

MASS TRANSIT IN A
POST-PANDEMIC WORLD:

INVESTING IN PARK AND RIDE FACILITIES



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INTRODUCTION

Park and Ride (P&R) facilities are a fundamental element in transportation options offered to those living within dense metropolitan cities and their surrounding communities. Investing in the strategic placement of P&R facilities can increase the use of public transit and other forms of non-motorized transportation as modes for commuting.

Having an adequate amount of P&R facilities is critical for highly-populated regions if they want to offset the negative effects related to high rates of personal vehicle use, such as intercity gridlock, highway traffic congestion, worksite parking shortages, and greenhouse gas emissions.

Adding to the necessity for P&R facilities is the increasing funding toward and adoption of electric vehicles. As the use of electric vehicles grow, so will the need for the addition of charging stations around cities. Transportation planners have an opportunity to approach this growing need prudently by working toward building technologically-advanced P&R facilities that will satisfy the future demand for electric vehicle charging stations.

Despite a downturn in ridership during the pandemic, current studies show that these numbers are climbing and may continue to climb, meaning public transportation requirements will only continue to become greater over time. By increasing the number of P&R facilities and the amenities those facilities offer, cities will create transportation solutions that benefit the riders, the environment, and the surrounding community.



Riders



Environment



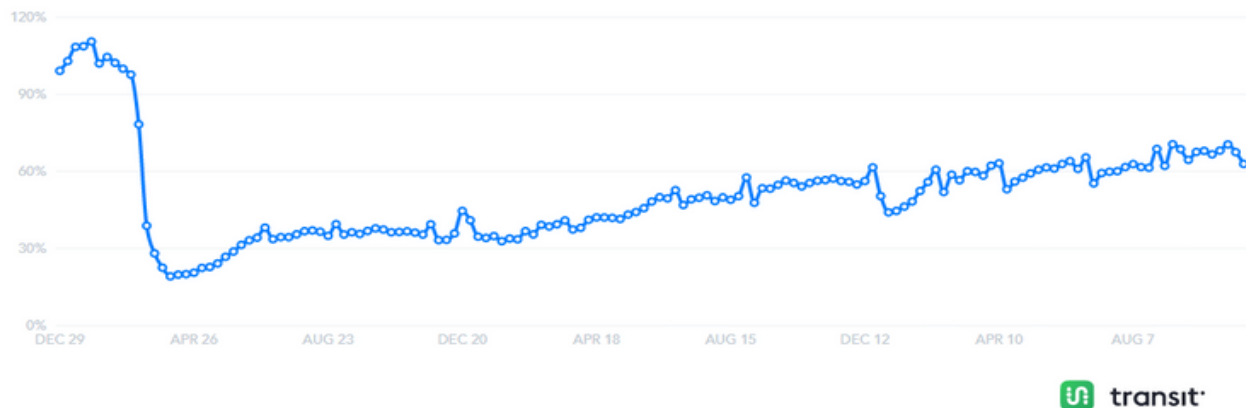
Community

RIDERSHIP TRENDS

According to the American Public Transportation Association (APTA), public transportation ridership has declined to 10-40 percent of pre-pandemic levels in many cities across the country. However, since then, the APTA notes that since the Omicron variant has subsided, "[Public] transportation ridership has begun to rise again. From mid-February 2022 to April 2022, national public transit ridership is approximately 60 to 65 percent of pre-pandemic levels." This signals a rising public interest and trust in mass transportation, with this trend having the potential to continue growing beyond what was seen even prior to the pandemic.

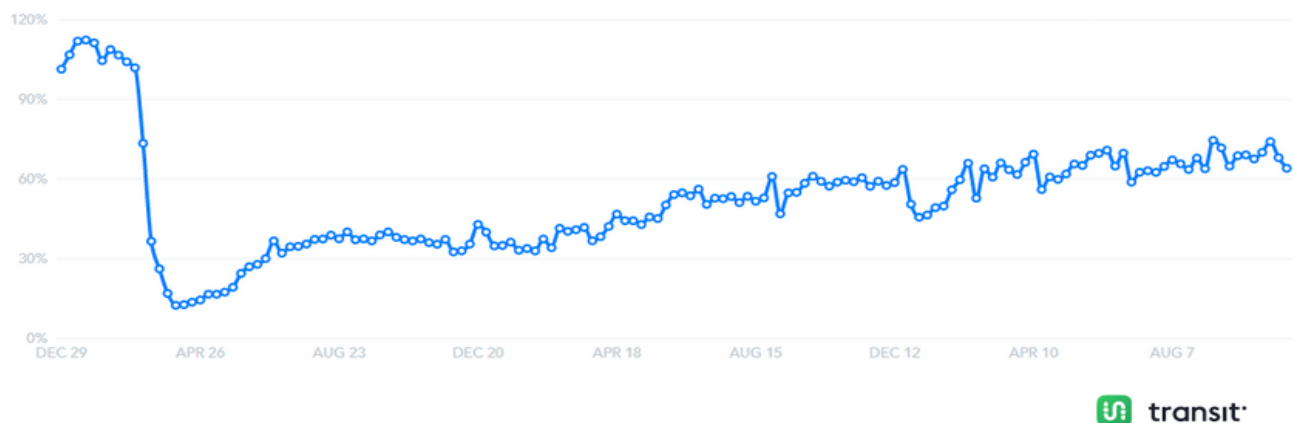
National Ridership Trends, By Week

Dec 2019-Nov 2022



Mid-Atlantic Ridership Trends, By Week

Dec 2019-Nov 2022



Source: American Public Transportation Association (APTA) ridership trends. The percentages displayed in this APTA report represent the percent difference between actual pre-pandemic ridership and estimated ridership for a given period during the pandemic. Estimated ridership values for each week are extrapolated values from the most recent quarterly actual ridership figures reported by transit agencies

ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS

Transportation carbon emissions have nearly doubled since the 1970's, with transportation now being the primary source of greenhouse gas emissions in the United States, contributing to 27% of total emissions. Because of this, many cities are exploring ways they can contribute to the reduction of pollution caused by transportation use.

Public transportation offers an immediate solution to this problem. The APTA notes that "public transportation with its overarching effects on land use, is estimated to reduce CO2 emissions by 37 million metric tons annually." But in order for many travelers to take advantage of public transportation options, they must first have sufficient access to P&R facilities.

Additionally, many major vehicle manufacturers are considering the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions in their manufacturing roadmaps. GM and Ford are pledging a combined \$56 billion in electric vehicles through 2025, while Jaguar is going all-electric by the end of that same year. Subaru and Mitsubishi are aiming to have 40% and 50% of their global sales coming from electric vehicles, respectively. This means that not only will the need for expanded P&R facilities become more necessary for a greener future, but so will the need for these facilities to have charging stations to manage the influx of electric vehicle purchases.

"Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) research suggests that the world needs to reduce global greenhouse gas emissions by 45% by around 2030, and achieve net-zero emissions by 2050, in order to avert the worst impacts of climate change. However, meeting such long-term goals will require deep cuts in emissions in the coming decades, including in transportation where emissions are projected to increase significantly by 2050, absent new actions."

Samantha Gross and Jennifer Perron
Heavy transport is a big carbon emitter — how can we change course?

Public Transportation Figures

4,800

Pounds of CO2 emissions saved annually by a solo commuter switching from a private vehicle to public transportation.

10 billion

The number of public transportation trips taken annually, up 30% since 1995.

Electric Vehicle (EV) Figures

\$13 billion

The amount companies have announced they are investing in domestic EV manufacturing in 2022.

26.4 million

The number of EVs projected to be on U.S. roads in 2030.

COMMUNITY BENEFITS

Aside from contributing to the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, P&R facilities bring a number of other important benefits to the communities they are located in.

Economic Stimulation

Studies on the impact of public transit investment on local economics show that it directly and positively impacts business sales. For every dollar spent on public transportation, \$4 in economic returns is generated. Additionally, as more people visit a city center, more jobs also appear there, boosting wages and economic productivity over time. Some reports even estimate that the hidden economic value of public transit could be worth anywhere from \$1.5 million to \$1.8 billion annually.

Freedom for Riders

Commuting takes time and attention for the person operating the vehicle, so when riders are able to access P&R facilities as a means to use public transportation, they are able to sleep, work, eat, or relax during that time while trained drivers are able to safely transport them to their destinations.

Reduces Congestion

Public transportation saves everyone time by taking cars off the road, therefore decreasing congestion on the roads. A study in 2011 noted that U.S. public transportation use saved riders 865 million hours in travel time.



CONCLUSION

While mass transit ridership declined during the pandemic, there is reason for optimism about its growth potential. Current trends show an increasing use that indicates ridership levels will recover to pre-pandemic levels, and perhaps even exceed them as the need for greener solutions continues to heighten.

Additionally, P&R facilities are a critical component of any urban area's transportation system. When there are not enough facilities to meet the demand of the citizens living within these areas, commuters may be forced to use their own vehicles to transport themselves to and from the places they work, eat, play, and shop at. As a result, traffic congestion, carbon emissions, and decreased local economic activity begin to adversely impact the surrounding community. Over time, this has the potential to erode the public's perception of their city's ability to provide crucial infrastructure for its citizens.

Because of these facts, Coach USA strongly recommends transportation agencies not only expand P&R facilities to help meet the future requirement for such options, but to also create more state-of-the-art solutions that will get in front of the growing adoption of electric vehicle use and stimulate economic vitality in the community.

ABOUT COACH USA

Coach USA is one of the nation's largest transportation companies where the top priority is the safety of its customers and employees. We operate over 2,500 vehicles and have over 5,000 employees who serve millions of passengers. Coach USA provides critical local and intercity transport services for communities throughout the United States and Canada via Coach Canada. Coach USA also owns and operates Megabus – the first, low-cost, express bus service to provide intercity travel for as low as a dollar. Since launching in 2006, Megabus has served more than 50 million customers throughout more than 100 cities across the nation.

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