



For Immediate Release

October 4-8, 2004.....Calgary's Second Annual Rideshare Week!

It's that time of year again. After a long wet summer, we've moved on to all the changes that fall has to enjoy. And these days, when we find ourselves brandishing ice scrapers to clear off the morning frost, we realize that winter and colder weather is only a few weeks away.

It's a time of change, and that change motivates us to begin preparing ourselves for winter. So when we start to think about winterizing our vehicles, we should also consider the benefits of carpooling.

Carpooling can boast a cost saving that's hard to match. Carpoolers can offset their average driving costs by \$1,800.00 each year, and commuters can spend less time warming up the car, less money to install a remote car starter, and even spend less money buying winter tires for the long commute on those icy streets.

For the hundreds of people that rideshare through Calgary's own carpool program at www.carpool.ca, however, it's been a time of savings - saving time, saving money, saving our roads and air quality, and improving their quality of life.

A year ago The City implemented the first Rideshare Week Event to promote carpooling and high occupancy vehicle trips during the morning and evening rush hour peak. Ridesharing reduces congestion, promotes a more interactive society and encourages a cleaner environment.

The program is helping us all get around a little easier, and the results are encouraging.

- There are presently over 1700 participants seeking carpool partners.

- Carpoolers are enjoying substantial savings. During last year's Rideshare Week campaign, 634 carpools were reportedly formed with participants reducing their travel by 31 million kilometers annually. The public cost savings are estimated at \$9.8 million per year with reductions in greenhouse gases emissions of over 7,000 tonnes annually.

With the help of our partners: Commuter Connections Society (also known as Carpool.ca), Climate Change Central, and more than 30 Calgary Employers, we are making carpooling a viable option for Calgarians.

Rideshare week will promote the Calgary Carpool program and highlight the benefits to Calgary commuters. The week will feature the media kick-off event:

Date: October 4, 2004

Time: 7:00 am - 9:00 am

Location: City Hall, Municipal Building Plaza (800 Macleod Trail SE)

A number of transportation fairs downtown, TV and radio public service announcements and banners posted throughout the City. Interested commuters are encouraged to attend the events and participate in chances to win a variety of donated prizes. Last year's prizes included fuel and parking gift certificates, golf bags, a pair of Sunshine Village lift tickets and more.

"Our Second Annual Rideshare Week celebrates our success", says carpooling advocate Alderman Diane Colley-Urquhart, "while reminding us that we have a long way to go so that everyone can enjoy cleaner air, a faster, less stressed commute and a more productive day".

There IS a better way to get there.

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