

# We Need Transit to Create Housing Stability

Access to reliable transit advances housing affordability and stability for everyone.



The cost of transportation and housing are among the largest expenses for families every year. Affordable housing and accessible transportation: our current system allows people to pick one of the two. We need to re-imagine the way our cities work so people aren't forced to make this choice.



**There is more to cost of living than housing.** Today, 550,000 Minnesotans are housing cost burdened (meaning they pay more than 30% of their income on housing), limiting their ability to pay for other necessities, like transportation, while staying in their homes.<sup>1</sup> At an average cost of \$10,729 per year,<sup>2</sup> owning a car is expensive compared to the \$1,440 per year for an unlimited Metro Transit pass.<sup>3</sup> When people have access to transit, they spend less on transportation and have more income to ensure housing stability for their families. When factoring housing and transportation costs together, cities with better public transit tend to be more affordable.<sup>4</sup>



**Car-centric design limits housing choice and equal opportunity.** Car-centric community design incentivizes those who have the means to commute by car to move from urban centers to the suburbs — where transit is less accessible and communities are designed around cars.<sup>5</sup> This leads to disinvestment in people of color and lower wealth communities and limits housing choices and access to the full range of opportunities across our region. Transit oriented development discourages sprawl and increases everyone's ability to live in the places they want to call home.



**Transit oriented development is more space efficient — but must include affordable housing.** Space is a limited resource. Cities with sprawling single family homes and extensive parking are not sustainable. To drive housing prices down, cities need to allow for and create more dense developments.<sup>6</sup> But, when new transit projects are built or existing lines are improved, land values rise and people who rely on transit the most are often priced out of their homes and businesses.<sup>7</sup> A healthy transportation system and denser development only works if its primary riders can afford to live close enough to use it.



**Free parking isn't free.** The cost of parking raises housing prices for everyone, regardless of whether they own a car or not. Every year, the city of Minneapolis spends over \$100 million in parking space construction alone.<sup>8</sup> The cost of upkeep adds additional expenses. Rents in apartments that include parking can see an increase anywhere from 20% on the low end to 60% on the high end.<sup>9</sup>

The transportation system we have today increases housing costs, strains family budgets and limits where people can afford to live. Expanding and improving transit access is critical to ensure everyone can stay in the neighborhoods they choose and still have access to everything they need to thrive.

## WHY TRANSIT MATTERS

### Antonette Kamara

I am a first-generation American. Both my parents immigrated to the United States from Sierra Leone before I was born and public transit is an integral part of our story.

Although I mostly grew up outside of the cities, in Cottage Grove, my family was not the typical suburban family. For a large part of my childhood my mom was not able to get her driver's license, for a health and legal reasons, and as long as I can remember whenever we needed to get anything done outside of Cottage Grove, we would wake up at 6 a.m. and get a ride with my Dad on the way to work to catch the only bus going out of Cottage Grove at the time.

**To literally survive and get to where I am now, public transportation was necessary.**

Going on the bus for me as a child was always an adventure. I got to see all different types of people just going about their day. Now that I am older, I still take the bus. For the past almost

five years, it has been essential to my day, getting to work, school, groceries, everything.



Now looking back, I can't imagine how difficult it was for my mom, and countless people like her who do not live in Minneapolis with more frequent bus stops. People all over Minnesota deserve accessible and frequent transportation. They deserve the chance to go about their lives, take care of their families, and commute with ease.

There needs to be more stops and routes, especially outside of bigger cities. I can only imagine the opportunities, the interactions and advancements that can come, if Minnesota transportation becomes more interconnected and supportive of those who really need it.

### Sources

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Move Minnesota leads the movement for an equitable and sustainable transportation system that puts people first. We are passionate about connecting communities, ending the climate crisis, expanding access to jobs and resources, and improving daily life for Minnesotans of all ages, races, incomes, and abilities. Learn more at [movemn.org](http://movemn.org).

Contact: Sam Rockwell, Executive Director, Move Minnesota, [samr@movemn.org](mailto:samr@movemn.org), 917-453-6807