MANY TIMES TRANSIT SURPASSES DRIVING
Nearly 9 in 10 Americans who have access to public transportation take advantage of it

Millions of Americans are looking for a convenient ride and are willing to pay a little more for it, according to HNTB Corporation’s latest America THINKS survey. Focusing on public transportation, the research findings point to a public ready for more transit options.

JOINING THE CLUB
Nearly 7 in 10 (69 percent) Americans feel there are many instances where public transit is a better option than driving. Among them, high gas prices (29 percent) and convenience (29 percent) are cited as the biggest motivators for choosing transit over driving.

Q. Which of the following, if any, would be most likely to motivate you to choose public transportation over driving?

- High gas prices: 29%
- Convenience: 29%
- Avoiding traffic: 10%
- Environmental concerns: 8%
- Relaxing or getting things done: 7%
- Safer: 4%
- Other people are doing so: 1%
- Other: 11%

* Among respondents who would choose public transportation over driving

MAKING DO; SEEING THE NEED FOR MORE
Despite budget and service cutbacks due to the recession, 68 percent of Americans say the overall quality of public transportation in their area has stayed the same or improved during the past five years. More Americans (46 percent) say local, state and federal governments spend too little on such services, rather than enough or too much.

Q. Would you say that the overall quality of public transportation in your area over the last five years has...

- Stayed the same: 59%
- Improved: 25%
- Worsened: 18%

* Among respondents who have public transportation in their area

Q. Do you think the amount of money that local, state and federal governments spend on public transportation in your area is...

- Too much: 11%
- Too little: 46%
- Adequate: 42%

* Among respondents who have public transportation in their area
ENVISIONING MANY BENEFITS

Approximately 1 in 4 respondents think the most valuable feature of public transportation is that it reduces traffic congestion (28 percent), or saves users money (24 percent), while about 1 in 7 (13 percent) say it’s most valuable feature is the environmental benefit.

Q. Which of the following do you think is the most valuable feature of public transportation?

- 28% Reduces congestion
- 24% Saves money
- 13% Protects the environment
- 11% Reduces stress
- 9% Supports economy
- 9% Reduces dependence on foreign oil
- 4% Reduces travel time
- 3% Other

HOPPING ON BOARD

Buses are Americans’ preferred form of public transportation (43 percent), followed by light rail (15 percent) and commuter trains (14 percent).

Q. If you had local access to each of these in your community and had to choose one, which type of public transportation would you prefer to take most often?

- 43% Bus
- 15% Light rail
- 14% Commuter train
- 12% Subway
- 10% Streetcar
- 6% Trolley bus
- 5% Other

MEASURING MODES OF FUNDING

Almost 3 in 10 (28 percent) Americans think governments should rely on a greater share of the gas tax to fund transit. About 1 in 5 think private investors (21 percent) or local sales taxes (20 percent) should be the primary funding source.

When it comes to funding more and better public transportation options, which of the following do you think local, state and federal governments should rely on for most of the money?

- 28% Greater share of the gas tax
- 21% Private investors
- 20% Dedicated local sales tax
- 15% Increased fares
- 10% Dedicated property tax
- 6% Other
- 2% Other