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Public Transit Ridership Surges in Second Quarter 2008

(Sept. 18, 2008) Americans took more than 2.8 billion trips on public transportation in the second quarter of 2008—an increase of almost 140 million trips from the second quarter of 2007, according to an American Public Transportation Association (APTA) report released last week.

In 2007, 10.3 billion trips were taken on public transportation—the highest number of trips taken on U.S. public transportation in 50 years, according to APTA.

In the second quarter of 2008, public transportation continued to climb, rising by 5.2 percent. Conversely, the Federal Highway Administration has reported that the vehicle miles traveled on United States roads declined by 3.3 percent in the second quarter.

Making the rise in public transportation more remarkable, according to APTA, is that usually fewer people ride public transit during an economic slowdown.

Comparing all transit modes, light rail had the highest percentage of ridership increase, with a 12.3 percent increase for the second quarter.

Bus ridership followed with the second highest increase, 5.1 percent nationwide. The largest part of that increase (14 percent) occurred in communities with populations ranging from 100,000 to 499,999.

Ridership on commuter rail rose 4.9 percent nationally, with heavy rail (subways and elevated trains) ridership increasing by 4.3 percent.

The complete ridership report is available at [apta.com](#).