

*Reconnecting Fort Wayne: Transportation* is a six part report designed to promote sustainable transportation planning in Fort Wayne. The first five reports, published in December of 2007, are innovative approaches or tools for analyzing current conditions and offering more transportation choice and lower household transportation cost.

# RECONNECTING FORT WAYNE

Building a Sustainable Future on an Innovative Past

The Center for Neighborhood Technology (CNT) was founded in 1978 to research, adapt and test new community revitalization strategies relevant to urban communities, especially strategies that harnessed the environmental and economic value of the more efficient use of natural resources. Over the years, CNT has worked to disclose the hidden assets of the Chicagoland economy and urban areas more broadly; demonstrate the multi-bottom line benefits of more resource-efficient policies and practices; and show how the value of what we demonstrated could be captured to benefit communities and their residents inclusively. CNT serves as the umbrella for a number of projects and affiliate organizations, all of which help the organization fulfill its mission: to promote the development of more livable and sustainable

urban communities. CNT's transportation work is focused on using transportation assets to serve both the environmental and economic development goals of regions and communities. CNT works to boost demand for clean, efficient and affordable mass transit; increase the supply of traditional and non-traditional mass transit services; disclose the linkages between transportation costs and housing affordability; create model value-capture mechanisms that take advantage of the intersection of efficient transportation networks with community economic development programs; and promote policy initiatives that increase public participation in investment decisions and make more resources available for sustainable investments.

More information is available at [www.cnt.org](http://www.cnt.org).

**A Summary Report**  
Sustainable Transportation in the City of Fort Wayne, Indiana

# RECONNECTING FORT WAYNE

*Expanding Transportation Choice Makes Sense*

The options for getting around within Fort Wayne may seem straight forward, but they have far-reaching effects on day-to-day mobility, and its cost. Transportation options are determined by public transportation investment. Consider this:

- Household transportation costs in Fort Wayne are significantly higher than the national average. As a result, Fort Wayne households have less money to spend on housing and education – investments that increase in value over time – because a larger share of household budgets goes for cars – their purchases, fuel, insurance and maintenance – that decrease in value.
- As a region, Fort Wayne is sending a higher proportion of its income to other regions where vehicles and fuel are produced. There is less discretionary income to circulate within the region at bookstores, restaurants, sports and entertainment, and other local economic development niches.
- Allen County does not meet federal air quality standards, partially because of the amount of vehicle use, which hurt the environment, health and the economy.

Fort Wayne was not alone in emphasizing auto travel for the past half century. But as Fort Wayne competes in the 21st Century economy and as household change in size and composition, Fort Wayne needs to offer a broader range of choices for travel and for living locally.

The Housing + Transportation Affordability Index is a new tool for illustrating how different housing locations result in different household transportation budgets. It clearly shows that Fort Wayne is at a disadvantage in competing with other regions, because so much discretionary income is tied up in housing and transportation costs. Housing is generally affordable in the region, but transportation costs are unusually high.

The alternative is to offer a much broader range of travel choices, from sidewalks to streetcars. Three innovative transportation choices are offered here for consideration and discussion by Fort Wayne leaders and residents:

- Universal transit pass (UPASS) for college and university students;
- Car sharing; and
- Restoration of streetcars.

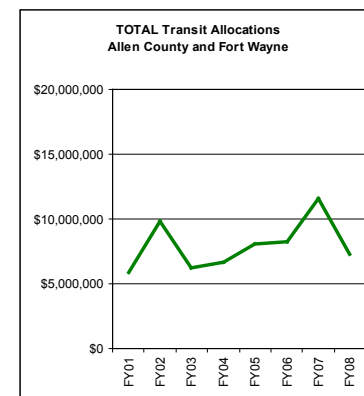
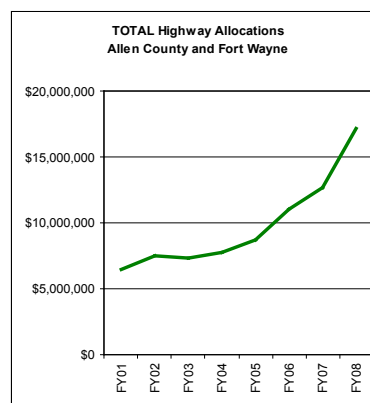
CNT recommends that Fort Wayne consider starting a Transportation Management Association, a public-private partnership charged with funding commute options and increasing transportation choice, including possibly the sponsorship of these and other new transportation programs. Finally, CNT offers a summary of the current public transportation investments to help inform the public discussion about Fort Wayne's transportation future.

[>> Link to Full Report at](#)

# FUNDING TRANSPORTATION CHOICE

Fort Wayne's current and previous mayors have made a strong commitment to sustainability: growing the city in a manner that maintains environmental health and preserves municipal and household wealth. Changes in public transportation investment priorities can bring greater value—both economic and environmental—to citizens and businesses.

It is apparent that investment in highway construction is increasing at a significant rate, while investment in transit has remained relatively flat. The graphs below show the trend for both types of investment from Fiscal Year 2001 through Fiscal Year 2008.



In addition, Fort Wayne and Allen County are devoting most of the region's Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) funds to road projects on the fringes of the region, generally spending 20% or less of the CMAQ funds on transit projects.

CNT recommends that a more open, transparent process, involving more citizens and providing a better balance of funding, be established in Fort Wayne. Additional recommendations in support of this general goals are found in the full report.

[>> Link to Full Report at](#)



# TMA

*A business approach to transportation choice*

**Leaders in Fort Wayne have identified sustainability as a strategy for economic growth. TMA's are used in a majority of states to expand transportation choice at a local level.**

CNT proposes that Fort Wayne consider launching a Transportation Management Association to run innovative transportation programs. TMAs are public-private partnerships that link business, government and community around improved commuting.

While TMAs operate diverse types of services, the Fort Wayne TMA proposed could potentially have these functions:

- Promotion of walking and bicycling where feasible;
- Bulk sales of student and employee transit passes and administration of a universal pass program;
- Commuter services like van pools and ridesharing;
- Accessory services to transit, such as promotion and employer education about tax-free options for employee purchase of transit passes;
- Parking pricing and parking management services;
- Car sharing (individual accounts for residents and business accounts for institutions).

Five neighborhood areas seem appropriate for programs of a start-up TMA: the downtown/West Central neighborhood, the North River neighborhood, the IPFW/Ivy Tech area, the area around Parkview's Randalia campus and Renaissance Pointe. These areas, which we call "Eco-Pods", offer the greatest opportunity for the successful shift of some resident and/or visitor trips from private autos to other transportation options. Eventually the Fort Wayne TMA might sponsor a UPASS program and spark the development of a streetcar system.

TMAs are generally public-private partnerships that rely on a healthy mix of funding sources. Typically funding is derived from a combination of membership dues from businesses that benefit, federal transportation funds, local or state grants, service contracts, developer funding agreements and business improvement districts.

[>> Link to Full Report at](#)



# HOUSING + TRANSPORTATION

*Choice is cost-effective*



**Fort Wayne residents have the opportunity to reduce the cost and impacts of travel. In Fort Wayne both housing and transportation costs are higher away from the city center.**

Housing costs are generally considered affordable when they represent 30% or less of household income. Transportation costs, the second highest household expense, represent 19% of income for an average U.S. family. Housing and Transportation are said to be affordable if they don't exceed 49% of income.

**Housing (30%) + Transportation (19%) = 49% of Household Income**

While housing in Fort Wayne is affordable, Fort Wayne residents generally spend far above the national average for transportation. Residents in the Fort Wayne region spend as little as \$537 per month for transportation in the West Central neighborhood and as much as \$1,046 per month in Tri-Lakes. As a percent of income, most households in Fort Wayne spend between 25 and 54 percent on transportation. Only in the wealthiest areas do households spend less than the national average on transportation.

Neighborhood with very specific characteristics score low on combined Housing + Transportation costs in Fort Wayne: they are walkable and compact, with stores and amenities readily accessible by walking, bicycling, and transit.

Expanding Citilink bus routes and ridership is essential to lowering combined housing and transportation costs, as are new transportation options such as car sharing and streetcars.

As Fort Wayne plans for the future, maintaining low housing costs and reducing transportation costs should be strategic objectives. This can be accomplished by focusing development in and near downtown, as is already underway, especially mixed use, transit oriented development. Low H+T scores have a high correlation with interesting and economically vital urban neighborhoods.

[>> Link to Full Report at](#)

# UPASS

*Invest in education, rather than a car*



**Fort Wayne is fortunate to have many colleges and universities. However, the expense of driving to school can use scarce resources that could be available for tuition and books.**

According to college and university administrators, some students find that the expense of driving to school competes with getting an education. The UPASS, sometimes referred to as a Universal Transit Pass, University Pass or Unlimited Pass, can get around this problem.

UPASSes are low cost transit passes that can be used by schools of any size. They are already used at some Indiana state universities. The passes are paid for as a student fee and, because they are purchased by every student, they are deeply discounted. Even students who choose not to use transit benefit by both reduced competition for parking, and congestion to classes.

>> [Link to Full Report at](#)

# CARSHARING

*Choose affordable and convenient car access*

**Car sharing organizations allow member individuals and organizations access to a fleet of cars, parked in decentralized locations, twenty-four hours a day. Car sharing can reduce transportation cost burdens for households and reduce the negative environmental impacts of heavy auto use.**



Whether organized as a non-profit or a for-profit, car sharing is both a business that must work within a marketplace and is a public service to households to significantly reduce transportation costs.

Car sharing, combined with Citilink, walking and for some, bicycling, can offer residents a way to get around and to participate fully in community life without the cost and inconvenience of car ownership. And car sharing is good for the environment because households use only cars when necessary, rather than as the default for all trips.

>> [Link to Full Report at](#)

# STREETCARS

*Go back to the future*



**Today Fort Wayne is experiencing a rebirth. Streetcars are a natural next step because they can help make downtown Fort Wayne a vital place to work and live.**

At the peak of the rail age in 1900, the City of Fort Wayne had 200 miles of streetcar track—a relatively large capacity for a city with a population of less than 50,000. While the system had been dismantled by mid-century, the rectangular grid that formed its backbone is still present in the streets of the older sections of Fort Wayne.

Streetcars are a relatively inexpensive transportation investment. In most small or medium-sized cities the average new line is two to three miles long and costs between \$3 million and \$20 million per mile. Costs vary depending on factors such as the cost of right-of-way, utility relocation, the number and type of stations, and vehicle storage facilities. The return on investment—in cities such as Kenosha, Tampa, Little Rock and Portland—in increased economic development on the blocks surrounding new streetcar lines is reported to range from 900% to 7500%.

>> [Link to Full Report at](#)