

MGT-10

Hourly car rentals

The city of Greenbelt, Maryland (21,000), has found a unique way to reduce congestion in a local parking lot and reduce its reliance on motor pool cars for its staff—it has partnered with a national car-sharing company that rents cars by the hour instead of by the more usual day or week. The city pays approximately 75 percent of the cost of the two cars currently in Greenbelt, one in front of a senior citizens complex and the other next to city hall.

Michael McLaughlin
City Manager

City of Greenbelt
25 Crescent Road
Greenbelt, MD 20770

301/474-8000
Fax: 301/441-8248
E-mail: mmclaugh@
ci.greenbelt.md.us

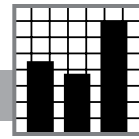
Implementation notes

Leadership/staffing The city manager negotiated the arrangement with Zipcar, a national company based in Boston. Zipcar takes care of leasing and maintaining the vehicles, and it oversees all of the rental reservations and fee collections.

Timeline The city obtained the cars just over one year ago.

Budget/funding The city pays approximately \$10,000 a year to Zipcar, which leases, maintains, and insures the vehicles. In return, the city may use the vehicles without paying an hourly rental fee, although this arrangement may change in the future. Members of the public may reserve the cars and pay the usual \$8.50 hourly rate, which includes gas.

Program description The program was established in response to parking problems at a local senior citizens apartment complex that is owned and operated by the city. The city decided that in addition to expanding the complex's parking lot, it would explore car sharing to see if that eased the parking problems. A second car, located at city hall, is available to city employees instead of a city pool car. Both cars may be used by city employees or members of the public. The cars must be reserved in advance through Zipcar, either by telephone or over the Internet. Because Greenbelt does not have the population density of the areas typically served by Zipcar, an underwriting agreement was necessary, but the city hopes that enough members of the public will begin using the cars to justify the placement by Zipcar of more vehicles in Greenbelt. The cars are promoted among the public primarily through word of



mouth and by the cars themselves, which feature the Zipcar logo.

Results The parking situation at the senior citizens apartment complex has eased considerably since the introduction of Zipcar. Approximately 14 residents are members of Zipcar, and three have given up their personal cars because Zipcar meets their transportation needs. The cars are also used by city staff, but the city is hoping that more members of the public will begin using the cars to enable the program to expand.

