

## FINDING FUNDING FOR U.S. SURFACE TRANSPORTATION

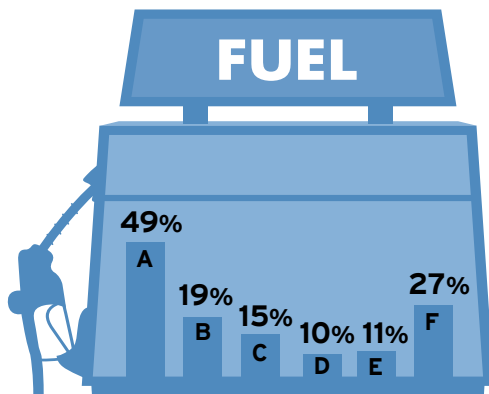
*Most Americans ready to make a long-term investment, but opinions vary on how to pay*

As part of HNTB Corporation's ongoing survey series, **America THINKS**, the infrastructure firm recently asked people across the country to voice their opinions about driving, the gas tax, improving surface transportation and funding options for the future.

Many Americans are willing to spend more for long-term transportation improvements, but the research also shows differing opinions regarding the options that should be used locally, regionally and nationally, including tolls, new user fees and congestion pricing, as well as raising the gas tax.

### DECELERATING THE PURCHASING POWER OF THE GAS TAX

*A combination of inflation, changing driving habits and increased fuel economy of vehicles has robbed much of the purchasing power from the gas tax, which was last raised by the federal government to 18.4 cents in 1993. The recession and fluctuating gas prices haven't helped, as Americans have responded by ramping up efforts to conserve.*



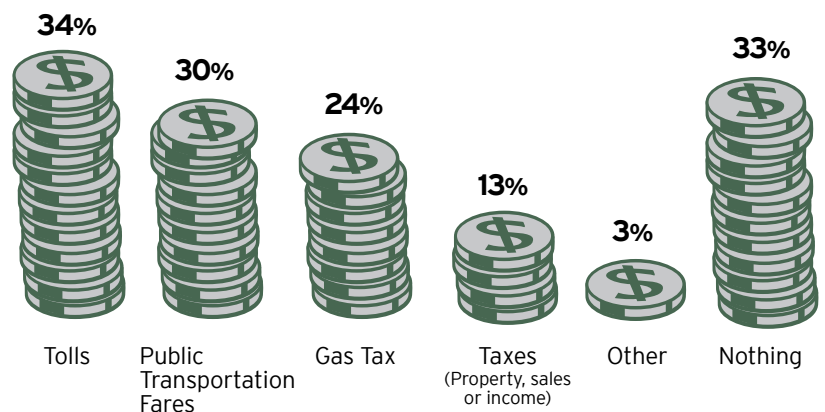
**Q.** If you are currently making any efforts to conserve gas or drive less often, in which of the following ways are you doing so?

- A. Grouping errands or outings together to reduce trips
- B. Driving a more fuel-efficient vehicle
- C. Carpooling or ride sharing
- D. Using public transit more often
- E. Other
- F. I am not currently making any efforts to conserve gas or drive less often

### MOST WILLING TO PAY FOR LONG-TERM, LOCAL IMPROVEMENTS

*Even in the midst of the current recession, more than two-thirds (67 percent) of Americans would be willing to spend more money on tolls, taxes, or public transit fares if transportation investments were made in their area. And an increasing number of people (57 percent) say the gas tax is no longer sufficient to properly maintain the country's roads and bridges (compared to 51 percent in January 2009).*

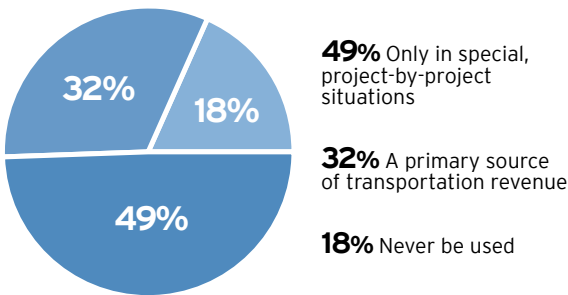
**Q.** Which of the following would you be willing to spend more money on if the money was put toward long-term transportation improvements, such as expanding highway capacity or introducing high-speed rail, in your area?



**PAY AS YOU GO**

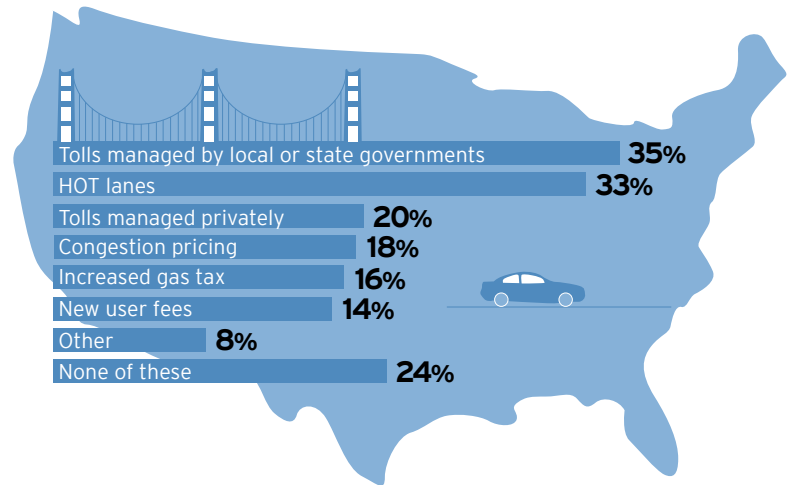
Respondents were divided when asked about the various future funding options most often discussed. Only 36 percent said they would support a gas tax increase of 10-cents per gallon once the economy improves.

**Q.** Which of the following best describes how you generally feel about tolls on roads and bridges?

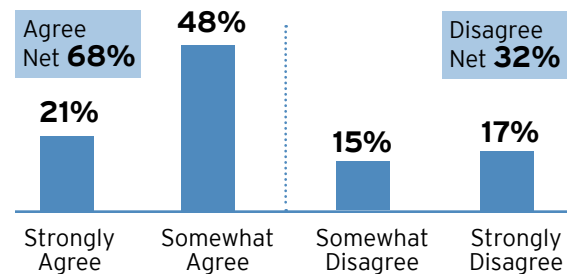


Tolling proved the most popular option. Fewer than one in five said it should never be used. Nearly seven in ten (68 percent) would support more high-occupancy toll lanes as a way to reduce congestion or fund road improvements.

**Q.** How should America pay for roads and bridges in the future?



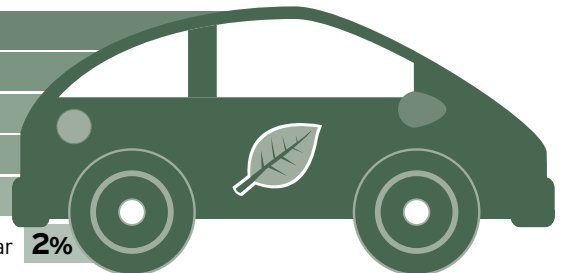
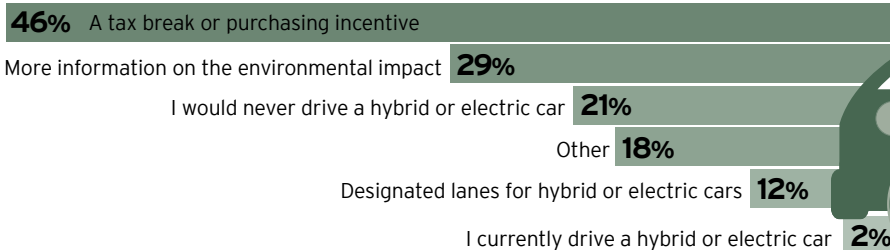
**Q.** How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statement: I would support the use of HOT lanes on more highways to reduce congestion or fund road improvements.



**LOOKING FOR REASONS TO GO GREEN**

When it comes to being eco-friendly on the road, Americans are selective – especially if they have to pay for it. The younger generation (ages 18-34) who don't currently drive a hybrid or electric car, but would consider it, are more likely than their 35+ elders (67 percent versus 57 percent) to do so if they got some money back.

**Q.** If you don't currently drive a hybrid or electric car, for which of the following reasons would you be more likely to drive a hybrid or electric car?



HNTB's America THINKS survey polled a random nationwide sample of 1,000 Americans between July 31 and Aug. 7, 2009. It was conducted by Kelton Research, which used an e-mail invitation and online survey. Quotas were set to ensure reliable and accurate representation of the total U.S. population ages 18 and over. The margin of error is +/- 3.1 percent. For more information, visit [www.hntb.com](http://www.hntb.com) or contact John O'Connell, (816) 527-2383, [joconnell@hntb.com](mailto:joconnell@hntb.com).