

HIGH SPEED RAIL TALKING POINTS

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- High-speed trains promote density by transforming land-development patterns. Federal policies prioritize road building, which encourages more driving and spurs ever-more spending on road construction and repairs. This cycle generates sprawl and hollows out city centers. Trains break the cycle and create healthy, walkable and thriving city centers.
- High-speed trains boost and build on existing bus and rail systems. Travelers use local transit to reach high-speed trains, for starters. And when they are well-coordinated and easily accessible, ridership increases on both high-speed rail and local transit systems. That builds political will and funding for the entire transportation network.
- Transportation generates 29% of carbon emissions in the U.S. High-speed rail, in an integrated public transit network, is the most effective way to slash those emissions.
- Trains can connect workers to jobs and establish links to markets and customers for businesses of all sizes.
- Amtrak's night trains are currently the foundation of the rural network. Upgrading them with high-performance trains will be game-changing.
- The low rolling resistance of steel wheels on steel rails is the basis for high-energy efficiency that cannot be beat by any other mode other than bicycles.
- No other mode has the flexibility to serve dispersed and varied markets to spur a massive shift from driving.
- The average passenger trip length for regional airline carriers is under 500 miles. So even though planes move at twice the speed of today's fastest trains, with to-and-from-the-airport travel time, check-in and runway delays factored in, the speed advantage of airplanes is minimal (or nil) for trips under 1,000 miles. And high-speed trains are easily the fastest travel mode for trips under 500 miles—even without factoring in the frequent weather delays that make flying such a headache.
- An [analysis](#) of 100 urban areas from 1993 to 2017 found that the rate of growth in new freeway-lane miles exceeded population growth. But rather than declining, congestion increased by 144 percent. For example, Texas spent \$2.8 billion to widen Houston's Katy Freeway to 26 lanes. Morning [commute times were soon 30 percent longer](#), and afternoon commute times were 50 percent longer.



- In Amtrak's Acela corridor—the most densely populated megaregion in the U.S., with multitudes of flight options—Amtrak's share of the air-flight market for travel between New York and Washington, D.C., increased from 37 to 75 percent from 2000 to 2012.
- Overall, the fatality risk of driving is [17 times greater](#) than taking a train. And the safest, most advanced HSR systems in the world have reduced the risk to effectively zero. The Japanese system that Texas Central is modeling its line on, for example, has had no fatalities or injuries since it began operation in 1964. In the U.S., [roughly 38,000 people die](#) each year in roadway accidents, which are the leading cause of death for people under the age of 55. More than 4 million people are injured each year in road crashes, and the direct medical costs are nearly \$400 million.
- Trains strengthen our local, state and national economies with better mobility. Fast, frequent and affordable trains create strong social, family and business ties by making travel easy and productive.
- Trains give people a safe way to move around at a low cost—with a small carbon imprint. Trains create a more enjoyable and prosperous life by supporting more walkable, more financially viable cities and towns.