The average length of a commute trip increased by 26% from 8.5 miles in 1983 to 10.7 miles in 1990 while the commute time increased by a substantially lower rate of 10% during the same period. The increase in commute distance may partially reflect the continued development of suburban and exurban residential areas. The resulting commutes are longer but are travelled at faster speeds. In terms of the number of miles travelled per hour, commuting speeds for all areas improved between 1983 and 1990.

Table 6.11

Commuting Patterns of Journey to Work Person Trips by Mode of Transportation and Place of Residence 1983 and 1990 NPTS[1]

Note: See Limitations of Data on Transit[2] in Chapter 1, Section 5

	In MSA, in Central City		In MSA, Not in Central City		Not In MSA		TOTAL	
Mode	1983	1990	1983	1990	1983	1990	1983	1990
Average Commute Trip Distance (Miles)								
Auto	7.5	8.8	9.2	11.6	7.0	10.6	8.5	10.4
Truck	8.6	12.5	11.4	13.5	5.4	13.5	10.4	13.0
Bus	7.1	8.2	8.1	13.1	**	15.7	7.5	9.3
TOTAL[3]	7.5	9.0	9.4	11.9	6.4	11.0	8.5	10.7
Average Commute Travel Time[4] (Minutes)								
Auto	16.8	17.2	18.4	20.3	14.3	16.3	17.2	18.4
Truck	18.1	20.0	20.8	23.3	13.0	20.0	19.1	21.4
Bus	34.3	44.0	32.7	52.7	**	58.3	33.7	46.6
TOTAL[3]	19.2	19.5	19.0	21.6	14.2	17.2	18.2	20.0
Average Commute Speed[5] (Miles per Hour)								
TOTAL[3]	23.4	29.5	29.7	34.3	27.0	37.8	28.0	33.3

[1] For information on comparing 1983 and 1990 NPTS survey data, see Section 4 of Chapter 1.

[2] Estimates of "actual" transit use are based on 1240 person trips to work on travel day by bus, subway, elevated rail or commuter train. Note that the NPTS estimate of transit trips for all purposes is 20% lower than the Federal Transit Administration's Section 15 reporting system.

[3] Includes all modes of transportation.

[4] Includes both travel time and time spent waiting for transportation.

[5] Average commute speed is calculated using nonsegmented trips only.

** Indicates no data available.