

POLICY WEBINAR

Transportation, Economic Opportunity, + America's Future

WITH
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Transportation for
America



Americans are ready to meet the economic challenges of the 21st century; but they can't do it with a 20th century transportation system. The maintenance and improvement of our nation's transportation infrastructure and the health of our economy are intrinsically linked. Our transportation system serves as the backbone of our economy, as people and businesses depend on a network that provides reliable, safe, fast and efficient service.



A revitalized transportation program is needed to provide the foundation for personal opportunity, robust commerce, and a healthy population while helping us further 21st century goals of on energy security and environmental sustainability.



Transportation investments should connect our small towns, big cities, and metropolitan regions to each other and the world, provide access to jobs, education and government services, and add value to our communities by investing in regional economic development. It should help the United States reaffirm its global leadership on technology and infrastructure, restore our competitive edge, and set an example for the world with an efficient, modern, and green network of infrastructure.

There is a need for change.

Economic Opportunity+ Transportation facts

- Congestion put a \$78 billion dent in the U.S. economy through wasted time and fuel in 2005; the average commuter lost 38 hours and \$710 sitting in traffic¹.
- Investments in road maintenance projects create 9 percent more jobs than spending on new highway capacity; increasing transit capacity creates 19 percent more jobs than new highway capacity².
- While Americans rode public transportation in record numbers in 2008, the federal government is still spending more than 80 cents on roads, bridges, and highways for every 20 cents it spends to transit³.
- Switching from driving to riding public transit could save the average Americans about \$800 per month, or \$9,596 per year⁴.
- State and local governments can realize up to a 16 percent gain in revenues as a result of increases in business profits and personal income generated by public transportation investment⁵.
- Public transit offers economic benefits to local communities that are 9 times the total costs of the project⁶.
- A recent World Bank study estimated that under the right conditions, “a 1% increase in a country’s infrastructure stock is associated with a 1% increase in the level of GDP”⁷.
- Despite record demand projections for volume in domestic ports, the U.S. is falling behind as other countries invest in world-class ports: In China, the port of Shanghai now has almost as much container capacity as all U.S. ports combined⁸.
- 16 case studies show that businesses continue to promote smart growth during times of economic downturn because they found that smart growth had a positive impact on business and was good for the bottom line⁹.

Global Competitiveness

In the 1950’s President Eisenhower laid the foundation for long-term growth and global leadership with funding of the Interstate Highway System. With other nations rapidly developing modern transportation systems that are energy efficient and climate friendly, America’s reliance on an out-dated and oil dependant transportation network represents a serious competitive disadvantage in today’s global economy. Our system’s crumbling bridges and overburdened transit systems do not meet Americans’ needs and hamstringing our ability to build a 21st Century economy.

Without strategic investments in a modern transportation system, America will be supplanted as the world’s most productive economy. America is currently investing only 2.4% of gross domestic product (GDP) in infrastructure, in comparison to 5% in Europe and 9% in China¹⁰. While we struggle to meet the need for repair of our roads and bridges, countries such as Spain, Japan and China are leading the way on new high-speed rail technology and shrinking distances between regions. Prioritizing our investments in a complete and modernized system would significantly increase connectivity and productivity while mitigating the costs of congestion.

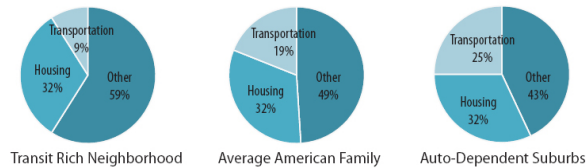
Job Creation

While the transportation system employs millions of Americans and is an essential component in our national economy, there has been little strategic thinking about how we can create sustainable jobs that are immune from outsourcing and draw workers from diverse populations. Research shows that investment in public transportation creates 19 percent more jobs than spending on new roads and bridges¹¹ yet public transportation receives a far lower federal share than highway projects and involve a much more complex and burdensome approval process.

Opportunity + Affordability

Americans spend nearly 20 percent of their income on transportation¹² – second only to housing as an overall portion of income – and are punished heavily by volatile swings in the oil market. For many working households, the goal of affordable living is becoming less attainable as fuel prices and trip lengths increase due to a lack of transportation options and worsening sprawl.

Portion of Income Spent on Housing, Transportation, + Affordability



Building Value, Driving Development

Underinvestment in mass transit and structural bias towards building new roads has limited our ability to match the skyrocketing demand for convenient, mixed-use, walkable neighborhoods. As a result of the collapse of the housing market, homes in distant suburbs have decreased in value sharply while many near good transit or in urban centers have maintained their value¹³.

Transit Investment + Economic Development

City/State	Transit Investment	Resulting/Expected Development
St. Louis, MO	25-year modernization, expansion of system	\$2.3 billion in business sales expected ¹⁴
Wichita, KS	American Heritage streetcars installed	\$50 billion in revenue, \$15 million contributed to local economy ¹⁵
Portland, OR	Streetcar network opened in 2001	\$2.8 billion invested within two blocks of streetcars route ¹⁶
Dallas, TX	Light rail starter line	Generated over \$922 million in development ¹⁷
Minneapolis, MN	12-mile Hiawatha light-rail line completed in 2004	5,400 new housing units under construction as of 2006 ¹⁸
California	700-mile high-speed rail line, state voters approved bonding for projects in Nov. 2008	Would help create 45,000 new jobs in San Diego, 100,000 construction jobs in the Bay Area, and save Central Valley residents \$3 billion per year. ¹⁹
Charlotte, NC	Newly built 9.6-mile light-rail line	Businesses have committed more than \$1.8 billion in development ²⁰ .



We can make a difference... here's how.

Next Steps --

Prioritize National Investments that Help Our Economy Grow

- Set national priorities for our transportation program that address the goals of energy conservation, environmental protection, increased mobility for all, and enhanced economic competitiveness.
- Define a national transportation system that includes intercity passenger rail, a multimodal freight system, and quality bicycle and pedestrian facilities.
- Significantly increase the rate of annual capital funding made available for investment in public transit.
- Put a greater emphasis on maintaining the investments we've already made in our transportation system to ensure our roads and bridges are in good quality and safe condition.
- Establish national guidelines for coordinating state and metropolitan transportation planning with other planning processes to ensure integration of land use and transportation.

Empower Regions to Plan for Multimodal Mobility and Access to Opportunity

- Strengthen regional decision making for integrating transportation, economic development, housing, environment, and energy use planning.
- Put priority in transportation investments that enable regions to build and manage comprehensive transportation networks that provide access to multimodal transportation options.
- Develop a comprehensive program to help recruit, train, and empower white-collar and blue-collar workers and carve out dedicated funding towards reaching these goals.
- • Develop technical assistance and guidelines for the forecasting and evaluation of transportation investments on development patterns., and deploy state of the art planning and modeling tools.

Support Transportation Investments that Create Sustainable, Affordable Communities

- Preserve the existing stock of affordable housing near transit corridors so that families of all income levels can participate in the economic benefit of living near transit.
- Leverage additional operating support for transit agencies demonstrating extraordinary demand for additional service capacity to capture the opportunity to build a stronger ethic for using public transportation over more energy-consuming alternatives.
- Provide incentives and support for transit-oriented development
- Support incentives that encourage land use planning for a diversity of household incomes near transit corridors.
- Target transportation investments to support convenient, mixed-use communities



We support a U.S. transportation system that includes a wide array of accessible, affordable and interconnected transportation choices that are healthy for people and the environment.



Transportation for America is a growing and diverse coalition focused on creating a national transportation program that will take America into the 21st century by building a modernized infrastructure and healthy communities where people can live, work and play.

We have formed a broad coalition of real estate, housing, environmental, public health, equity, business, transportation and other organizations that seek to align our national, state, and local transportation policies with an array of issues: economic opportunity, climate change, energy security, health, housing and community development. We believe a new national vision will play a key role in strengthening the foundation of our nation.

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