



Keeping Arizona Up To Speed: Expanding Transportation Options for All



"The transportation needs of the next 50 years will be markedly different from those of the past 50 years. U.S. policy makers must begin adapting their current decisions to future needs." Fitch Ratings in March 2012¹



Arizonans are proud of the system of roads and highways that evolved during the second half of the 20th century as our state began its period of rapid growth. But to stay economically competitive in the 21st century, Arizona leaders must recognize that for the first time in two generations, there has been a significant decrease in the number of miles people are driving each year. Arizonans cut their per-person driving miles by 9.3 percent between 2006 and 2011.² This decline in driving is a national trend, and driving miles per person are down especially sharply among young people.



While trends indicate that people are moving away from driving, ridership on public transit is increasing, and people more and more are looking for alternative transportation options. Young people in particular are drawn to urban, walkable locations that have multiple transportation options, such as bikes, buses, ride sharing services, streetcars, light rail, and commuter trains.³ When it comes to attracting young professionals, a recent survey found that "up to 86 percent said it was important for their city to offer opportunities to live and work without relying on a car."⁴ To attract talented workers and businesses to the state, Arizona must provide the transportation options that the Millennial generation– the largest generation in American history – is seeking.



¹ ["U.S. Transportation Trends Demand New Funding Solutions,"](#) Fitch Ratings, March 12, 2014

² ["Moving Off the Road,"](#) Arizona PIRG Education Fund, August 2013

³ ["Transportation and the New Generation,"](#) Arizona PIRG Education Fund, April 2012

⁴ Poll by Global Strategy Group, commissioned by Rockefeller Foundation and T4America

Meanwhile, America is turning 65 at the most rapid rate in its history –nearly 10,000 people are reaching the traditional age of retirement each day in both urban and rural areas. As people age, their transportation needs change. According to the Maricopa Association of Governments, as driving and walking trips decrease over the next decade, carpooling, bus, train, and dial-a-ride trips all are projected to increase. An AARP survey identified that one of the top services people 50-plus want implemented to improve their communities was better transportation options.⁵

These trends for the two largest generations are important to consider when deciding how to focus Arizona’s future transportation investments. A recent national survey found that both Millennials and Baby Boomers want cities to focus less on recruiting new companies and more on investing in new transportation options, walkable communities, and making the area as attractive as possible.⁶

Transportation policy and funding should reflect how current and future generations want to get around, especially when transportation dollars are increasingly scarce. If Arizona doesn’t address these changing transportation trends, we will get left behind.

To create a strong economy for Arizona today and into the future, we need leaders and voters to understand the benefits of funding a mix of transportation options:⁷

- Every billion dollars spent on public transportation produces 16,419 job-months; the same amount spent on highway infrastructure projects produces 8,781 job-months. Combined, these projects produce more than 25,000 jobs.
- Every \$1 invested in public transportation generates approximately \$4 in economic returns.
- Every \$10 million in capital investment in public transportation yields \$30 million in increased business sales.
- Every \$10 million in operating investment yields \$32 million in increased business sales.
- From 2006-2011, residential property values performed 42 percent better on average if they were located near public transportation with high-frequency service.

Arizona’s policy makers must understand these changing transportation trends and adequately invest in transportation options that make sense for this century. Since it can take a decade to plan, finance, and build major transportation projects, it is critical that Arizona’s leaders take action now to ensure that our future infrastructure meets the needs of a 21st century economy and workforce.

To start, we challenge our leaders to ensure that state agencies coordinate their activities to identify and implement solutions that integrate transportation, housing and land-use planning. This is a critical first step that will pay large dividends by stimulating the economy, creating jobs and building the kinds of livable places that will continue to make Arizona attractive to current and future residents. In order to achieve this goal, both human and capital resources must be dedicated to the effort.

The undersigned organizations have outlined various ways you can help focus attention on the importance of updating Arizona’s transportation agenda. We stand ready to support your efforts. For more information, please use the links listed below.

⁵ [What Is Livable? Community Preferences of Older Adults](#), AARP Public Policy Institute, April 2014

⁶ [Investing in Place](#), American Planning Association, April 2014

⁷ [Public Transportation Fact Book](#), American Public Transportation Association, 2014

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