



**AMERICAN
PUBLIC
TRANSPORTATION
ASSOCIATION**

TRANSIT NEWS

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Americans Take More Than 10 Billion Trips on Public Transportation for the First Time in Almost Fifty Years

WASHINGTON, DC - If you thought you were seeing more riders during your daily public transit trips, it's not your imagination. The American Public Transportation Association (APTA) announced today that Americans took 10.1 billion trips on local public transportation in 2006 – the first time in 49 years. Over the last decade, public transportation's growth rate outpaced the growth rate of the population and the growth rate of vehicle miles traveled on our nation's highways.

“This significant ridership milestone is part of a multi-year trend as more and more Americans ride public transit to get to destinations important to them, while realizing the benefits of saving money and avoiding congestion,” said William W. Millar, president of APTA. “Public transit ridership helps reduce America's dependence on foreign oil and decreases our contribution to global warming; but ultimately, this milestone represents 10 billion reasons to increase local and federal investment in public transportation.”

Public transit use is up 30 percent since 1995. That is more than double the growth rate of the population (12 percent) and higher than the growth rate for the vehicle miles traveled on our roads (24 percent) during that same period. In 2006, public transit ridership grew 2.9 percent over 2005. To put the 10.1 billion public transportation trips in perspective, transit trips outnumber domestic airline trips by 15 to one.

“Public transportation is a proven way to meet our nation's goals,” said Millar. “As Congress looks to find ways to reduce America's dependence on foreign oil and reduce emissions causing global warming, we call on them to increase investment and include incentives to encourage further use of public transportation.”

Light rail (modern streetcars, trolleys, and heritage trolleys) had the highest percentage increase among all modes, with 5.6 percent increase in 2006. Some light rail systems showed double digit increases in ridership: San Jose (36.6 percent); Minneapolis (18.4 percent); New Jersey (20.1 percent); Saint Louis (16.2 percent); Philadelphia (10.8 percent); and Salt Lake City (14.2 percent).

Ridership on heavy rail posted the second largest increase at 4.1 percent. The five heavy rail systems with the highest increase in ridership for 2006 were: Los Angeles (10.8 percent); New Jersey (10.1 percent); Staten Island, NY (9.4 percent); Atlanta (6.3 percent); and Chicago (4.5 percent).

Commuter rail posted the third largest increase at 3.2 percent. The five commuter rail systems with the highest ridership growth rate in 2006 were: rail system servicing south Florida based in Miami (21.3 percent); rail system servicing Pennsylvania based in Harrisburg, PA (18.9 percent); rail system between

South Bend, IN and Chicago (10.7 percent); commuter service that runs between Stockton and San Jose, CA (8.8 percent); and South Shore rail service based in New Haven, CT (8.3 percent).

Other modes saw increases in ridership. Demand response (paratransit) ridership increased by 2.9 percent and the transit bus increased by 2.3 percent. In fact, there were major increases by some large bus agencies in the following cities: Seattle (12.1 percent); San Antonio (9 percent); Dallas (8.3 percent); Los Angeles (6.2 percent); and Houston (6.1 percent).

To see the complete report go to <http://www.apta.com/research/stats/ridership>.

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APTA is a nonprofit international association of 1,500 member organizations including public transportation systems; planning, design, construction and finance firms; product and service providers; academic institutions; and state associations and departments of transportation. APTA members serve the public interest by providing safe, efficient and economical public transportation services and products. APTA members serve more than 90 percent of persons using public transportation in the United States and Canada.

B-roll footage of transit systems across the country and the announcement with sound bites are available for media via satellite:

Mon 3/12
1:00-1:15 PM ET
GA 26C, Tr. 9, DL 3880V

Mon 3/12
3:00-3:15 PM ET
GA 26C, Tr. 9, DL 3880V