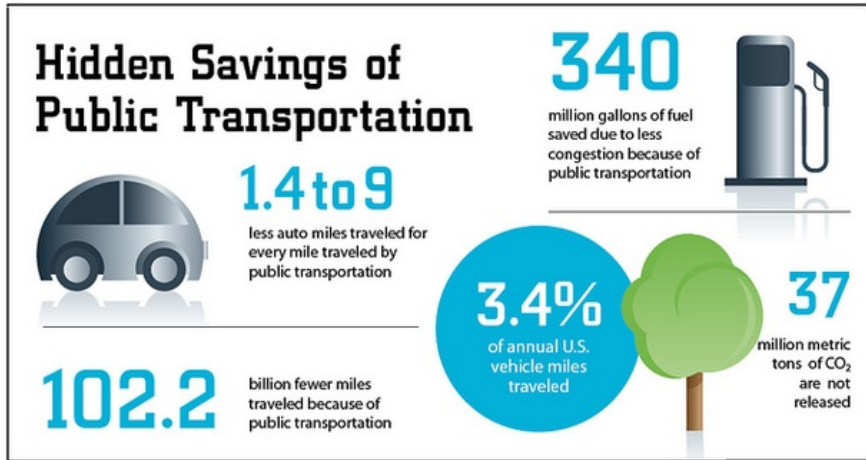




CHARTS

# The Case for Public Transportation, in Infographic Form

KAID BENFIELD 10:08 AM ET 11 COMMENTS



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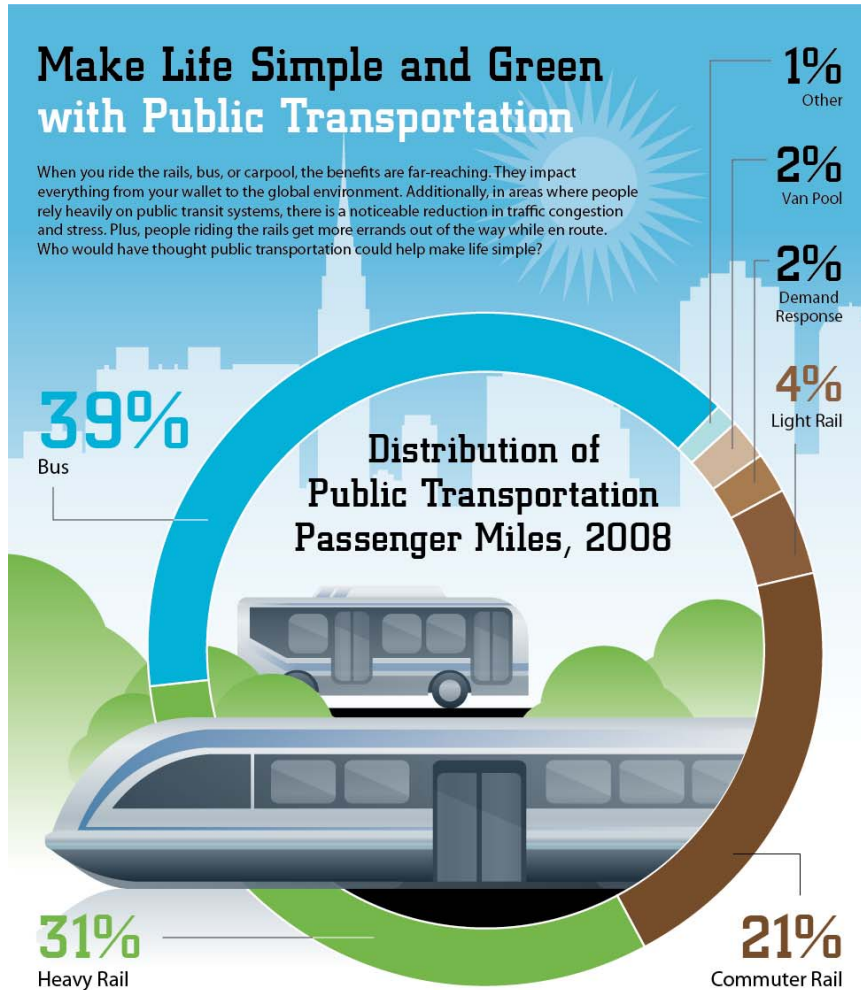
This would make a great poster. Last week the [Sustainable Cities Collective](#) posted a terrific, poster-sized graphic highlighting the benefits of public transportation to individuals and to society. The very well-made display was created, somewhat improbably, by Boris at [Credit Donkey](#), a website whose primary function seems to be to explicate the world of credit cards to consumers. The graphic is based on research by Kelly Teh.

The link between an environmental cause and a site primarily devoted to credit cards is, I suppose, household expenses.

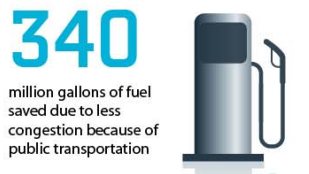
Taking transit saves household expenses. We should enlarge and frame this, and put it on one of the incredibly blank walls (that's another story) in our offices here at NRDC:

# Make Life Simple and Green with Public Transportation

When you ride the rails, bus, or carpool, the benefits are far-reaching. They impact everything from your wallet to the global environment. Additionally, in areas where people rely heavily on public transit systems, there is a noticeable reduction in traffic congestion and stress. Plus, people riding the rails get more errands out of the way while en route. Who would have thought public transportation could help make life simple?



## Hidden Savings of Public Transportation



## Heavy Rail Systems Top 5 Most Traveled



	Pounds CO <sub>2</sub> / Passenger Mile	% of total Heavy Rail Passenger Miles Traveled in the U.S.	% Occupancy
MTA New York City Subway (NY)	0.147	59.3%	59%
Washington Metro (DC, MD, VA)	0.347	9.7%	33%
San Francisco BART (CA)	0.085	8.6%	32%
Chicago "L" (IL)	0.573	7.0%	36%
Atlanta MARTA (GA)	0.245	3.5%	39%

## Light Rail Systems



Teh's [article on Credit Donkey](#) explains her reasoning:

As I was riding the DC Metro a couple of weeks ago, I was reminded of the metro tickets I keep as mementos of places I've traveled: San Francisco's BART, Atlanta's MARTA, and New York City's subway system. That got me thinking about stories of families who've saved a bundle by becoming one-car (or no-car) households ...

According to RITA Bureau of Transportation's statistics on average fuel efficiency and distance traveled to work (10 miles each way), the average daily work commute costs about \$2.25 each way in a car compared to \$1.02 for the average public transit fare—nearly half price.

The cost savings alone could justify using public transit, not to mention the health benefits. APTA claims public transportation offers cleaner air with 95% less carbon monoxide and nearly 50% less carbon dioxide and nitrogen oxide per passenger mile than a private vehicle does.

There's much more, but it's all in the graphic. Enjoy. Props to Kelly and Boris for doing it.

*This post originally appeared on the NRDC's [Switchboard](#) blog.*

Keywords: conservation, Sustainability, public transportation



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