

# FACTS ON PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

Public transportation in the United States is a crucial part of the solution to the nation's economic, energy, and environmental challenges — helping to bring a better quality of life. In increasing numbers, people are using public transportation and local communities are expanding public transit services. Every segment of American society — individuals, families, communities, and businesses — benefits from public transportation.

## PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION CONSISTS OF A VARIETY OF MODES

- Buses
- Trolleys and light rail
- Subways
- Commuter trains
- Streetcars
- Cable cars
- Van pool services
- Paratransit services for Senior citizens and people with disabilities
- Ferries and water taxis
- Monorails and tramways
- High Speed Rail

## QUICK FACTS

- In 2008, Americans took 10.7 billion trips on public transportation.
- 35 million times each weekday, people board public transportation.
- From 1995 through 2008, public transportation ridership increased by 38%—a growth rate higher than the 14% increase in U.S. population and higher than the 21% growth in the use of the nation's highways over the same period.
- Public transportation is a \$48.4 billion industry that employs more than 380,000 people.
- More than 7,700 organizations provide public transportation in the United States.

## PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION ENHANCES PERSONAL OPPORTUNITIES

- Public transportation provides personal mobility and freedom for people from every walk of life.
- Access to public transportation gives people transportation options to get to work, go to school, visit friends, or go to a doctor's office.
- Public transportation provides access to job opportunities for millions of Americans.

## PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION SAVES FUEL, REDUCES CONGESTION

- Access to bus and rail lines reduces driving by 4,400 miles per household annually.
- Americans living in areas served by public transportation save 646 million hours in travel time and 398 million gallons of fuel annually in congestion reduction alone.
- Without public transportation, congestion costs would have been an additional \$13.7 billion.

## PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION PROVIDES ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES

- Every dollar communities invest in public transportation generates approximately \$4 in economic returns.
- 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.

### **PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION SAVES MONEY**

- The average household spends 18 cents of every dollar on transportation, and 94% of this goes to buying, maintaining, and operating cars, the largest expenditure after housing.
- Public transportation provides an affordable, and for many, necessary, alternative to driving.
- Households that are likely to use public transportation on a given day save over \$8,400 every year.

### **PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION REDUCES GASOLINE CONSUMPTION**

- Public transportation's overall effects save the United States 4.2 billion gallons of gasoline annually:– more than 3 times the amount of gasoline imported from Kuwait.
- Households near public transit drive an average of 4,400 fewer miles than households with no access to public transit. This equates to an individual household reduction of 223 gallons per year.
- Households that use public transportation and live with one less car can save on average \$9,000 every year.

### **PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION REDUCES CARBON FOOTPRINT**

- Communities that invest in public transit reduce the nation's carbon emissions by 37 million metric tons annually:– equivalent to New York City; Washington, DC; Atlanta; Denver; and Los Angeles combined stopping using electricity.
- One person switching to public transit can reduce daily carbon emissions by 20 pounds, or more than 4,800 pounds in a year.

A single commuter switching his or her commute to public transportation can reduce a household's carbon emissions by 10% and up to 30% if he or she eliminates a second car. When compared to other household actions that limit CO<sub>2</sub>, taking public transportation can be 10 times greater in reducing this harmful greenhouse gas.