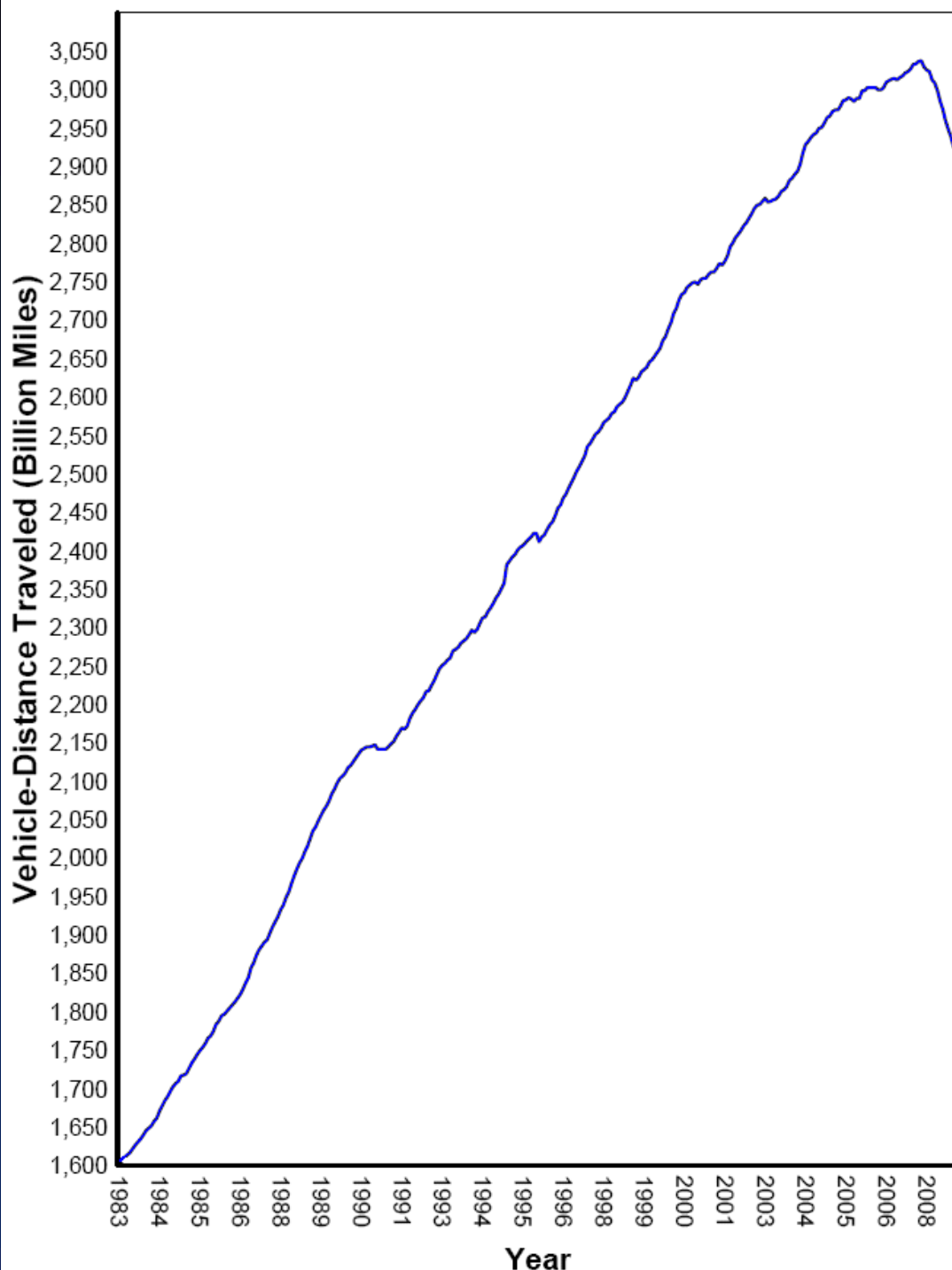


# National Physical Plan: Transportation, Urban Planning, & Community Design.



National Physical  
Activity Plan Conf.  
Washington, DC  
July 2009

A physical activity initiative  
and no one even knows it!



# US Total Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT); moving 12-month total, by year

**2007-2008**

**VMT: - 3.6%**

**Transit use: + 4%**

[www.fhwa.dot.gov](http://www.fhwa.dot.gov)

[www.apta.com](http://www.apta.com)

# **1. Transportation agencies must set performance measures and benchmarks for active transportation.**

- **Fund and mandate collection of active travel data (pedestrian, bike, transit) to inform national policy**
- **Examples**
  - **20% active travel modes by 2020**
  - **Reduction in pedestrian and bicycle crashes**
- **School travel mode measures**

# **\* Universal adoption & implementation of complete streets at federal, state, & local levels.**

- **Tie “completeness” to funding**
- **Change roadway standards (AASHTO)**
- **Complete streets:**
  - **Take all modes into account in all projects: pedestrian, bicycle, transit, motor vehicle.**
  - **Assure design speed = posted speed.**
  - **Limited exclusions**

## **2. Change how US DOT collects & distributes transportation funding to create an optimal system for ped, bike, and transit travel.**

**Goal: A complete and interconnected system of ped, bike, and transit facilities including, parks, greenways, and trails.**

- Use performance measures to guide funding**
- Connect transportation, land use, and housing in the planning process.**
- Focus on at-risk, underprivileged populations**
- Tools include smart growth, health impact assessments, long range transportation plans.**
- Reward innovative designs (e.g. traffic calming measures)**

### **3. Integrate physical activity (health) impacts into community planning; states, MPOs, cities, towns.**

- **Create model regulations and practices,**
- **Include health in all steps of process**
  - **Visioning**
  - **Plan making**
  - **Standards, regulations, incentives,**
  - **Development work (including review, public/private projects)**
  - **Public investment (infrastructure, facilities).**

## **4. Locate and design schools for maximum community physical activity.**

- **Proximate to residential and maximize pedestrian sheds.**
- **Inviting school site designs (e.g. ADA, functionality).**
- **Joint use facilities; school as center of the community.**
- **Bussing, idling, pick-up, drop-off policies.**
- **Change siting requirements (field acreage); school & transportation funding policies.**

## **5. National active community design and implementation education campaign for professionals in planning, engineering, community design.**

- **Professionals: planning, engineering, public works, public health . . .**
  - **Initial and continuing education**
- **Elected officials: Mayor, city council, school board,**
- **Appointed officials: City managers, planning, health, conservation boards.**

## **6. Create a system of financial inducements to individuals & private entities to encourage active transportation.**

- **Internalize external costs of driving; e.g. congestion charges, parking fees, toll roads, mileage based auto insurance.**
- **Consider equity impacts in all cases.**
- **Support tax free active travel benefits (e.g. parking cash out, bike sharing programs).**
- **Location efficient mortgages.**
- **Incentives (tax breaks?) for employers to create supportive settings, such as install bike parking, lockers, showers.**

## **7. Promote and facilitate with school administrators the adoption of Safe Routes to School programs as policy nationwide.**

- **Partner w/ National Safe Center for SRTS and National Safe Routes Partnership to promote to school administrators . . .**
- **. . . To develop facilitators.**
- **. . . To utilize national curriculum based on 5 E's: engineering, encouragement, education, enforcement, evaluation.**

**[www.saferoutesinfo.org](http://www.saferoutesinfo.org)**

**[www.saferoutespartnership.org](http://www.saferoutespartnership.org)**

# Transportation, Urban Design, and Community Planning



## 4th arrives amid shift in driving habits

High unemployment, gas prices are taking their toll

By Larry Copeland and Paul Overberg  
USA TODAY

The nation heads into the Independence Day holiday weekend amid the longest and steepest decline in driving since the invention of the automobile.

Since the number of miles traveled by motor vehicles in the USA peaked in November 2007, the nation's 12-month total has dropped by 123 billion miles, or slightly more than 4%. That's a bigger decline than the drop of just above 3% during the 1979-80 Iranian revolution that triggered a spike in gasoline prices in the USA.

The 4% drop is the equivalent of taking between 8 million and 10 million drivers off the road.

"We may be witnessing the beginning of a fundamental shift in American driving habits," says Ed McMahon, senior research fellow at the Urban Land Institute, a non-profit group that promotes innovative development.

The Federal Highway Administration's miles-traveled report for April, the most recent available, suggests a slight flattening out. While April's total was up 0.6% from April 2008, continuing rises in joblessness and gas prices are likely to limit driving, McMahon says.

As the USA prepares to celebrate the Fourth of July, many Americans are choosing to watch fireworks

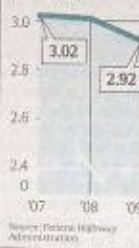
The leisure travel organization attributes the projected decline to uncertainty about the economy, "especially rising joblessness and sagging personal incomes." The recent spike in gas prices also might be a concern, AAA says.

Gas prices were the driving force behind the nation's change in driving habits, says analyst Alan Pisarski, author of *Commuting in America*. "When people saw \$3 a gallon, when they saw \$4 a gallon, it was something akin to sticker shock. It really did have an effect on people's behavior." He says people started taking transit, carpooling, merging trips and cutting back on vacation travel. Many stayed with alternative modes of transportation even after gas prices retreated last year.

Bernard Assaf, 36, a software engineer from a northern Atlanta suburb, says he won't get back in his car for the 40-mile round trip to work even if gas prices plummet. With help from The Clean Air Campaign, an Atlanta non-profit that promotes transportation alternatives, he now carpools to a satellite parking lot 7 miles from home, then takes public transit to his office. "For me, it's not just about the price of gas," he says. "If I put 40 miles a day on my car vs. 14 miles, that's a big difference. I've gotten too used to doing things by

### Traffic volume drops

Total miles driven by motor vehicles on U.S. roads for the 12 months that ended each April 30 (in trillions).



Source: Federal Highway Administration

### Fewer miles at higher cost

See the relationship between gas prices and miles driven at [usatoday.com](http://usatoday.com)

far-flung suburbs, which were hardest hit by both the housing collapse and high gas prices, and those in rural communities.

John Crabtree, spokesman for the Center for Rural Affairs, a non-profit rural advocacy and economic development group based in Lyons, Neb., says it's "a double-edged sword" for many rural communities.

More people are shopping close to home, giving local merchants a boost. "But if you or your child need to go to the doctor, and you live 40 miles from the nearest health care provider, it makes a difference whether gas is \$2 a gallon or \$3 a gallon," Crabtree says. "People are forced to make difficult choices."

The driving drop-off also signals a reversal in auto ownership among African Americans and Hispanics, which had been increasing since 1970, Pisarski says. "That will limit access to jobs, and will be a factor in the overall economy in getting people back to work," he says.

McMahon says his research shows that people over the past three years are trending toward compact, transit-oriented developments that mix residential, retail and office uses and encourage walking. Even when the