

## **Meet Miocar: An electric car-share you can rent in Visalia for \$4**

Joshua Yeager

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Abigail Solis enters Miocar at Highland Gardens in Visalia on Nov. 1, 2019. The electric car-share is available to all residents through a new Valley Air District initiative. (Photo: Joshua Yeager)

Forget Uber and Lyft — meet Miocar.

The product of an innovative partnership between the Valley Air District, Self-Help Enterprises, UC Davis and a handful of Valley businesses, Miocar offers an affordable and emissions-free alternative to ride-sharing services for Tulare County residents.

For as little as \$4 an hour or \$35 a day, Tulare County residents can rent a BMW i3 or Chevy Bolt to zip to grocery stores, doctor's appointments or grandchildren's schools.

"Most people have never used an electric vehicle. Once they get in and push the button, they realize it's no different from driving a regular (gas-powered) car," said Abigail Solis of Self-Help Enterprises, who helped bring Miocar to Visalia's Highland Gardens affordable housing complex.

Miocar is meant to help "fill the gap" for transportation-challenged folks in rural areas, where bus access is infrequent if available at all.

"In many Valley communities, long travel distances and small populations contribute to transit service that is often infrequent and hard to access," said Steve Cliff, California Air Resources Board Deputy Executive Officer. "This project provides a convenient, inexpensive, emission-free option for residents to take care of routine errands that would otherwise be a challenge."

The two Visalia Miocars will live at Highland Gardens, but the service is available to all city residents. You can sign up online at [miocar.org](http://miocar.org) or through the Miocar smartphone app. The only requirement is a valid driver's license and a clean driving record.

Solis walked the Times-Delta through the process. From tapping the app's icon on her iPhone screen to revving the BMW's electric engine took less than three minutes.

The vehicles can travel between 180 and 220 miles on a single charge — more than enough for a trip to Fresno and back, Solis said. If you need to go farther, a card included with Miocar allows you to charge the vehicle for free at any charging station.

"Once people get a taste of what it's like to drive electric vehicles, they might be more willing to purchase one," Solis said. "We hope this is the first step in bringing investments to EV charging infrastructure throughout the Valley."

Now in its pilot phase, Miocars will be available for pickup at housing complexes in Visalia, Dinuba and Orosi in Tulare County.

"They look cute and they don't use gas, so they're good for the environment," said Maria Vera, a Highland Gardens resident who signed up for the service. She plans to use Miocar to pick up her grandchildren while her car is in the shop. "Since you don't have to call a taxi or wait for an Uber it's super convenient."

"I hope more people across Visalia will use it, too," she added.

Solis said that's the idea. Miocar was developed from the ground up in Tulare and Kern counties with community feedback. That's why it's called "Miocar" in the first place — "mio" is the Spanish word for "my."

"People want to feel like this is my car, our car. That's essentially what they are: community vehicles," Solis said.

Overall, at least 24 electric vehicles and 17 chargers will be deployed throughout the South Valley — with hopes to expand the program to Fresno and Madera counties, officials said.

The project cost \$3.8 million to develop and launch.

It is funded primarily through the California Climate Investments program, which puts cap-and-trade dollars to work reducing greenhouse gas emissions, strengthening the economy and improving public health and the environment, with a focus on disadvantaged communities.

Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses the launch of an electric car-sharing program in Wasco. For more information on this or other Spanish clips, contact Cristina Padilla at 559-230-5801.

## **Lanzan programa en que compartes un 'ride', en un auto eléctrico y a precio conveniente**

Univision.com, Froday, November 1, 2019

Este viernes 1 de noviembre, autoridades locales se reunieron en Wasco para inaugurar un nuevo iniciativa que permitirá a trabajadores del valle central movilizarse a otras zonas de forma compartida y en un vehículo no contaminante.

En la localidad de Wasco, al sur del Valle, se reunieron autoridades locales para inaugurar el sexto sitio de este tipo en la región, en el cual los residentes pueden optar a un programa que subsidia el valor de estos autos, libres de emisiones y que solucionarían gran parte de los problemas de movilización.

De acuerdo al Director Ejecutivo Adjunto de la Junta de Recursos del Aire de California. "Este proyecto ofrece una opción conveniente, económica y libre de emisiones para que los residentes se encarguen de los mandados de rutina, que de lo contrario serían un desafío".

Sunrise Villa Apartments fue el lugar escogido para dar a conocer el programa de vehículos compartidos. La iniciativa está dirigida para personas con dificultades de transporte en estas comunidades, y de acuerdo a lo informado, ya existen otros lugares similares en complejos de viviendas asequibles en Orosi, Dinuba, Visalia, Lamont y Arvin.

Aquellos residentes interesados pueden inscribirse en línea en <https://miocar.org/> y pagar un bajo costo por hora, por día, por mes.

"En muchas comunidades del Valle, las largas distancias de viaje y las pequeñas poblaciones contribuyen al servicio de tránsito que a menudo es poco frecuente y de difícil acceso", dijo Steve Cliff, Ph.D.

Estas localidades son favorecidas gracias al financiamiento de California Climate Investment, organización no lucrativa que se encarga de subsidiar proyectos de eficiencia energética en comunidades de bajos recursos. De hecho, ellos aportan \$ 2,250,000 a este proyecto para que las personas que dificulten su movilización puedan hacerlo de una manera segura.

Otros socios que participan de este proyecto son: UC Davis, Miocar, Consejo de Gobiernos del Condado de Kern, Asociación de Gobiernos del Condado de Tulare, Cal Vans, [el Distrito del Valle del Aire](#) y CARB, entre otros.