







STRATEGY 3.

# IMPROVED TRANSPORTATION OPTIONS

GOAL:

USE A VARIETY OF TRANSPORTATION  
MODES—AND CLEANER VEHICLES

CO-BENEFITS:

-  reduced energy costs
-  jobs
-  improved air quality and health
-  quality of life



Bicycling creates no pollution, offers exercise opportunities and is often the quickest way to travel.

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There is no single remedy, but rather many remedies with many benefits.

### Actions

1. Invest more in transit
2. Expand transit incentives
3. Promote transit-oriented development
4. Make walking and biking easier
5. Car share and carpool
6. Improve fleet efficiency
7. Achieve higher fuel efficiency standards
8. Switch to cleaner fuels
9. Support intercity rail
10. Improve freight movement

For more information, see Chicago 2020 Mitigation and Adaptation Strategies chart on page 50.

Every day, Chicagoans travel to a variety of places—they commute to work, drive to the store, go to the doctor, make a trip to the health club, go out for dinner. Currently, 21 percent of the city’s greenhouse gas emissions is produced by cars, trucks, buses and trains. (This inventory excludes emissions from air travel, an approach that mirrors that of most other cities.) To lower emissions, a high-quality transportation system must include a mix of public transit, bicycling, walking, car sharing, energy-efficient vehicles and the development of transit-oriented neighborhoods. Chicagoans have many places to go, and they need a variety of convenient, energy-efficient ways to get there.

### Public transit solutions

Chicago has the nation’s second-largest transit system, with an average weekday Chicago Transit Authority (CTA) ridership of 1.6 million rides (approximately one-third by rail and two-thirds by bus). The CTA has 222 miles of track and 144 train stations in the Chicago area. After a serious decline in the 1980s, ridership has made a major rebound; between 1997 and 2007, CTA annual ridership jumped by nearly 55 million rides. Metra, which offers commuter rail in the metropolitan region, is also a key feature in the city’s transit landscape. One-third of Metra stations are in the City of Chicago and 300,000 trips are provided via Metra into the city every day.

The rise in ridership—and our extensive transit system—are excellent starting points for reducing GHG emissions. But to seriously cut emissions, the regional transit system needs further development. Key route extensions and innovative services, such as an integrated bus rapid transit network that spans a number of the city’s arterials, will show more Chicagoans that public transport is an attractive alternative to being stuck in traffic. Thus a prime goal should be to promote infrastructure investment from state and federal government and service improvements that could help boost ridership by up to 30 percent. The City just received \$153.1 million in U.S. Department of Transportation grant funds to reduce traffic congestion. If that 30 percent target is reached, greenhouse gas emissions from transportation could drop by .83 MMTCO<sub>2</sub>e (as well as associated air pollution emissions from cars). In addition, Chicagoans could experience better transit service, less congested roads and the huge economic benefit of jobs created to maintain the system, add routes and improve service.

As we work toward these infrastructure improvements, Chicagoans could benefit from improvements such as universal fare cards and innovative payment methods that allow riders to move more easily between CTA, Metra, Pace services and car sharing. Targeted public information campaigns can educate Chicago motorists about the personal savings that come from switching to public transport—as much as \$400 a month when totaling fuel costs, insurance and parking.

Companies can help with employee benefits such as pre-tax transit passes and cash payments to employees who give up the use of employer parking facilities, a measure which can produce a reduction of .03 MMTCO<sub>2</sub>e.

### Developing communities around a hub

In many neighborhoods, a central piece of the puzzle is the design and development of neighborhoods around a public transport hub. Homes, shops and jobs that are clustered near a transit stop encourage walking and use of transit. Such transit-oriented development alone can reduce emissions in the city by .63 MMTCO<sub>2</sub>e by 2020. The City of Chicago and the CTA are embarking on a collaborative process to promote transit-oriented development, which will multiply the benefits of transit improvements

### KEY FACTS:

THE CHICAGO AREA DEPENDS DAILY ON PUBLIC TRANSIT.

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**1,600,000**  
CTA rides daily

### KEY FACTS:

MOTIVATION TO SWITCH TO PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION.

Huge personal savings come from switching to public transportation—as much as \$400 a month when totaling fuel costs, insurance and parking.



Metra  
The way to really fly.



pace



**The opening of the Orange Line in 1993 brought rapid transit to the Southwest Side and the line now provides almost 10,000,000 rides each year.**



in terms of travel savings, jobs and community development. The City also will collaborate with Metra on transit-oriented development.

### **Walking, biking and car sharing**

If Chicagoans make greater use of public transit and walk and ride bicycles more, they will drive less, achieving more significant long-term emissions reductions. Walking and biking are transportation choices that promote health and emit no greenhouse gases. The City aims to boost walking and bicycle trips to one million a year, doubling the current number. Proposed steps include the implementation of the Bike 2015 Plan and the Chicago Pedestrian Plan, netting a direct .01 MMTCO<sub>2</sub>e drop in GHG emissions by 2020. The fringe benefits of these plans are many, including saving many families the cost of a second automobile.

When driving is the best option for a particular trip, there are still opportunities to increase efficiency and reduce vehicle miles traveled (VMT). Car sharing and ridesharing or vanpooling offer alternatives to owning cars that both promote use of transit and lower household costs. Research has shown that people who car share drive less. Depending on how aggressively this option is pursued, CO<sub>2</sub>e savings can exceed .5 MMT. With car sharing, transit users and others can have the benefits of a car for occasional trips without the burden of full-time car ownership,

and they can save thousands of dollars per year in car payments, insurance and maintenance costs.

### **Fueling the future—efficiently**

While increased use of transit and more trips on foot and bike promise a major reduction in heat-trapping gases, so do more fuel-efficient vehicles. The City, CTA, businesses and residents can transition to more fuel-efficient vehicles, which could alone contribute a reduction of .21 MMTCO<sub>2</sub>e by 2020. Key fleets include buses, garbage trucks, taxis and delivery vehicles. The CTA already has 20 hybrid buses in a pilot program to gauge their all-weather use and is acquiring an additional 150 hybrid buses to help to replace the oldest buses in the CTA fleet. Finally, the City supports the implementation of The Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007, the first statutory increase in fuel economy standards for automobiles since they were first enacted in 1975. The Act specifies a national standard of 35 miles per gallon by 2020, which could reduce GHGs by another .51 MMTCO<sub>2</sub>e.

The use of alternative fuels such as biodiesel will also help lower GHG emissions from vehicle exhaust. Gasoline use—and its high emissions—could continue to decrease as a range of even cleaner alternative fuels are developed and brought to the market, including ethanol made from grasses and

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**Metra trains and bike lanes play important roles for commuters. Metra provides about 300,000 rides every day. The 18-mile Lakefront Trail along Lake Michigan serves both commuters and recreational cyclists. It is a cornerstone of the City's goal for a 500-mile bikeway network.**

agricultural waste. The sustainability of any alternative fuel must be further examined from a life cycle perspective before widespread adoption. Expanding the supply and use of alternative fuels for vehicles in Chicago could net a .68 MMTCO<sub>2</sub>e drop in greenhouse gas emissions.

Cleaner transportation is not the exclusive responsibility of the City. As with so many actions, both individuals and businesses can make a significant difference. Companies and other organizations can switch to more efficient fleets; car owners can opt for hybrids or other vehicles that use less gas.

### Regional transportation

Regional transportation initiatives have an important role in this plan. They include increasing the efficiency of freight transport, reducing emissions from air travel and increasing market share of intercity rail. Freight, too, can be carried more efficiently. How freight is moved (train, truck, barge, etc.), the route it takes and the time involved in moving it are all factors that need to be addressed. Rail is the most efficient way to move freight, but currently, due to bottlenecks and aging infrastructure, it takes trains the same amount of time to get through Chicago as it takes to get here from Los Angeles. Such complex freight problems will require regional cooperation, but solutions include eliminating bottlenecks and adding rail capacity to encourage switching from truck (higher impact) to rail or barge (lower impact). Of regional and national significance, the innovative CREATE program (Chicago Region Environmental and Transportation Efficiency) will address many of these key issues and has the City's active support. The

potential GHG reductions from these improvements could yield an estimated 1.61 MMTCO<sub>2</sub>e per year.

Chicago's airports merit close attention. Like other cities, their emissions are not part of the Chicago baseline calculation. Leading the way for the nation, the O'Hare Modernization Program Sustainable Development Manual includes a number of actions to reduce air transportation emissions, such as high-efficiency aircraft motors and pumps, upgrading of gate facilities and improved traffic control to reduce aircraft idling.

Implementing an intercity high-speed passenger rail plan could yield a .006 MMTCO<sub>2</sub>e drop in emissions from lower automobile use in the city of Chicago as well as a much larger emissions drop for the greater Chicago region.

As we shift our transportation practices, we'll see many valuable benefits beyond the drop in emissions. The economy will benefit: most of the dollars Chicagoans spend on fuel leave the region. In contrast, what residents save on lower fuel costs tends to be spent locally. Investment in transit infrastructure will create jobs. Enhanced transit will allow a spectrum of Chicagoans—the young, the old and those with mobility limitations—to get to places more easily. With fewer cars on the road, there will be less congestion and travel times will decrease. Air quality will improve. And the people who walk and ride bikes more often will be healthier.

For more information on Chicago's Climate Action Plan, visit [www.chicagoclimateaction.org](http://www.chicagoclimateaction.org).



Biking has long been a priority of Mayor Daley, and the City has taken major steps to encourage use of bicycles. Millennium Park offers bike parking, lockers and showers

to riders; the Bicycle Ambassadors Program gets new riders up and riding and promotes safety for all road users. The recommendations in Chicago's Bike 2015 Plan include a

500-mile Bikeway Network; more bicycle-friendly streets; a total of 5,000 new bike racks; and campaigns to promote the safety and health benefits of bike travel.



In 2005, Boeing, headquartered in Chicago, was selected by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency as one of the "Best Workplaces for Commuters." Boeing offers employees many commuting alternatives, including a telecommuting/virtual office program; a

financial incentive program for using public transportation; and a car- and vanpool program called "Commuter Connection," which allows employees to input information into a participant database to search for a car- or vanpool match. Boeing also offers car- and vanpool

employees prime parking spaces and has an emergency ride program if a participant is unable to get a ride home. Approximately 33 percent of Boeing employees across the United States participate in one or more of these programs.



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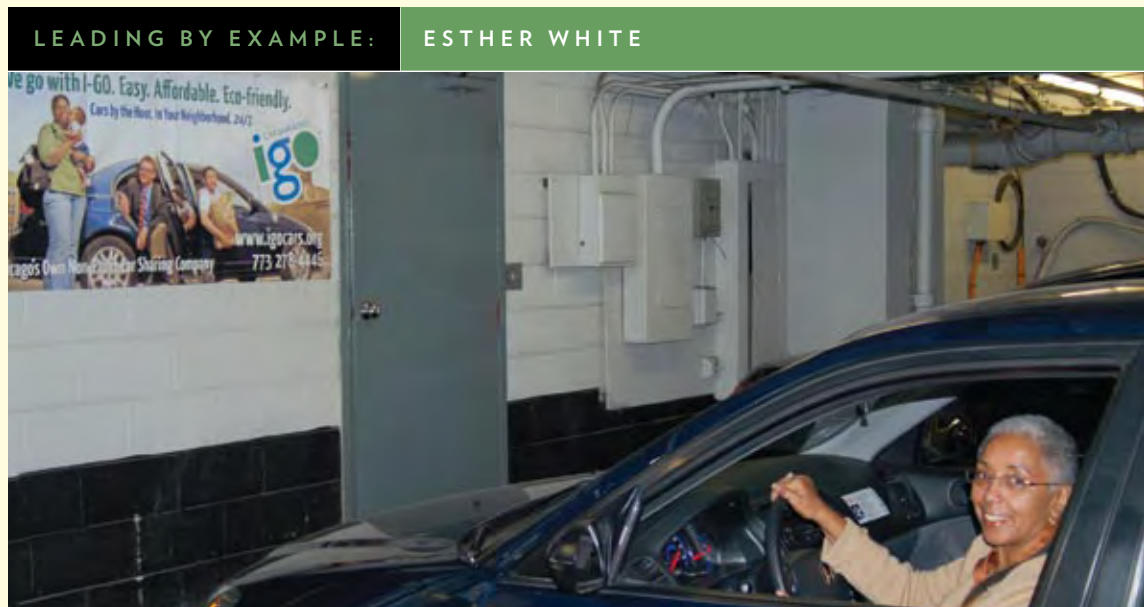
LEADING BY EXAMPLE:

CAMIROS, LTD.

A Chicago-based, 32-year-old urban planning firm, Camiros signed up for the RTA's transit benefit program as soon as it was available. This program allows commuters to use pretax dollars to pay fares on CTA,

Metra, Pace, vanpools and a few specialty services. Camiros staff tell job applicants about the transit benefit during the interview stage because they believe the accessibility of their office in downtown Chicago

is an asset. The firm has made transportation such an easy issue that all 12 employees participate in the transit benefit program, and at least two employees have chosen not to own cars.



LEADING BY EXAMPLE:

ESTHER WHITE

A Hyde Park resident, the 60-year-old White walks or takes the train or bus to her job downtown. For other trips—church on Sundays and neighborhood jaunts with her grandsons—she drives. But she

doesn't own a car. Instead she uses I-Go car sharing, reserving online and paying by the hour for a Honda Civic. Her driving costs total \$80 per month. "There's one car less that's emitting pollution," says White

proudly. "I'm becoming more and more environmentally conscious." For car-share information, visit [igocars.org](http://igocars.org) or [zipcar.com](http://zipcar.com).