



Transportation Data and Research Assessment

Brown County United Way

October 2008

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Brown County United Way Intern**

Summary:

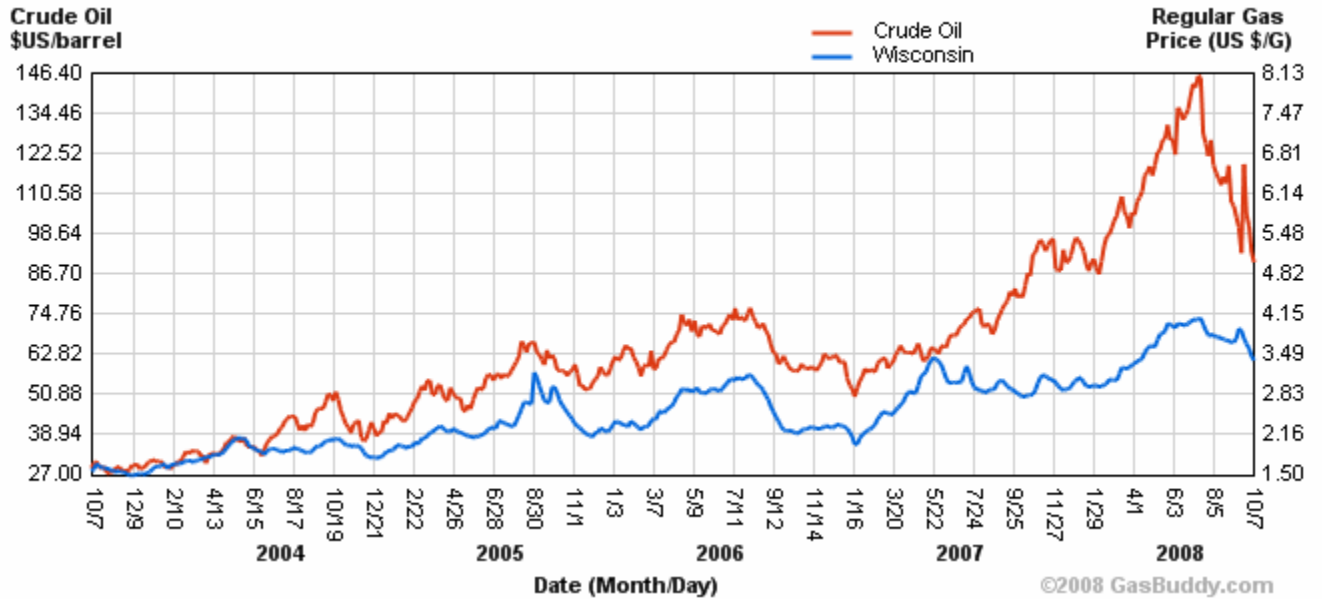
After meeting with our Impact Councils and going over economic trends and patterns, Brown County United Way has decided to look into transportation as an initiative to address for 2009. Before posing a solution, we conducted some research to see if this was really an issue worth investigating. This research was collected from various sources and on various levels of society. We utilized the Consumer Price Index, the Energy Information Administration, and the US Census Bureau for most of the National level data. Being that transportation is not solely dependent on the local economy, but also depends on the national and global situation. On a more local level, the data collected on Brown County was retrieved from sources such as, United Way 211 call center data, The Green Bay Metro System, Brown County Homeless and Housing Coalition, and interviews with our partnered non-profit agencies. At the end of this research there are some current initiatives and suggestions on addressing transportation and ways to make it more affordable for the average individual or family. Given this research, we feel that transportation is very under estimated as a need in the communities. Obviously with the current economy and gas prices soaring, transportation is an issue for many people and takes a front seat on economic decision making.

Layout:

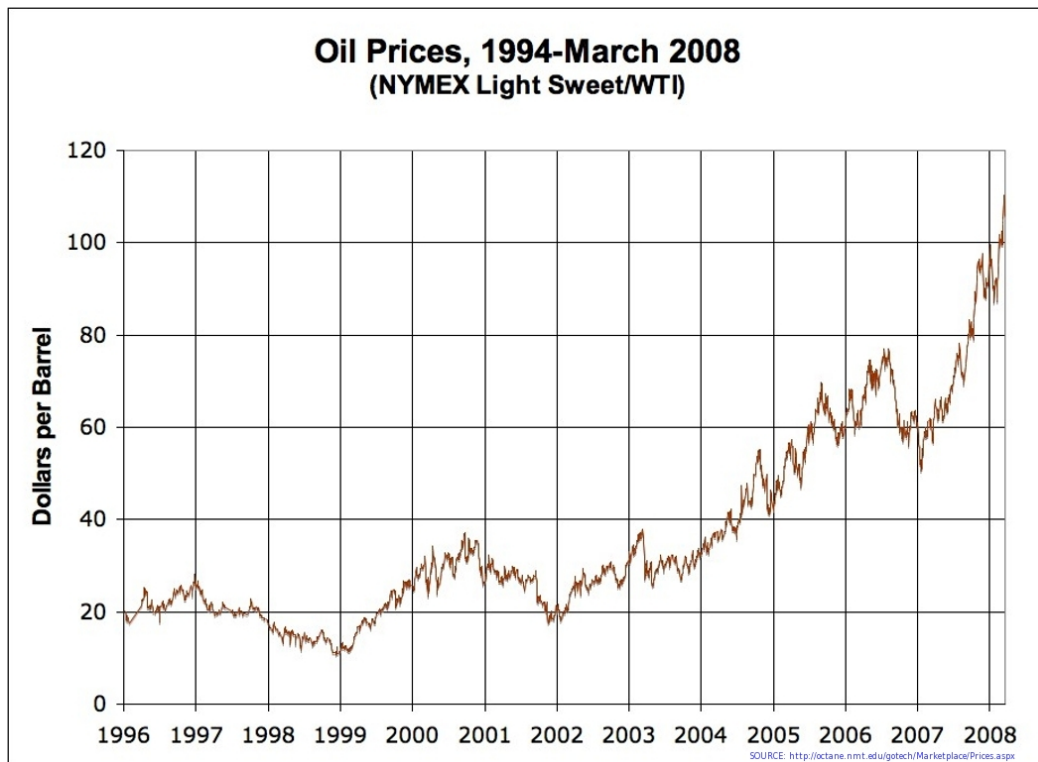
- 1. National Level Transportation Issues**
- 2. Brown County Transportation Issues**
- 3. Current Initiatives/Ways to reduce Transportation Costs**

National Level:

60 Month Average Retail Price Chart



- With the price of gas steadily increasing over the past five years, and the economy and job market falling, it is obvious that transportation would be an issue worth noting. The consumer price index summary for 2008 notes that transportation has changed the most from month to month. This index is a measure of the average change in prices over time of goods and services purchased in households. This index is put out by the Bureau of Labor Statistics. The annual rate transportation has changed in the past 3 months is 16.8. The second highest consumer price change to energy.



From the mid-1980's through September 2003, the inflation adjusted price of a barrel of crude oil was generally under \$25.00 a barrel. A series of events in the past five years has led the price to increase to \$140 in July 2008. Since this time the price per barrel has begun to slowly decline. Reasons for the increase are numerous and include declining oil reserves, Middle East tension and oil price speculation, tension between Iran and the United States.

Alan Pisarski published a book in 2007 titled, *Commuting in America III*. This is a book related to the transportation issues in America, and our reliance on it for daily life.

- Regarding vehicle ownership, the number of households that are vehicle less (zero-vehicle households) has stayed pretty consistent from 1960-2000. 28 million people in 2000 were zero-vehicle households. The number of two car households has been the most rapidly increasing number in the past 40 years, totaling roughly 75 million vehicles.

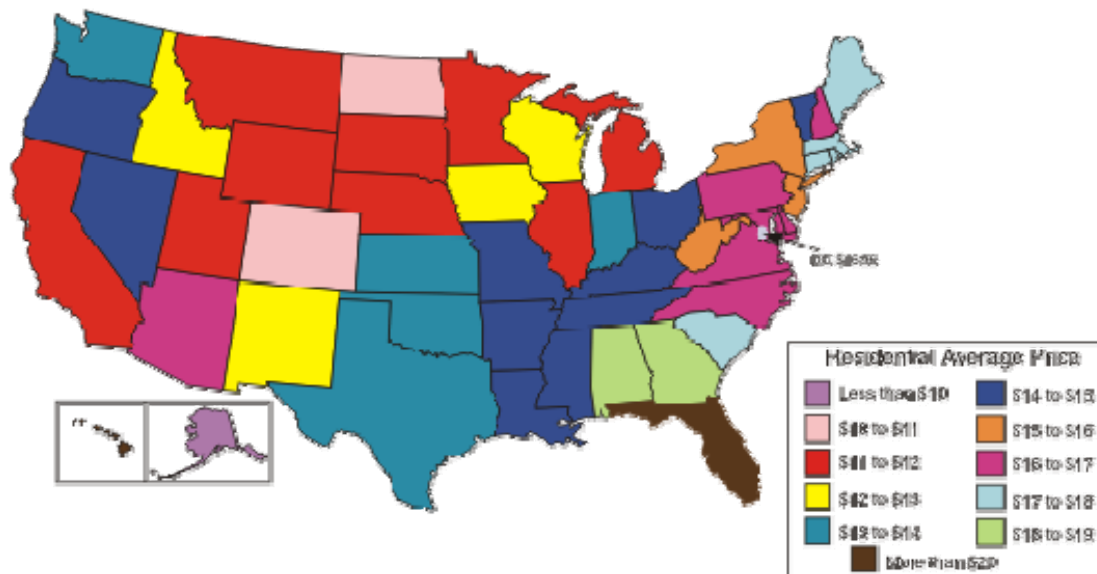
- Vehicle ownership as compared to household income: It has been established that the income for those living in poverty is \$20,000 for a family of four. In this book, those who make \$20,000 per year as income, 38% are zero-vehicle homes, 45% are one vehicle homes, 14% own two vehicles, and the remaining 35 own three vehicles.

- Vehicles and workers: On average, the majority of households with access to vehicles tend to have more workers. 57% of households without vehicles also have no workers. "A key commuting concern must be with serving those workers without vehicles"(Pisarski, 41).

- Who are the vehicle-less? Those who are in zero-vehicle situations are put there based on a few factors, not exclusive to their situation. One main factor is obviously income. The second factor is race and ethnicity. 23.8% of zero-vehicle households are black, 17.2% are Hispanic, 14.9% are American Indians, and 12.7% are Asian.

Natural Gas Prices in the US

- The national average residential price for natural gas was \$6.69 per thousand cubic feet. In 2006 the average price jumped to \$13.75 per thousand cubic feet.

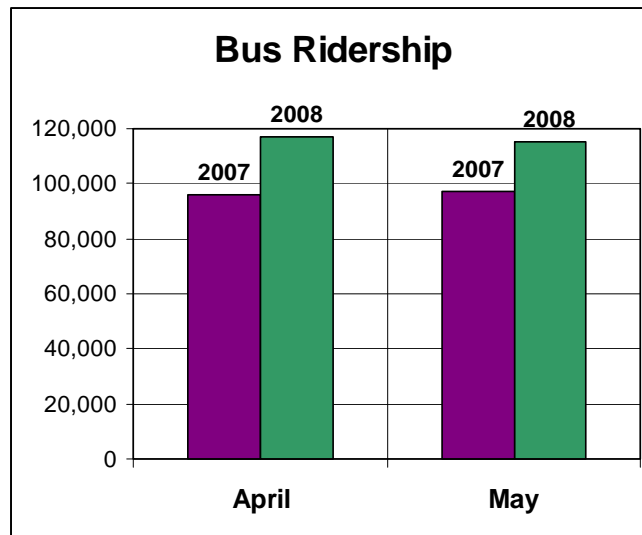


- Each year the Energy Information Administration projects the average price, consumption, and total cost of natural gas during the upcoming winter for a household in the Midwest. The Midwest is used because more than

75% of its 25.1 million households heat their homes with natural gas. For the heating season of 2007-2008, EIA estimates that Midwest homeowners will pay about \$1.19 per therm (1therm=100,00 Btu)

Brown County

In 2007 the Brown County Homeless and Housing Coalition put out a Needs Assessment and Survey. This survey was completed by 626 surveys, of those 236 were completed by individuals who were homeless or formerly homeless. The top ranking need among those homeless that completed the survey was transportation. Transportation was also a top three ranking among landlords, providers and others who completed this survey. Overall in 2007 the second ranked need was transportation, coming in second to transitional housing.



The rising price of fuel makes transportation difficult for many families. Some alternatives are less driving, or the Green Bay Metro. The number of students and adults riding the bus has shown an increase for 2008. The Green Bay Metro carried 39,298 more students and adults in April-May 2008 than in 2007 for the same months.

Green Bay Metro

- The system medium is 17.1 passengers per hour.
 - The poorest performing route is the #8 Monroe with a rate of 11.3 passengers per mile.
 - The #3 Mather route carries the most passengers per hour at a rate of 32.1 on a weekday.
- Based on performance evaluations, the Green Bay Metro staff has identified several areas of concern:
 - Routes 8, 11, 15 and 61 consistently fail to meet performance standards. The ridership level is too low and it has been recommended that the 61 route to Syble Hopp be discontinued.
- There have been some service requests to improve the quality of service and to reach more clients.
 - Request to return service to the Lutheran Social Services facility near the intersection of Cormier Road and Crary Street in the Village or Ashwaubenon.
 - Many of these disabled adults have a difficult time getting to the bus, and this service would make it more accessible for them to easily access transportation.
 - Request for service to the new Brown County Jail
 - Lt. Phil Steffen of the Brown County Jail made this request as a result of complaints received from NEW Curative staff. The inmates with work release privileges were waiting for the bus in the vestibule of the NEW Curative building.

- Request to eliminate the Morain Terrace extension of the #10 Velp Route.
- Service to the retirement facility on Moraine Terrace adds time to the route, which makes it difficult to stay on schedule.

Green Bay Metro Fares

Adult	
Cash	\$1.50
Token	\$1.50
Pass	\$26.00
Student Fares - Grade K-12	
Cash	\$1.50
Token	\$1.50
Pass	\$19.00
Half Fares - with proper ID	
Cash	75¢
Token	75¢
Pass	\$15.25
Special Pass with Student ID	
Cash	\$1.50
Token	\$1.50
Pass	\$23.50

Interviews with local agencies (American Red Cross and Family Services) regarding transportation:

1. Has there been an increase in demand for your transportation program?
 - Both agencies have significant increases in demand. The American Red Cross turns down 80-90 requests for rides each month because they do not have the capacity to seat them. The winter months see an even greater increase. Family Services increase may be due to a strategic change in marketing efforts.
2. If yes, what are your needs to address the increase?
 - Volunteer drivers, staff, and increased funding.
3. In what direction do you see this trend going?
 - Only increasing, as the cost of fuel/petroleum products increases, the size of the city increases – elderly and disabled individuals find it necessary to discontinue driving for both safety and cost. The aging population is only going to increase significantly as well, and as the size of the city grows, so too will the distance each person needs to travel. This will increase our fuel costs, and wear/tear on vehicles.

2-1-1 Call Data

- In Brown County from June 2007 to July 2008 there have been 299 calls around the issue of transportation. Of those calls 126 found themselves with no program to meet the need. Of the total calls:
 - 100 were expense assistance for gas money
 - 39 were special needs transportation
 - 37 were transportation to a place
 - 33 were bus fare related
- In July alone in Brown County there were 25 calls pertaining to transportation. 13 of those needs were unmet.

- In Marathon and Portage Counties there were 356 calls for transportation. 14% of those calls were unmet. Of the total calls:
 - 172 were for financial assistance and 29% of those calls were unmet.
 - In Fox Cities, there were 244 calls for transportation, and 6 were unmet
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There are a few things being done to reduce the need for transportation.

One of those being, 'The Connector'.

The Connector, a Fox Cities Regional Transportation Initiative will address the needs of lower income individuals relying on public transportation for employment purposes. The expanded geographic areas and operating hours will be provided through a contracted service arrangement between Valley Transit and local taxi providers. The service area would consist of four key transfer points to cover the northern, southern, eastern, and western areas of the Fox Cities. The second component of The Connector will provide late evening (10pm to midnight) and early morning (4am to 6am) service to better serve second and third shift workers.

The Green Bay Metro has also made some improvements to increase ridership and lower the need for individual vehicles, which saves on gas expense:

- Installing bike racks
- Posted a 'how-to-ride' video designed to help riders deal with the route systems.
- The city recently launched a bike loan program to lend bikes to people within certain areas.
- Bike lanes are also being created throughout the county, along with a bike route map for those who consistently travel by bicycle.

The Energy Information Administration has also compiled a list of ways to cope with natural gas bills.

- Shop for lower-priced natural gas.
- Participate in local gas company's yearly budget plan to spread gas costs evenly throughout the year.
- The Federal and State energy assistance programs are available to natural gas customers who have a limited budget. For example, the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) is a Federal program that distributes funds to States to help low-income households pay heating bills. Additional State energy assistance and fuel fund programs may be available to help households pay energy bills during a winter emergency.