on who has paid and provision of payments to the vanpool owner.
- Consider WiFi-equipped vans and other amenities to attract and retain riders.
- Most vanpool and carpool programs include a Guaranteed Ride Home program.
- Look for other interested co-workers on your company's social media website, postings in a breakroom or through your HR office.
- Find out if your company can offer preferred parking at the workplace for vanpools/carpools.

For more information and assistance, contact

Martha Cazaubon

South Central Planning and Development Commission

[martha@scpdc.org](mailto:martha@scpdc.org)

985-851-2900, Ext. 2030



April 2019

South Central Planning and Development Commission



# RIDESHARE

Getting You There



South Central Planning and Development Commission (SCPDC) is the designated U. S. Department of Transportation Metropolitan Planning Organization for the Houma-Thibodaux urban area. SCPDC is involved in efforts to improve transportation throughout the region it serves. SCPDC wants to spread the word about Ridesharing and sustainable transportation that can help save money and get you where you need to go!

For more information on how to set up a rideshare program or learn about the region's Public Transportation services select the appropriate logo.



CARPPOOL PROGRAMS



PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION



VANPOOL PROGRAMS

Getting You There

# RIDESHARE



## CARPOOL PROGRAMS

Members of a carpool use private vehicles to share rides to and from common destinations like work or school. The carpool members get together and decide on ground rules for sharing rides including who will drive, sharing of costs, meeting points, and other details. If you are interested in participating in a carpool, connect with other interested people through work or school sites.



Carpooling is a great way to save money. Use the [Commuter Cost Calculator](#) to find out your savings!



The American Automobile Association (AAA) calculates the composite average cost per mile for all vehicle types and publishes the data on its website each year. Use the [AAA calculator](#) to learn your estimated Annual Cost Per Mile.



Carpooling helps reduce carbon emissions!  
You can calculate your carbon footprint with U. S. EPA's [Carbon Footprint Calculator](#).



Carpooling reduces traffic on our roads and the need for parking spaces.



Carpooling cuts down on stress when riders take turn driving!

Ridesharing Tips  
Rideshare Checklist  
Rideshare Safety Suggestions

[LINK TO OUR CARPOOL FLYER GOES HERE](#)

Need a Back-up Plan? Check out [our Public Transportation Providers!](#)



## Ridesharing Tips

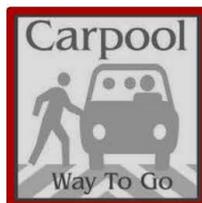
- ✓ Decide if you are going to drive alternate days, drive every day, or ride every day.
- ✓ If it is not a shared driving arrangement, agree on a payment schedule.
- ✓ Set up a line of communication. If someone cannot make it on a given day, let the driver know in advance (if possible the day before). Don't forget to give notice of days you won't be sharing the ride due to personal schedules and plans.
- ✓ Establish time schedules and pick-up points. Be prompt.
- ✓ Establish a rule for latecomers. Decide how long the carpool will wait for a passenger (usually no more than 5 minutes).
- ✓ Avoid side trips on the way home.
- ✓ Keep the car clean, well maintained, and filled with enough gas for each trip.
- ✓ Decide on radio use, smoking policies, and other similar concerns before you start carpooling. For example, will snacks and/or beverages be allowed?
- ✓ Have a back-up plan for emergency situations. For example, if your carpool driver must leave early for due to illness, a family emergency, or unexpectedly has to stay late, what is the carpooling plan? What are your other transportation options?
- ✓ Develop an environment that encourages open discussion of carpool-related conflicts or problems.
- ✓ Establish a communication plan so adjustments can be made with minimum inconvenience.
- ✓ An agreement to a carpool is not a binding contract. If you find carpooling is not for you, give your group sufficient notice so they can make alternate arrangements or find a replacement.

Here is a [Rideshare Checklist](#) you can use to help set up your own carpool.



## Rideshare Safety Suggestions

- ✓ When you meet new people or share transportation, always use common sense and always protect your personal safety. You alone are responsible for your safety.
- ✓ Before agreeing to travel together, arrange to meet your prospective rideshare partner in person in a well-lighted, populated, public place to discuss schedules, driving safety, insurance coverage, and other items on the carpool discussion checklist. Feel free to bring a friend for support. If you are uncomfortable for any reason, then simply decline the offer to rideshare. Always tell at least one other person about your plans and where and when you're meeting your potential travel mate.
- ✓ Confirm your prospective partner's phone number by calling it. Check the phone number in the phone book or online. Record your travel partner's driver's license or other photo ID information when you first meet them; ask for three personal references, and call them.
- ✓ Follow your instincts: if you do not feel safe with the person, do not travel with him or her. Trust your initial feelings and do not travel with someone you do not trust.
- ✓ Establish a chain of communication and a backup carpool plan. Exchange emergency contact numbers and any important medical information before traveling. Ensure everyone has a copy of home, work or cell phone numbers and agree in advance what will happen in the event of illness or mechanical problems – it is best to expect the unexpected.
- ✓ If you are the passenger, record the make/model of the car you will ride in, the driver's license information and the license plate number. If you are a driver, record the passenger's personal information. Take a few pictures of your carpool partners and their cars. Give these details to a family member or friend and let them know when you will be carpooling.
- ✓ Keep a charged cell phone with you at all times.
- ✓ Drive safely. Speeding, taking chances, or just plain negligence should never be tolerated.
- ✓ Do not ride with alcohol, drugs, firearms, or any other items that may cause you harm or violate the law. Do not drive a vehicle under the influence of drugs or alcohol, or ride with someone who is under the influence of drugs or alcohol.
- ✓ Do not carry or expose large amounts of cash.
- ✓ Buckle up.
- ✓ A poorly maintained car can consume more fuel than one that is properly maintained. A well maintained vehicle will ensure a safe, reliable, comfortable ride that's better for the environment.



## Getting You There

# RIDESHARE



### PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION IN THE SOUTH CENTRAL REGION

#### URBAN TRANSPORTATION SERVICES

Good Earth and Thibodaux Transit provide service in the City of Thibodaux and Terrebonne Parish.

Need routes and schedules? Check out Good Earth and Thibodaux Transit websites.



#### INTERCITY TRANSPORTATION SERVICES



Greyhound has returned service to Thibodaux, Morgan City and Houma. Routes and schedules are found online at [greyhound.com](http://greyhound.com). Service is offered between Thibodaux, the New Orleans Louis Armstrong International Airport (MSY) in Kenner and other destinations. A stop is also provided in LaPlace on the New Orleans to Baton Rouge route.

#### AMTRAK PASSENGER RAIL SERVICE

Amtrak's Sunset Limited line stops in Schriever. Amtrak passengers can travel Eastbound to New Orleans and Westbound to Houston and beyond. The depot is located

at 145 Burlington Court in Schriever. For more information check out the Sunset Limited schedules and routes on Amtrak's website, amtrak.com.

### **RURAL TRANSPORTATION SERVICES**

The following agencies provide On-Demand public transit service to the general public and service for elderly and disabled clients in rural areas of the South Central Region. Typically, riders call 24 hours in advance to schedule trips within each agency's service area. Some provide regular scheduled services to designated medical centers including Chabert Medical Center in Houma, Thibodaux Regional Medical Center, and more. Riders must still contact the agency to schedule their trip.

Contact the agency serving your parish for more information on services, fares, routes, and schedules.

#### **Assumption Parish Council on Aging**

**Physical Address**

166 Hwy 1008  
Napoleonville, LA 70390

**Mailing Address**

166 Hwy 1008  
Napoleonville, LA 70390

Phone: 985-369-7961 Fax: 985-369-9884  
Email: [director@assumptioncoa.org](mailto:director@assumptioncoa.org)

#### **Lafourche Parish Council on Aging**

The Lafourche COA provides transportation service only to the elderly and disabled. Non-emergency medical trips are provided based on availability of space to those under age 60 or not disabled for additional transportation fees. Those interested should contact the Agency to learn more.

**Physical Address**

4876 Highway 1  
Mathews, LA 70375

**Mailing Address**

PO Box 500  
Raceland, LA 70394

Phone: 985-532-0457 Fax: 985-532-0462  
Email: [transportation@vicom.net](mailto:transportation@vicom.net)  
Website: [lafourchecoa.org](http://lafourchecoa.org)

#### **St. Charles and St. James Parishes River Parishes Transit Authority**

**Physical Address**

149 Woodland Drive  
LaPlace LA 70068-5940

**Mailing Address**

P. O. Box 2444  
LaPlace LA 70069-2444

Phone: 985-651-1141 Fax: 985-651-1138  
Website: [rptarolls.org](http://rptarolls.org)

**St. Charles Council on Aging, Inc.**

The St. Charles COA provides transportation services including non-emergency medical trips only to the elderly and those under age 60 who are disabled. Those interested should contact the Agency to learn more.

**Physical Address**

626 Pine Street, Suite A  
Hahnville, LA 70057

**Mailing Address**

same

Phone: 985-783-6683 Fax: 985-783-1996

Website: <http://www.stcharlescoa.com/home.html>

**St. James Parish Transit**

**Physical Address**

5154 Hwy 44  
Convent, LA 70723

**Mailing Address**

P.O. Box 87  
Convent, LA 70723-2105

Phone: 225-562-2304 Fax: 225-562-2425

Email: [humanresources@stjamesla.com](mailto:humanresources@stjamesla.com)

**St. John the Baptist Council on Aging**

The St. John the Baptist COA provides non-emergency dialysis trips only. Those interested should contact the Agency to learn more.

**Physical Address**

214 Regala Road  
Reserve, LA 70084

**Mailing Address**

same

Phone: 985-479-0272

**St. Mary Community Action Agency**

**Physical Address**

1407 Barrow Street  
Franklin, LA 70538

**Mailing Address**

P.O. Box 271  
Franklin LA 70538-0271

Phone: 337-828-5703 Fax: 337-828-5754

Email: [afrank6333@aol.com](mailto:afrank6333@aol.com)

Website: [stmarycaa.org](http://stmarycaa.org)

**Terrebonne Council on Aging**

**Physical Address**

P. O. Box 836  
Houma, LA 70361

**Mailing Address**

995 West Tunnel Blvd.

Houma, LA 70360  
Phone: 985-868-8411 Fax: 985-868-7806.  
Email: [info@terrebonneco.org](mailto:info@terrebonneco.org)  
Website: [www.terrebonneco.org](http://www.terrebonneco.org)

[Link to our Public Transportation flyer here.](#)

Getting You There

# RIDESHARE



## VANPOOL PROGRAMS

Vanpools are another form of **Ridesharing**. Vanpools hold more passengers than a carpool, and tend to be most common for longer distance commutes (10 to 15 miles or more). Typically, one or more members of the vanpool is a designated driver, and members share the costs of travel, including insurance, fuel, and maintenance of the van. Employers and employees can take advantage of an IRS Commuter Tax Credit program to participate in qualified vanpool programs. For more information see our flyer and also IRS Publication 15-b.

[Link to our flyer here.](#)

