

Trends in Transportation (Quick Fact Summary)

WHAT MODES OF TRANSPORTATION DO WE USE TODAY?

Fossil Fuel Vehicles - Traditional automobiles have internal combustion engines designed to extract power from fossil fuels such as natural gas, gasoline or diesel fuel. Biodiesel and even hydrogen can be used in some engines.

Electric Cars - Electric cars are typically more efficient than fuel cell-powered vehicles on a tank-to-wheel basis.[16] They have better fuel economy than conventional internal combustion engine vehicles but are hampered by range or maximum distance attainable before discharging the battery. The electric car batteries are their main cost.

Hybrid Cars - Hybrid cars may be partly fossil fuel (or biofuel) powered and partly electric or hydrogen-powered. Most combine an internal combustion engine with an electric engine, though other variations too exist. The internal combustion engine is often either a gasoline or diesel engine.

Human-powered Vehicles – Human-powered transport includes bicycles, skateboards, scooters, and other environmentally friendly ways of getting around. In addition to the health benefits of the exercise provided, they are far more environmentally friendly than most other options. Bicycles are an efficient mode of transport because they harness power from our large leg muscles.

WHAT WILL THE NEXT GENERATION OF TRANSPORTATION USERS NEED?

Younger Workers are Open to Walking, Biking, and Public Transit - Millennials are less interested in cars and are showing preferences for other modes of transportation like biking and walking. This means that offices will need to be located close to housing and public transportation options.

“Nine-to-Five” Jobs are Going Away - Rather than working in one traditional nine-to-five position more people are working in the service economy and taking on several different contract opportunities at once.

Offices are Changing - Office-sharing and telecommuting trends suggest that by 2020, fewer companies will feel the need to invest as much in physical office spaces. This could reduce rush hours, alter traffic patterns, and change demands for transportation.

Urban Population Increases - Over the next fifteen years, the U.S. population will grow by roughly 40 million people, from 321 million to 361 million. Nearly all of this growth will occur within urbanized areas. Of the top 100 most populous urban areas in 2015, 73 are projected to grow rapidly.

WILL CARS CONTINUE TO DOMINATE AMERICAN TRANSPORTATION?

Older Workers are Retiring - By 2020, all of the baby boomers will have reached pre- or early-retirement ages. Car ownership, which was important to baby boomers, is not as important to the next generation.

Vehicle Miles Travelled - VMT is down 7.29 percent. We drive significantly less as a nation than we did 10 years ago, and that number is only likely to decline more. As more working adults choose to live in high-density and walkable areas where driving is not a necessity, other options will enter the transportation marketplace.

Fewer people will drive cars in the future - Many people are already starting to drive less to avoid the stress, expense, and danger of car travel. Young people are getting driver's licenses at a lower rate than in the past.

People are starting to use other forms of transit - Transit system usage is up, reaching the highest levels measured in 58 years. Many cities are adding bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure at a rapid pace.