

Study data guides key transportation and land-use policy decisions

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Annual University of Minnesota study ranks access to jobs by transit in top U.S. metros. Credit: Metro Transit

Annual nationwide data from the Accessibility Observatory at the University of Minnesota, that measures access to jobs by transit, is

guiding key transportation and land-use policy decisions.

"We analyzed the accessibility performance of largest U.S. metropolitan areas," said Andrew Owen, director of the Observatory. "This new data has a range of uses and implications, especially when applied on a state and local level."

State departments of transportation, metropolitan planning organizations and [transit agencies](#) can apply the data to performance goals related to congestion, reliability and sustainability. In addition, detailed accessibility evaluation can help in selecting between project alternatives and prioritizing investments.

This year's report—Access Across America: Transit 2018—presents detailed accessibility values for each of the 49 metropolitan areas, as well as detailed block-level color maps that illustrate the spatial patterns of accessibility within each area.

Rankings of the top 10 [metro areas](#) for job accessibility by transit in 2018 changed only slightly from the previous year, with New York, San Francisco and Chicago, respectively, again topping the list. One exception is the Washington, D.C., metro area, which dropped to sixth place from fourth, likely due to the unavailability of census data on federal workers.

Transit is used for an estimated five percent of commuting trips in the United States, making it the second most widely used commute mode after driving. The commute mode share of transit can be higher in individual metropolitan areas: 31 percent in the New York metropolitan area; 11 percent in Chicago; eight percent in Seattle.

Key factors affecting the rankings for any metro area include the number of [jobs](#) available and where they are located, the availability of

transit service, and population size, density, and location.

"Transit is an essential transportation service for many Americans," Owen said. "Better coordination of transit service with the location of jobs and housing will improve job accessibility by transit."

The rankings focus on accessibility, a measure that examines both land use and transportation systems. Accessibility measures how many destinations, such as jobs, can be reached in a given time.

The annual study, part of the Access Across America national pooled-fund study that began in 2013, ranks 49 of the 50 largest (by population) [metropolitan areas](#) in the United States for connecting workers with jobs via [transit](#).

The research is sponsored by the National Accessibility Evaluation Pooled-Fund Study, a multi-year effort led by the Minnesota Department of Transportation and supported by partners including the Federal Highway Administration and 12 additional state DOTs.

More information: Access Across America: Transit 2018.
access.umn.edu/research/america/transit/2018/

Provided by University of Minnesota

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