

## ENHANCING THE TRANSPORTATION–LAND USE CONNECTION IN RURAL AMERICA

Rural communities, which often operate with very limited resources, face challenging decisions when considering transportation investments and land use strategies. In response to this challenge, ICMA, in partnership with the Renaissance Planning Group conducted a study for the Transportation Research Board of the National Academies ([www.trb.org](http://www.trb.org)). The goal of the study was to collect information on innovative ways to integrate rural land use and transportation plans, which will be compiled into a guidebook of resources for rural planners.

The *Rural Transportation* surveys were mailed in the winter 2006 to a selected sample of municipalities with populations between 2,500 and 250,000 and counties with population between 2,500 and 25,000. Of the 3,050 municipalities and counties that received surveys, 649 responded (21.3%).

For more information on ICMA's *Rural Transportation* survey, please contact [Dan Emerine](#).

Following is the survey text with the aggregate results shown in bold next to each answer. Each answer represents the percentage reporting for that question, except where noted.

<b>1: Demographics:</b> <i>In general, how would you characterize the following demographics in your county's rural community(ies)? (Check only one box)</i>				
	<b>Increasing</b>	<b>Stable</b>	<b>Decreasing</b>	<b>Wide variation</b>
a. Population	<b>55.2</b>	<b>29.4</b>	<b>14.7</b>	<b>0.6</b>
b. People over 65	<b>74.8</b>	<b>21.6</b>	<b>3.2</b>	<b>0.3</b>
c. People under 30	<b>26.8</b>	<b>33.2</b>	<b>38.5</b>	<b>1.4</b>
d. Racial diversity	<b>28.8</b>	<b>62.2</b>	<b>3.8</b>	<b>5.2</b>
e. Residents with higher education	<b>40.4</b>	<b>44.9</b>	<b>11.3</b>	<b>3.4</b>
f. Household income	<b>38.2</b>	<b>44.0</b>	<b>13.8</b>	<b>4.0</b>
g. Affordable housing	<b>11.3</b>	<b>44.0</b>	<b>43.3</b>	<b>1.4</b>
h. Substandard housing	<b>21.1</b>	<b>45.9</b>	<b>29.8</b>	<b>3.2</b>
i. Diversity of jobs	<b>19.9</b>	<b>48.3</b>	<b>28.7</b>	<b>3.0</b>
j. Number of jobs	<b>30.6</b>	<b>40.9</b>	<b>27.1</b>	<b>1.4</b>
k. Unemployment rate	<b>18.5</b>	<b>61.5</b>	<b>18.7</b>	<b>1.3</b>

<b>2: Transit:</b> Please rate the quality of the following transit services in rural areas of your county (Check only one box)				
	<b>Good</b>	<b>Adequate</b>	<b>Poor</b>	<b>No service</b>
a. Fixed route buses within the county	<b>8.9</b>	<b>16.7</b>	<b>18.1</b>	<b>56.3</b>
b. Fixed route buses to neighboring counties	<b>4.8</b>	<b>14.6</b>	<b>20.2</b>	<b>60.4</b>
c. Long-distance bus service (e.g. Greyhound)	<b>3.9</b>	<b>19.2</b>	<b>22.2</b>	<b>54.8</b>
d. Demand-response (e.g. on-call vans for people with disabilities)	<b>19.3</b>	<b>42.1</b>	<b>25.4</b>	<b>13.3</b>
e. Passenger rail (Amtrak, Regional Commuter)	<b>4.2</b>	<b>6.1</b>	<b>11.4</b>	<b>78.3</b>
f. Ride sharing programs (carpooling, etc.)	<b>2.1</b>	<b>19.9</b>	<b>34.2</b>	<b>43.8</b>
g. Private taxi services	<b>3.8</b>	<b>26.3</b>	<b>27.3</b>	<b>42.6</b>
h. Other (please describe):	<b>13.0</b>	<b>5.0</b>	<b>5.0</b>	<b>77.0</b>

<b>3. Issues &amp; Needs:</b> Please indicate the importance of each issue/need in your community. <b>(Check only one box)</b>	<b>Very Important</b>	<b>Somewhat important</b>	<b>Not Important</b>
a. Access to local centers, such as shops, medical offices, and schools	<b>69.8</b>	<b>26.6</b>	<b>3.6</b>
b. Access to jobs	<b>75.4</b>	<b>22.4</b>	<b>2.2</b>
c. Access to regional centers such as shops, medical offices, and schools in other jurisdictions	<b>50.2</b>	<b>44.8</b>	<b>5.1</b>
d. Access for tourists	<b>43.7</b>	<b>41.7</b>	<b>14.6</b>
e. Concerns about trucks or cut-through traffic on local roads	<b>36.6</b>	<b>47.6</b>	<b>15.8</b>
f. Driver safety (cars and trucks)	<b>53.9</b>	<b>39.8</b>	<b>6.3</b>
g. Pedestrian and/or bicycle safety	<b>50.2</b>	<b>41.9</b>	<b>7.9</b>
h. Safety at railroad crossings	<b>42.0</b>	<b>32.0</b>	<b>26.0</b>
i. Water and/or air quality	<b>62.4</b>	<b>30.4</b>	<b>7.1</b>
j. Open space, environmentally sensitive land, and/or scenic lands	<b>51.8</b>	<b>38.5</b>	<b>9.7</b>
k. Historic and/or cultural character	<b>50.6</b>	<b>43.0</b>	<b>6.3</b>
l. Public health problems linked to sedentary lifestyles, such as obesity	<b>36.0</b>	<b>55.0</b>	<b>9.0</b>
m. Do you have other important issues? Please note:			

<b>4. Barriers to Success:</b> Please indicate the extent to which the following may be barriers to integrating land use and transportation in your community(ies) <b>(Check only one box)</b>			
	<b>Major Barrier</b>	<b>Minor barrier</b>	<b>Not a barrier</b>
a. Lack of public input	<b>19.5</b>	<b>49.8</b>	<b>30.7</b>
b. Lack of political support	<b>23.1</b>	<b>45.1</b>	<b>31.8</b>
c. Lack of political authority	<b>21.7</b>	<b>41.4</b>	<b>36.9</b>
d. Limited public funding	<b>84.0</b>	<b>13.0</b>	<b>3.0</b>
e. Lack of private investment	<b>65.5</b>	<b>28.4</b>	<b>6.1</b>
f. Lack of staff, e.g, planning, engineering, etc.	<b>42.9</b>	<b>44.1</b>	<b>13.0</b>
g. Lack of information and/or technical expertise	<b>28.8</b>	<b>51.2</b>	<b>20.0</b>
h. Community leaders are resistant to change	<b>21.8</b>	<b>40.8</b>	<b>37.4</b>
i. Difficulty coordinating with state DOT	<b>17.3</b>	<b>45.4</b>	<b>37.2</b>
j. Difficulty coordinating with adjacent jurisdictions	<b>11.8</b>	<b>49.7</b>	<b>38.5</b>
k. Difficulty coordinating with incorporated areas of the county	<b>9.0</b>	<b>41.5</b>	<b>49.5</b>
l. Difficulty coordinating with regional planning agency	<b>7.3</b>	<b>34.5</b>	<b>58.1</b>
m. Other (please describe)			

**5. Transportation & Land Use Strategies:** For each strategy listed below, please answer whether you have implemented it, how successful it was, how difficult it was to achieve, and whether you are interested in learning more about it. (Circle appropriate letter or number.)

	Have you implemented the strategy?		How successful was it?			How difficult was it to implement?			Are you interested in learning more about the strategy?	
	Yes	No	Not	Some-what	Very	Not	Some-what	Very	Yes	No
<b>Roadway Improvements</b>										
a. Building new roads	50.8	49.2	7.1	46.3	46.6	21.9	55.6	22.6	48.6	51.4
b. Widening existing roads	48.9	51.1	8.2	46.8	45.0	26.4	51.2	22.4	46.3	53.7
c. Paving unpaved roads	53.6	46.4	7.1	39.9	52.9	34.0	49.0	17.0	44.0	56.0
d. "Spot" improvements (turn lane, sight distance, etc)	54.5	45.5	6.6	49.2	44.2	28.4	55.7	16.0	46.7	53.3
e. Traffic calming or "road diets"	22.0	78.0	28.2	41.9	29.9	38.2	36.4	25.5	51.3	48.7
f. Improving street connectivity	31.8	68.2	15.3	53.7	31.1	25.5	47.9	26.7	45.7	54.3
<b>Traffic Management</b>										
g. Installing traffic signals	37.8	62.2	16.4	35.0	48.6	36.0	45.0	19.0	40.0	60.0
h. Intelligent transportation systems	11.9	88.1	49.2	31.1	19.7	58.9	28.6	12.5	37.9	62.1
i. Limiting turns on commercial streets	18.3	81.7	25.0	41.3	33.7	38.5	38.5	22.9	32.5	67.5
j. Directing through traffic away from downtowns	20.3	79.7	25.7	44.2	30.1	37.1	41.9	21.0	34.6	65.4
k. Rerouting rail traffic out of downtowns	9.5	90.5	53.3	31.1	15.6	57.5	17.5	25.0	22.1	77.9
l. Improving warning signs, signals, or barriers	39.1	60.9	11.9	44.0	44.0	47.7	40.6	11.7	40.3	59.7
<b>Multi-modal Transportation</b>										
m. Fixed route bus service	21.1	78.9	25.6	41.3	33.1	38.2	43.6	18.2	32.4	67.6
n. Demand-response transit (on-call vans, etc)	32.9	67.1	9.3	45.4	45.4	36.1	54.8	9.0	37.0	63.0
o. Rail transit (such as commuter rail or light rail)	7.5	92.5	73.0	21.6	5.4	66.7	15.2	18.2	25.1	74.9
p. Rideshare programs (carpools, etc)	13.0	87.0	36.8	40.8	22.4	47.0	37.9	15.2	33.3	66.7
q. Bicycle routes	35.6	64.4	14.1	41.9	44.0	30.7	52.8	16.5	48.7	51.3
r. Bicycle amenities (bike lockers, etc)	11.7	88.3	46.4	37.5	16.1	58.9	32.1	8.9	39.2	60.8
s. Sidewalks	53.6	46.4	7.5	41.4	51.0	32.0	45.6	22.4	46.6	53.4
t. Pedestrian amenities (lighting, signage, etc)	36.2	63.8	6.6	47.7	45.7	28.8	59.3	11.9	43.1	56.9
u. Trails and greenways	46.3	53.7	8.9	40.5	50.6	22.9	58.4	18.6	52.9	47.1
<b>Design</b>										
v. Pedestrian-friendly streets	30.3	69.7	14.6	44.4	41.1	28.4	48.2	23.4	47.3	52.7
w. Environmentally sensitive/scenic highway design	19.7	80.3	18.8	47.9	33.3	24.7	48.3	27.0	41.7	58.3
x. Community design standards or guidelines	36.6	63.4	12.4	57.0	30.6	18.3	54.3	27.4	52.0	48.0
y. Architectural review board	16.0	84.0	30.0	47.5	22.5	38.6	42.9	18.6	39.7	60.3
z. Historic preservation program	38.6	61.4	10.3	57.1	32.5	20.9	56.7	22.5	49.6	50.4
<b>Growth Management</b>										
aa. Policies directing growth toward existing developed areas	44.9	55.1	11.9	61.7	26.3	17.0	54.7	28.3	56.1	43.9
bb. Policies directing transportation to growth areas	23.3	76.7	19.2	56.8	24.0	27.9	46.8	25.2	46.9	53.1
cc. Mixed-use development	37.9	62.1	16.5	62.0	21.5	22.0	51.1	26.9	54.2	45.8
dd. Clustered housing in rural subdivisions	28.9	71.1	18.1	60.0	21.9	26.2	49.0	24.8	48.8	51.2
ee. Large lot zoning	30.7	69.3	17.2	49.7	33.1	35.1	46.4	18.5	40.6	59.4
ff. Transfer/purchase of development rights	15.0	85.0	27.7	41.0	31.3	32.9	40.5	26.6	47.5	52.5
gg. Rural land preservation	29.0	71.0	18.5	45.0	36.4	26.1	47.8	26.1	47.6	52.4
<b>Other Strategies</b> - (please list each strategy and complete the questions in the columns to the right.)										

**6: Information Sources:** What are the best ways for your area to get information about new approaches? *(Check all that apply.)*

a. Books	<b>60.9</b>
b. Compact discs	<b>53.0</b>
c. Internet downloads	<b>73.1</b>
d. Email discussion groups and listserves	<b>34.1</b>
e. National conferences	<b>22.3</b>
f. Local, regional, or state workshops	<b>82.7</b>
g. Teleconferences	<b>18.0</b>
h. Online courses/webcasts	<b>22.8</b>
Professional organization(s): (please list)	
Other (please describe)	