

Q & A with smart commuter Babak by GENIVAR's Markham Sustainability Group

Babak's exemplary commitment to environmental stewardship has not only saved him money through carpooling.

Q. Tell us about any sustainable practice(s) that you have incorporated in your lifestyle

A. During my school days, I used to bike to school in the summer and take public transit at the other times. However, more than anything, this was to save money. Now I carpool to work.

Q. Carpooling – when did you start and is this the first time you have tried it out or do you have previous carpooling experience as well?

A. I started carpooling to work in July of this year. This is my first time trying out the carpool experience.

Q. Do you carpool as part of your work commute only or outside of work as well?

A. At the moment, I only carpool as part of my work commute.

Q. How many days a week on average do you carpool?

A. Three days a week on average

Q. How many people do you carpool with?

A. One other person so two in total

Q. How did you connect with your carpool partner

A. My carpool partner is part of my group and we happened to talk about where we live and realized that it would make more sense to carpool.

Q. What is your current arrangement with your carpool partner with regards to who drives and cost sharing?

A. I drive every day since I regularly need it to go for site visits during work hours. And my carpool partner shares the cost for the commute to and from work based on our pre-agreed amount per trip.

Q. Work schedule timings? Fixed or flexible?

A. It is pretty flexible and we try and accommodate each other when we can't stick to specific timings if we didn't know ahead of time. On days where our schedules don't match, we don't carpool.

Q. Do you have back up or emergency plans?

A. The smart commute emergency ride program is pretty much my back-up plan. It was also one of the factors that made carpooling a practical option for me.

Q. Why did you decide to carpool?

A. Basically, it didn't make sense to me to have two cars make the same trip, when we could easily carpool in one car. Also, the associated cost savings was an incentive as well.

Q. What would you say to those who perhaps think carpooling is quite inconvenient?

A. In my opinion, it is not as inconvenient as people may seem to think initially, but if you find people who are flexible as well then I guess the arrangement isn't as bad. Also, I think the small effort required to carpool is worth the time (HOV lane) and cost savings.

Q. What do you think about the carpool priority parking that we have here at Genivar?

A. I wouldn't say it was one of the main reasons why I decided to carpool but it certainly is a bonus having a reserved spot so close to the entrance especially in the winter.

Q. Any concluding thoughts you would like to share with our readers?

A. Carpooling – Try it! It might work for you!