

# Inside Lane

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## Good news for commuter benefits!

Congress has continued the \$230 monthly pre-tax commuter transit benefit allowance through 2011. This amount was set to revert back to \$120 effective Jan. 1.

Internal Revenue Code Section 132(f) allows employees the choice to direct a portion of their salary into reimbursement accounts to pay for certain work-related parking and/or transit expenses on a pre-tax basis. There are two separate accounts -- one for transit expenses and another for parking expenses.

By deferring money into these accounts, an employee can save an average of 40 percent by using pre-tax dollars to pay for commuting expenses. Employers also benefit as they can save an average of up to 10 percent in payroll tax savings.

When IRC Section 132 was originally written, the monthly transit pre-tax allowance was \$120. Under the American Resource Recovery Act, the pre-tax payroll deduction limit for transit was increased to \$230 on March 1, 2009, while maintaining the \$230 monthly limit for parking expenses.

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**Want to know more about teleworking?**

eWorkPlace

A briefing session is scheduled for Wednesday, Jan. 19, for employers to learn more about the resources available through eWorkPlace and hear from companies that have successfully implemented telework programs.

At the free session, you can learn how employers set up telework programs and lessons learned. Plus you'll receive samples of a telework policy, teleworker application, teleworker agreement and other helpful guides. Lunch will be provided.

**Detail:**

Wednesday, Jan. 19  
11 a.m. to 1 p.m.  
Edina Community Center  
5701 Normandale Road, Room 350

Please RSVP by Jan. 17, at 952-848-4947 or [Melissa@494corridor.org](mailto:Melissa@494corridor.org).

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## Coming soon: a new online ridematching system

We're transitioning to a new online ridematching system, powered by GreenRide, to help make finding carpool and vanpool matches even easier!

You'll see changes to the ridematching system starting at the end of January.

Among the new features:

### Enhanced privacy and security settings

- You decide on how much account information is shared with potential car- or vanpool partners.
- The system gives only a general indication of a user's home or apartment location on a map.

### More ways to connect

- Are you on Facebook, YouTube or Twitter? Link your ridematching profile to your favorite social media page, giving you another option to help connect with others.
- You can upload a photo to your profile and give details about your driving or riding habits.
- E-mail alerts will let you know when a potential car- or vanpool partners wants to get in touch via the Message Center, allowing you to keep your e-mail address private!

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## More tools your employees can use

Metro Transit has introduced new tools your employees can use!

### Metro Transit Store

 <b>Go-To Card or Pass</b> <b>Click For Price</b> Buy a new Go-To Card or add value to an existing Go-To Card or pass.	 <b>Other Fare Media</b> <b>\$6.00 - \$40.00</b> Purchase a Day Pass or Metro Mobility tickets.
 <b>Collectibles</b> <b>\$66.00 - \$78.00</b> Purchase fun gifts for Metro Transit fans.	

### New online store

Buying fares in advance saves you money. Now it's easier and more secure than ever at Metro Transit's online store.

Shop online to get a new Go-To Card or Metro Mobility tickets and add value to an existing Go-To Card or pass.

That's not all. At the online store you can buy fun collectibles – such as Northstar model trains – for Metro Transit fans and train enthusiasts.

[Visit the online store now!](#)

### The 7-Day Pass

Have you heard about the new 7-Day Pass? It's a convenient way to save! For just \$22, get unlimited bus and train rides for a whole week.

The 7-Day Pass is valid for trips at the \$2.25 fare, which includes local service during rush hours or express rides during non-rush hours. You'll need to add stored value to your Go-To Card to supplement a 7-Day Pass if you ride rush-hour express routes or Northstar.

Add one to your Go-To Card today. Get more [details](#).

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