



Sherwood's Rideshare Program: A Subsidy Without a Return

Sherwood Policy Forum | Policy Brief

Background

On September 3, the *Arkansas Leader* reported that Sherwood's microtransit rideshare program has seen a jump in riders since its launch. The service, operated by Rock Region Metro, charges two dollars per trip. Beginning next month, Sherwood's annual contribution to keep the program running will rise by approximately fifty thousand dollars each year.

Analysis

An investment produces a measurable return, whether financial, economic, or social. The rideshare program does not. Costs are rising while the city receives no offsetting benefit. More than thirty thousand Sherwood residents are now subsidizing a very small number of riders. Someone is making money from this arrangement, but it is not the City of Sherwood.

The program is inefficient compared to alternatives. The city could provide each rider with a monthly Uber voucher and in all likelihood still save money. That raises the question of whether this program is truly designed to serve residents or simply to prop up an agreement with an outside contractor.

Every dollar spent on this effort is a dollar unavailable for Sherwood's real priorities. Drainage improvements, street repairs, public safety, and the new animal shelter all remain pressing needs. Those are the areas where resources should be directed, not toward subsidizing a system that produces no measurable return.

Conclusion

The rideshare program is not an investment. It is a subsidy without a return. Sherwood residents deserve transparency, accountability, and a city government that respects their tax dollars. If a program cannot demonstrate clear value, it should not continue to receive funding.

Sherwood Policy Forum is an independent citizen-led initiative. It is not affiliated with the City of Sherwood, the Sherwood Animal Shelter, or any city department. Residents are encouraged to share their perspectives openly and without concern for political repercussions.