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Transit agencies partner to expand access to vanpooling services

The Des Moines Area Regional Transit Authority (DART) is partnering with Heart of Iowa Regional Transit Agency (HIRTA) to expand access to vanpooling services for commuters in Boone, Dallas, Jasper, Madison, Marion, Story and Warren Counties via DART's [RideShare program](#).

With more than 100 vanpools in operation, DART's RideShare program offers groups of five to 12 commuters with similar travel patterns the option of sharing rides to and from work. Vanpool passengers designate a volunteer driver and pay an affordable monthly fare while helping reduce the number of vehicles on the road, contributing to a greener regional economy.

"Transportation is often a barrier for sustaining employment in the communities we serve," said HIRTA Executive Director, Julia Castillo. "Talent attraction and retention is becoming increasingly difficult with the state's record low unemployment rate. Offering commuters an established, cost-effective alternative through DART's RideShare program gives employers another tool in their toolbox to attract and retain talent."

The pilot partnership between the two public transit agencies is an opportunity to provide employers with an affordable method of transportation for employees commuting outside the Greater Des Moines metropolitan area. To further reduce the out-of-pocket expense for passengers, employers may offer incentives or subsidies to encourage ridesharing among their workforce.

"Access to affordable transportation opens up job opportunities for people that may not otherwise be possible, benefiting employees and employers," said DART CEO, Elizabeth Presutti. "We're excited to partner with our colleagues at HIRTA to expand access to the positive benefits of vanpooling."

Individuals or employers interested in starting a vanpool can contact RideShare Customer Service by phone at 515-288-RIDE (7433) or email at rideshare@ridedart.com.

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The Des Moines Area Regional Transit Authority (DART) is the public transportation provider in and around Polk County. DART operates a family of transportation services that connects thousands of people every day to jobs, school, medical appointments, entertainment and more. For more information about DART services, schedules, route changes, or directions to the nearest DART stop, visit the website at ridedart.com or call 515-283-8100.

HIRTA (Heart of Iowa Regional Transit Agency) is organized under an Iowa Chapter 28E Agreement to serve as the Public Transit System for the Iowa Department of Transportation's Region 11. HIRTA provides safe, reliable, and affordable public transit to anyone within our 7-county region. We provide a variety of shared-ride services as a means to keep people connected, mobile and independent. For more information about HIRTA, visit our website at www.ridehirta.com or call 1-877-686-0029.