

Owning and driving a car is getting more expensive every day. Transportation expenses have risen to over 20 percent of the average family's household budget. Not only does our reliance on cars hurt our pocketbook, it results in burgeoning traffic congestion, parking headaches, road wear and tear, and noise, not to mention enormous amounts of greenhouse gases. But in Ann Arbor, at least, there are many alternatives to the "one-person-per-car" culture. For instance:

#### Mass Transit:

For 95% of Ann Arbor residents, there is an AATA (Ann Arbor Transit Authority) route within a quarter mile of their home. The Ypsilanti, Chelsea, Dexter and Saline areas are also served. To find out which bus to take, enter your addresses of departure and destination at [routes.aata.org](http://routes.aata.org). A \$1 bus ride is only the beginning of all that AATA has to offer. For instance:

- *Mride* Program—free bus service for all University of Michigan students, faculty, and staff, on all AATA routes.
- *Night Ride*—for trips after 11 pm on weekdays and 7 pm on weekends, AATA offers a shared-ride, \$3 taxi service within the City. A similar service is available all day on major holidays.
- *Go!pass*—Ann Arbor businesses may purchase a free annual pass for only \$5 per employee, which allows them unlimited riding on any AATA route.
- *A-ride*—Taxicabs, small buses or lift vans provide transportation at \$2 a trip for persons with disabilities.
- *Seniors*—free or reduced fares and passes are available on buses and shared-ride taxis. Group shopping trips from some senior housing complexes are offered.

#### Car-sharing:

A car-sharing organization purchases and maintains a fleet of cars and coordinates their use by its members. A car co-op is great for those who use cars only occasionally. The *Ann Arbor Community Car Co-op* is looking for new members (see [www.a2c3.org](http://www.a2c3.org)).

#### Bicycling:

Bike parking is available on nearly every downtown block, and enclosed bike lockers can be rented for \$60 year. AATA has installed bike carrying racks on the front of every bus.

#### Carpooling:

*Rideshare* is a free matching service that assists people in organizing a carpool. Should a member have an unexpected schedule change preventing them from catching their carpool, *Rideshare* will provide free taxi rides, up to six times a year. Call 1-866-510-POOL or go to their page from the [www.semecog.org](http://www.semecog.org) website.

#### Van pooling:

*MichiVan* is a free service that assists companies and individuals in organizing and leasing vanpools. The driver rides free and may use the van for limited personal use. Call 1-800-VAN-RIDE or go to [www.michivan.com](http://www.michivan.com).

To promote these many options, Ann Arbor has kicked off "May is Curb your Car Month." Over twenty different activities have been planned for the month, such as workshops in bike safety and maintenance, and a "Commuter Challenge" competition to reward organizations whose employees use sustainable modes of transportation. For a list of the events planned, or for more on the many options described above, go to [www.getdowntown.org](http://www.getdowntown.org).