

Public Transportation Facts

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Every segment of American society—individuals, families, communities, and businesses—benefits from public transportation. It is a lifeline for millions of Americans connecting them to people, places and possibilities. It also builds thriving communities, creates jobs, eases traffic congestion and promotes a cleaner environment. Investment in public transportation spurs both local and the national economy.

Public Transportation Consists of a Variety of Modes

- Buses
- Light rail
- Subways
- Commuter trains
- Streetcars and trolleys
- Cable cars
- Van pool services
- Ferries and water taxis
- Paratransit services for senior citizens and people with disabilities
- Monorails and tramways

Quick Facts

- In 2019, Americans took 9.9 billion trips on public transportation.
- 34 million times each weekday, people board public transportation.
- Public transportation is a \$79 billion industry that employs more than 430,000 people.
- Approximately 6,800 organizations provide public transportation in the United States.
- 45% of Americans have no access to public transportation.
- Millennials consider public transportation as the best option for digital socializing and among the best for connecting with communities.

Public Transportation Provides Economic Opportunities

- Every \$1 invested in public transportation generates \$5 in economic returns.
- Every \$1 billion invested in public transportation supports and creates approximately 50,000 jobs.

- Every \$10 million in capital investment in public transportation yields \$30 million in increased business sales.
- Every \$10 million in operating investment yields \$32 million in increased business sales.
- An estimated \$39 billion of public transit expenditures flow into the private sector.
- Home values were up to 24% higher near public transportation than in other areas. Hotels in cities with direct rail access to airports raise 11% more revenue per room than hotels in those cities without.

Public Transportation Is a Safer Way to Travel Than by Automobile

- Traveling by public transportation is 10 times safer per mile than traveling by automobile.
- A person can reduce his or her chance of being in an accident by more than 90% simply by taking public transit as opposed to commuting by car.

Public Transportation Saves Money

- The average household spends 16 cents of every dollar on transportation, and 93% of this goes to buying, maintaining, and operating cars, the largest expenditure after housing.
- A household can save more than \$13,000 by taking public transportation and living with one less car.

Public Transportation Reduces Gasoline Consumption

Public transportation's overall effects save the United States 6 billion gallons of gasoline annually.

Public Transportation Reduces Carbon Footprint

Communities that invest in public transit reduce the nation's carbon emissions by 63 million metric tons annually.

Public Transportation Enhances Personal Opportunities

- 87% of trips on public transit have a direct impact on the local economy.
- Of all riders, 71% are employed and 7% are students.
- More than two-thirds of riders walk to their stop or station.

For more public transportation facts, see the Public Transportation Fact Book or APTA's full research library.