



TRANSIT NEWS

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AS GAS PRICES DROP, PUBLIC TRANSIT USERS STILL SAVE MORE THAN \$8,300 per HOUSEHOLD

WASHINGTON, DC – Even though the price of gas has decreased dramatically over the last several months, public transportation riders still enjoy a significant economic savings. A person can achieve an average annual savings of \$8,368 per year by taking public transportation instead of driving, based on today’s gas prices and the average unreserved parking rate, according to the American Public Transportation Association’s (APTA) “Transit Savings Report.” The report is a monthly analysis that shows the average annual savings represents almost a third more than the average amount a household pays for food in a year, according to the Food Institute (\$6,111).

Even with gas prices \$1.378 lower than last year, public transportation users still receive a dramatic economic savings over those who commute by automobile. APTA’s monthly “Transit Savings Report” shows how much a person can save on a monthly or yearly basis by taking public transportation and living with one fewer car in his or her household. The report reminds commuters that taking public transportation is the quickest way to save money compared with the overall driving costs of commuting by auto or light truck.

On average, according to the *2008 Colliers International Parking Rate Study*, the national average for the monthly unreserved parking rate in a city’s downtown business district is \$143. Over the course of a year, parking costs alone can amount to an average of \$1,720.

The report calculates the monthly savings for public transit users at \$697 per month based on today’s gas price of \$1.727 as reported by AAA.

The top 20 cities with the highest transit ridership are ranked in order of their transportation savings based on the purchase of a monthly public transportation pass and factoring in today’s local gas prices and the local monthly unreserved parking rate.*

Top Twenty Cities – Transit Savings Report

	City	Monthly Savings	Annual Savings
1	Boston	\$1,024	\$12,285
2	New York	\$1,021	\$12,258
3	San Francisco	\$944	\$11,325
4	Chicago	\$871	\$10,456
5	Philadelphia	\$848	\$10,171
6	Seattle	\$844	\$10,123
7	Honolulu	\$828	\$9,933
8	Washington DC	\$781	\$9,371
9	Minneapolis	\$761	\$9,135

10	Cleveland	\$756	\$9,072
11	San Diego	\$755	\$9,059
12	Portland	\$737	\$8,845
13	Denver	\$716	\$8,591
14	Baltimore	\$707	\$8,482
15	Los Angeles	\$701	\$8,416
16	Miami	\$673	\$8,075
17	Dallas	\$668	\$8,019
18	Las Vegas	\$655	\$7,864
19	Atlanta	\$655	\$7,860
20	Pittsburgh	\$616	\$7,398

*Based on gasoline prices as reported by AAA on 1/7/09.

Methodology

APTA calculates the average cost of taking public transit by determining the average monthly transit pass of local public transit agencies across the country. This information is based on the annual APTA fare collection survey and is weighted based on ridership (unlinked passenger trips). The assumption is that a person making a switch to public transportation would likely purchase an unlimited pass on the local transit agency, typically available on a monthly basis.

APTA then compares the average monthly transit fare to the average cost of driving. The cost of driving is calculated using the 2008 AAA average cost of driving formula. AAA cost of driving formula is based on variable costs and fixed costs. The variable costs include the cost of gas, maintenance and tires. The fixed costs include insurance, license registration, depreciation and finance charges. The comparison also uses the average mileage of a mid-size auto at 23.4 miles per gallon and today's price for self-serve regular unleaded as recorded by AAA at \$1.727 per gallon. The analysis also assumes that a person will drive an average of 15,000 miles per year. The savings assume a household gives up one car.

In determining the cost of parking, APTA uses the data from the *2008 Colliers International Parking Rate Study* for monthly unreserved parking rates for the United States.

To calculate your individual savings with or without car ownership, go to www.publictransportation.org.

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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.