

The Congestion Taxers – remember them? – argued for their toll-tax to reduce the number of cars that enter Manhattan. Data that only became available this month reveals that while visitations increased to nearly to third highest level in six decades (surpassed only by 1999 and 2000), private car entries declined to the second lowest number in a dozen years and the lowest since October 2001. And these numbers reflect nothing from the economic downturn, the spike in gasoline prices through the summer and the impact of the MTA and Port Authority toll increase last Spring which all served to reduce traffic into Manhattan. This decline in traffic clearly demonstrates the volatility of toll-taxes as an anything but stable source of revenue. Should not the Ravitch Commission and lawmakers look elsewhere as they look to find [new and stable resources](#) for transit.

From NYMTC (New York Metropolitan Transportation Council) - Notes for 11/12/08
<http://www.nymtc.org/files/nn111208.pdf>

DATA CORNER: Travel Up-Vehicle Usage Down by Adam Schildge

According to data provided by NYMTC's member agencies, **the total number of persons entering the area of Manhattan below 60th Street on a single fall business day has increased by 3.6% since 2006.** This total number includes all modes of transportation except walking, and reached 3.73 million people entering this area in 2007. This is the third highest figure ever, falling only beneath the record figures reached in 2000 and 1999. Notably, 2007 also sits right above the fourth-highest entries recorded in 1948, 3.69 million.

At the same time that persons entering the Hub have increased to a near record, **the number of private vehicles fell to the second lowest figure since 1996,** following even lower vehicle counts taken in October 2001. As a result of the increase in travel and decrease in vehicle usage, the share of persons taking private vehicles into the Hub dropped by 1.6% to 26.6% in 2007. The overall increase in travelers was instead borne by subway, bus, and commuter rail. These public transit modes saw increases of 2.5%, 6.8%, and 2.0% respectively.

This detailed single-day study has been compiled regularly since 1932 and annually since 1978. Reports prior to 1984 were compiled by NYMTC's predecessor, the Tri-State Regional Planning Commission. The report provides detailed hourly inbound and outbound passenger and vehicle counts by line, location, and mode. The data for the report has been obtained by member and affiliated agencies, including four separate operating units of the Metropolitan Transportation Authority, the New York City Department of Transportation, the Port Authority of New York & New Jersey, New Jersey Transit, Amtrak, and others. The complete report, with detailed source tables, analytical breakdowns, and textual and graphical analysis is available on NYMTC's website at www.NYMTC.org/data_services/HBT.html.