



# Transportation Riders United

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*“Moving Us Forward”*

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## Creative Cities and Transit Investment

With Detroit a buzz about Richard Florida coming to town as part of **CreateDetroit**, Transportation Riders United (TRU) has developed an analysis of whether there is a relationship between regions with high-quality transit and Richard Florida's rating for Creative Cities.

**CreateDetroit** is... creative citizens for a creative region! On March 3 and 4, 2004, Richard Florida and his team will present a Regional Transformation Process (RTP) in Detroit at Orchestra Hall and The Max M. Fisher Music Center. Richard Florida has presented RTPs in other cities such as Albuquerque, NM, Green Bay, WI and Greensboro, NC and has been a catalyst for change in those areas. He is particularly interested in the Detroit region and very excited about the RTP for our area. "Detroit has more potential than any other city or region. It has the number one research university and is the greatest city for music ever."

However, Richard Florida's current ranking for Detroit is 39 out of 49 large metropolitan regions (<http://www.creativeclass.org/regall.shtml>), a very mediocre rank. The highest ranking region is San Francisco. Of the 49 large metropolitan areas, Memphis had the lowest score.

TRU found that 100 percent of the top 19 ranked cities had a transit quality rating better than Detroit with an average TRU transit rating<sup>1</sup> of 53 for this top group. For the 20 cities ranked between 20 and 39 (Detroit's Ranking), 80 percent of this group had as good or better transit quality as compared to Detroit with an average TRU rating of 30. For the lowest ranked cities, only 60 percent had transit quality higher than Detroit's with an average TRU rating of 21. From this analysis, it appears that regions that have good transit tend to have higher Creative City rankings. A graph of the results is attached.

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<sup>1</sup> In order to determine a quality factor for a region's transit quality, Transportation Riders United used a number of factors including a ranking of all cities according to transit-seat-miles/capita, whether the region had a high percent of workers using public transit to get to work (as provided by the American Public Transportation Association 2001 Public Transportation Fact Book, Table 41), whether the region has planned, built or funded rail projects under the New Starts Program, known information on local match per capita as provided by Michigan Land Use Institute, and a Sierra Club score for cleaning the air with transportation spending choices. New York City has the highest score of 80.

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# Creative City Rank and Transit Quality

