

# The Salt Lake Tribune

## Public transportation was in trouble before COVID-19. Can it bounce back?

We want to know what you don't like about public transportation, and what would make you ride more.

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All aboard — or maybe not.

It's no surprise that U.S. ridership on public transportation dropped 81% in April 2020, according to the National Transit Database (158.5 million rides taken vs. 835.1 million rides taken in April 2019).

But even before COVID-19 shut down life as we knew it, people were taking fewer bus and train rides.

A Cato Institute report states that while public transportation took 13% of Americans to work in 1960, in 2018 it carried just 5%.

Between fiscal years 2014 to 2018, the report continues, national bus ridership dropped 12.2% and rail usage across the country declined by 2.6%.

In urban areas with populations of less than 1 million and of more than 5 million, rides on public transportation decreased by 7.2%. Areas with a population between 1-5 million saw the most significant drop of 12.5%.

The Cato Institute report lists a number of reasons for this decline, from expense and time issues to the simple fact that nearly everyone has a car.

The Salt Lake Tribune wants to know why readers choose not to use public transportation. While COVID-19 is a major factor in recent years, what other issues keep you off of busses and trains?