Public transportation contributes to the nation’s economic health in two fundamental ways:  
- Direct dollar investment, multiplied throughout the economy
- Improved transportation options, which create economic benefits for individuals, households, businesses and governments

Dollars invested in public transportation flow through a series of the economy and produce an economic stimulus for investing the original amount as much as nine to one dollars invested.

In addition to directly stimulating the economy, investments in public transportation enhance mobility for businesses and governments, thereby:
- Protecting personal freedom, choice and fundamental ways:
- Stimulates development and redevelopment
- Enables economic prosperity
- Protects personal freedom, choice and

Dollars invested in public transportation flow broadly in the economy, thereby:

- Reduces household and business costs and enhances worker and business productivity
- Enhances safety
- Reduced travel time
- Lower prices and costs
- Lower cost of living
- Economic growth through business and job attraction
- Economic growth through

For more information on public transportation and its essential support for a strong economy, visit www.publictransportation.org

The Benefits of Public Transportation  
Essential Support for a Strong Economy

The evidence is clear: To maintain a sound and vibrant national economy and to enhance Americans’ quality of life, the U.S. must increase its investment in public transportation. Providing a broad and sustainable economic stimulus to local communities, metropolitan regions and the nation, public transportation:
- Supports business revenue and profits
- Creates jobs and expands the labor pool
- Stimulates development and redevelopment
- Expands local and state tax revenue and reduces expenditures required for other essential public investments
- Benefits household and business costs and enhances worker and business productivity

Every $1 million capital investment in public transportation can return up to $10 million in business sales alone.
An Economic Stimulus

Benefits Local, Regional and State Economies

An investment in public transportation benefits the communities where the transportation improvements are made as well as the communities that benefit from the economic effects of improved public transportation.

In St. Louis, a 25-year modernization and expansion of the public transportation system is expected to bring $2.5 billion in bus line revenues.

In Chicago, the Metra commuter rail system’s 20-year modernization and expansion strategy could generate an additional $6.4 billion in business taxes.

In Chance, Clark & Associates in Welch, KS, which has provided Public Transportation “incentives” in over 100 American cities, say that every $1 billion invested in public transportation projects translates to $10 billion in public transportation revenues and contributed more than $5.1 million to the Wichita economy.

Analysis of system expansion for New York City’s Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) and New York City’s Regional Transportation Authority show nearly equivalent economic incentives in benefits attributable to contributions in excess of 2 to 1 for New York State and 1.8 to 1 for Illinois.

Sustains and Creates Jobs, Locally and Nationally

“Every $1 billion invested in the nation’s transportation infrastructure supports approximately 67,000 jobs—providing that transportation continues to be a source of economic growth and engine of jobs.”

These include desirable and non-desirable manufacturing jobs, as well as jobs in support activities facilitating manufacture, such as construction, finance, insurance and real estate, retail and wholesale trade, and services.

In plans in Plattsburgh and Hornell, NY, and Savannah, GA, hundreds of thousands of jobs are supported for rail equipment.


Smaller scale, bus-oriented public transportation investments are also supporting economic development across the country.

In Dayton, OH, the Wright Stop Project occupies a local renewal strategy located between two of the most dynamic regions of the Great Dayton Regional “Thoroughfare.” The transit improvements include a business park with a potential of 200 downtown workplaces.

The first phase of Bentonville New River Rapid Transit is in operation, providing a first phase for the Bentonville area that is expected to serve over 1.4 million people, and an additional 8 million people in the surrounding area.

The return on dollars invested in public transportation is far greater than the return on dollars invested in any other sector as well as in major metropolitan regions, and at state and national levels.

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In New York, the MTA-LIRR Taisi Sable Access project is expected to bring $370,000,000 in direct jobs and $290,000,000 in indirect jobs.

In New Orleans, the economic activity generated by the local public transportation system increased by 14.1 percent in 2003.

In Rail of South Florida’s eight-year public transportation development plan to spur 6,800 ongoing economic opportunities.

Sparrows Economic Growth and Development

In communities and regions across the nation, investment in public transportation promotes tourism, economic growth and development.

Public transportation-oriented development in congested corridors translates to increased demand and improved revenues, which can be used as a catalyst for new business activities and partnerships between public agencies and private business. These partnerships, in turn, attract businesses to the area, creating tens of thousands of new jobs in areas that might not otherwise support new economic activity.

In Washington, DC, the new $100 million Amtrak “off-peak” station at Washington’s existing Red Line is developed through an agreement between the federal and DC governments and local business interests. The station, an integrated multimodal transportation hub, will accelerate development and enhance urban design, revitalizing an underserved and underutilized part of DC.

The 35-mile Metrolink light rail system in St. Louis has invested $1.9 billion in the commercial corridor in St. Louis, and many other projects that leverage public transportation investment and development.

The architecturally designed Metrolink system is expected to generate over $300 million in annual revenue, representing a $300 million increase in local sales tax revenues.

An investment in public transportation directly benefits the local, regional and state economies.

Benefits Local, Regional and State Economies

New York’s MTA-LIRR East Side Access project is expected to bring $2.3 billion in direct revenue over a 20-year period, or an additional $4.6 billion in business taxes.

In Detroit, the Job Express service operated by the Chance Coach, Inc. in Wichita, KS, which has provided durable manufacturing jobs, as well as jobs in non-manufacturing industries, such as construction and real estate.

At plants in Plattsburgh and Hornell, NY, and Savannah, GA, hundreds of thousands of jobs are supported for rail equipment.

The 35-mile MetroLink light rail system in St. Louis has generated over $922 million in development, surpassing the $860 million cost of the project.

In Detroit, the Job Express service operated by the Chance Coach, Inc. in Wichita, KS, which has provided durable manufacturing jobs, as well as jobs in non-manufacturing industries, such as construction and real estate.

The Altamont Commuter Express, running 77 miles between Sacramento and Oakland, CA, has augmented commercial activity.

In Atlanta and Washington, DC, average office rents have jumped 18 cents on transportation, 98 percent of which goes toward maintaining and operating vehicles, the largest percent of personal after-home mortgage payments.

Public transportation investment will translate into an additional $4.6 billion per year in revenues, another $1 billion in retail sales and nearly $20 billion in annual sales and service dollars.

Every day, the economic benefits of public transportation are felt on a personal, regional and national level.

For example, in St. Louis, the St. Louis MetroLink system is expected to bring 20,000 people per year on transit, 3 percent of which goes toward maintaining and operating vehicles, the largest percent of personal after-home mortgage payments.

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