

# CATS

## Partners in Progress Meeting

Results for Maple Pointe Senior Residence  
Chicago, Illinois

November, 2005



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# Public Outreach Report

## Maple Pointe Senior Residence

November, 2005

On July 17, 2005 communications staff from the Chicago Area Transportation Study set out to Maple Pointe Senior Residence, 150 W. Maple, Chicago, to share, enlighten, educate and involve local senior citizens in the transportation planning process through the CATS "*Partners in Progress*" outreach initiative.

This meeting served as an opportunity to hear first-hand about many of the transit issues and needs facing the active and ever-growing Chicago senior resident population. It afforded interested seniors an opportunity to learn about the transportation planning process, how it affects them, and how they can have a voice in the process.

Keynote speaker for this meeting was Jock Hardy, Director of Communications at CATS, who discussed the Regional Transportation Plan, the Transportation Improvement Program, the nuts and bolts of the decision-making process, and the many opportunities for involvement that exist for seniors and people with disabilities.

After conducting the July 17 meeting, CATS was asked to return for a follow-up meeting with building residents who missed the first meeting. We were glad to oblige, as it indicated community interest and a second opportunity to solicit more resident input. This "seasoned" group of approximately 30 persons proved to be alert and very interested in our program. They also made sure to convey the need for safer pedestrian crossings, reinstating the #11 CTA bus route, more weekend bus service, friendlier bus drivers, and timely and accommodating public transit services for persons with physical challenges.

CATS would like to extend a special note of thanks to Wayne Worley and building management at Maple Pointe Senior Residence, Sheila Davidson, senior event organizer, and all of the supportive residents. We appreciated their input, energy and support for the "*Partners in Progress*" outreach initiative.

Each meeting participant was asked to complete a brief Transportation Opinion Survey designed to identify their transportation issues and concerns. It is our intent to provide each community we visit with this survey to better understand the transportation strengths, deficiencies and needs from a local perspective. There were 24 surveys returned. Survey results can be found on the following pages.





## Maple Pointe Transportation Opinion Survey Results

The following conclusions are to be regarded as general in nature. The results are not a product of rigorous quantitative or qualitative analysis. In several instances, the survey offered multiple options for answers, and as expected most respondents chose more than one option. Therefore, the responses to some questions add up to more than 100 percent.

The number of people completing the Transportation Opinion Survey at the Maple Pointe Senior Residence in Chicago was 24: 8 males and 16 females. The average age of the respondents is 69 years, with the youngest being 54 and the oldest 83. Seventeen percent said they are employed and 79 percent said they are retired. Eight percent are students at universities or community colleges in the Chicago area. All of those who are employed say they can get to work using public transportation, while none of the students can. Twenty-nine percent say they use public transportation for non-work purposes.

The primary means of transportation for 75 percent of the respondents is the bus (CTA, Pace or paratransit). Exactly half walk to their destinations. Nearly half (46%) take taxis, and 42 percent ride the El/subway. Usage of autos/vans/pickups/SUVs was low, with 38 percent saying they drive and only 17 percent saying they ride as passengers. Twenty-five percent use Metra commuter rail and 17 percent ride bicycles.

Given the high usage of public transportation, complaints were relatively low compared to other populations CATS has surveyed. Thirty-eight percent say public transit is too slow. Twenty-nine percent said service is infrequent, and 21 percent said it's too expensive. Seventeen percent said they don't feel safe on transit, the same percentage as those who say they have no information about available service. Thirteen percent each said public transportation doesn't serve their destinations or where they live.



Although the majority of the respondents rely on public transportation, they do experience problems unrelated to transit in their daily travel. Traffic congestion was cited by 56 percent of the respondents, followed by roads in poor condition (42%) and intersection delays (33%). Inadequate signage (21%) and railroad crossing delays (13%) were cited as other problems encountered.

Television (63%) is the primary source for transportation information for survey respondents. Radio (38%), newspapers (33%) and the RTA/CTA/Metra/Pace (33%) are other major sources of information. Only four percent said they receive information from the Internet, and 17 percent said they receive no information whatsoever.

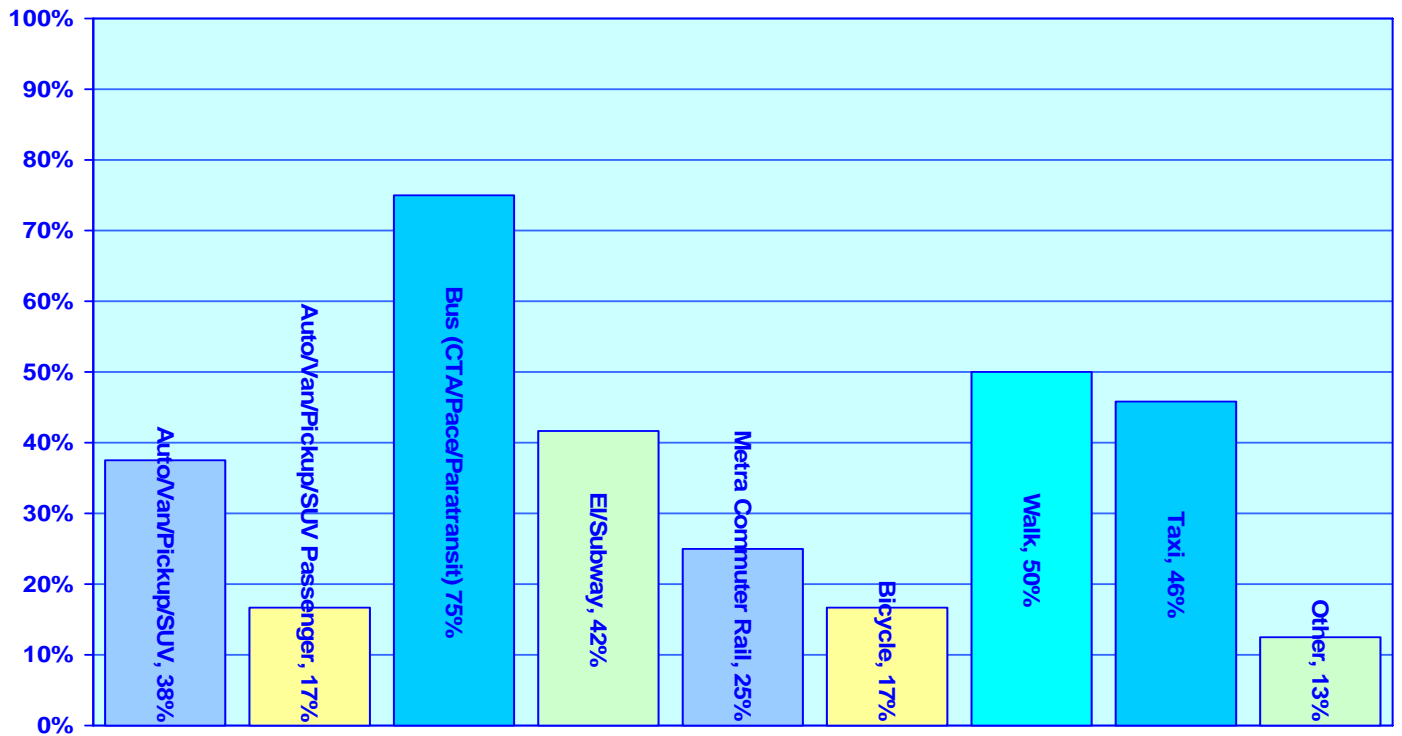
When asked to comment on what could be done to improve the transportation system in northeastern Illinois, the respondents indicated the following categories where improvements are needed:

- Better bus service;
- Cleaner and safer public transportation.

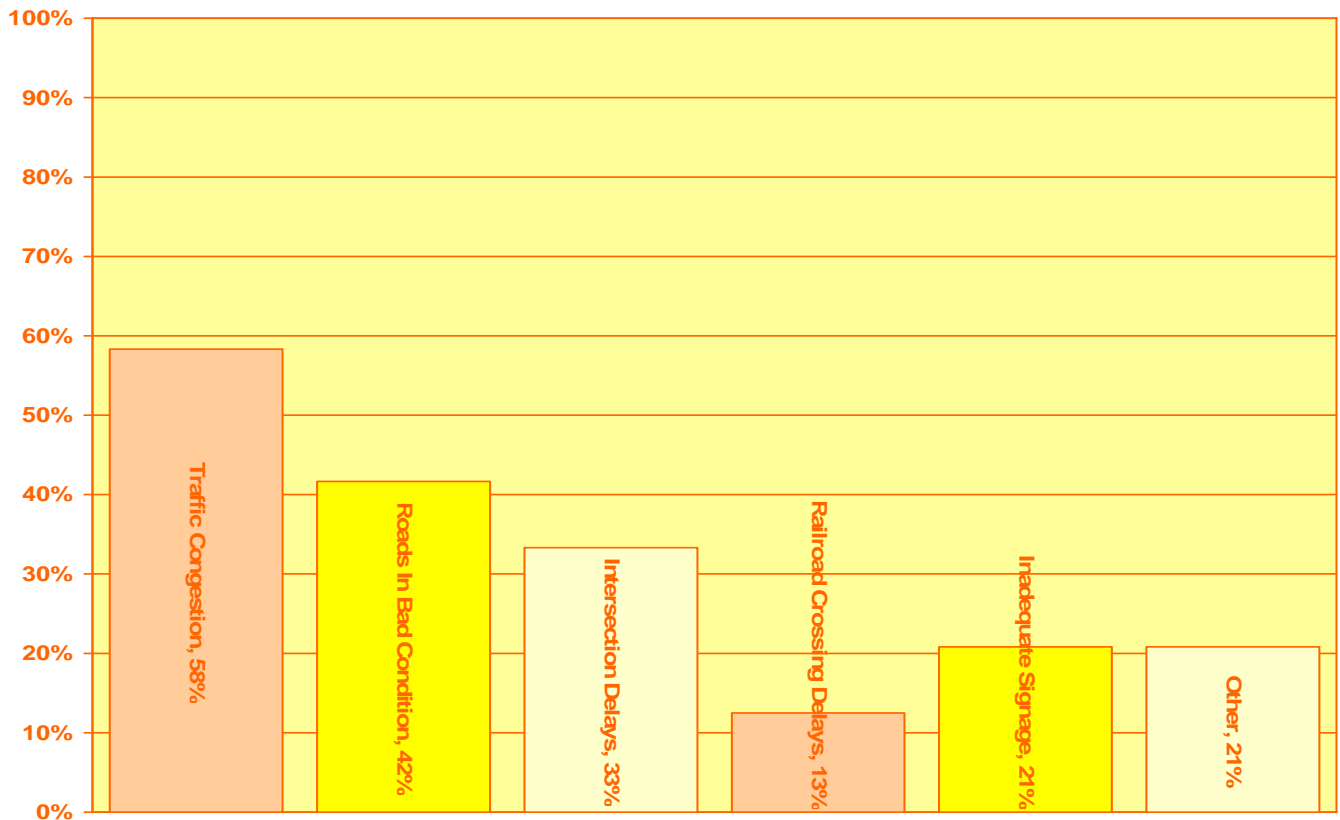
The charts on the following pages give breakdowns on responses CATS received from participants at the Maple Pointe meeting.



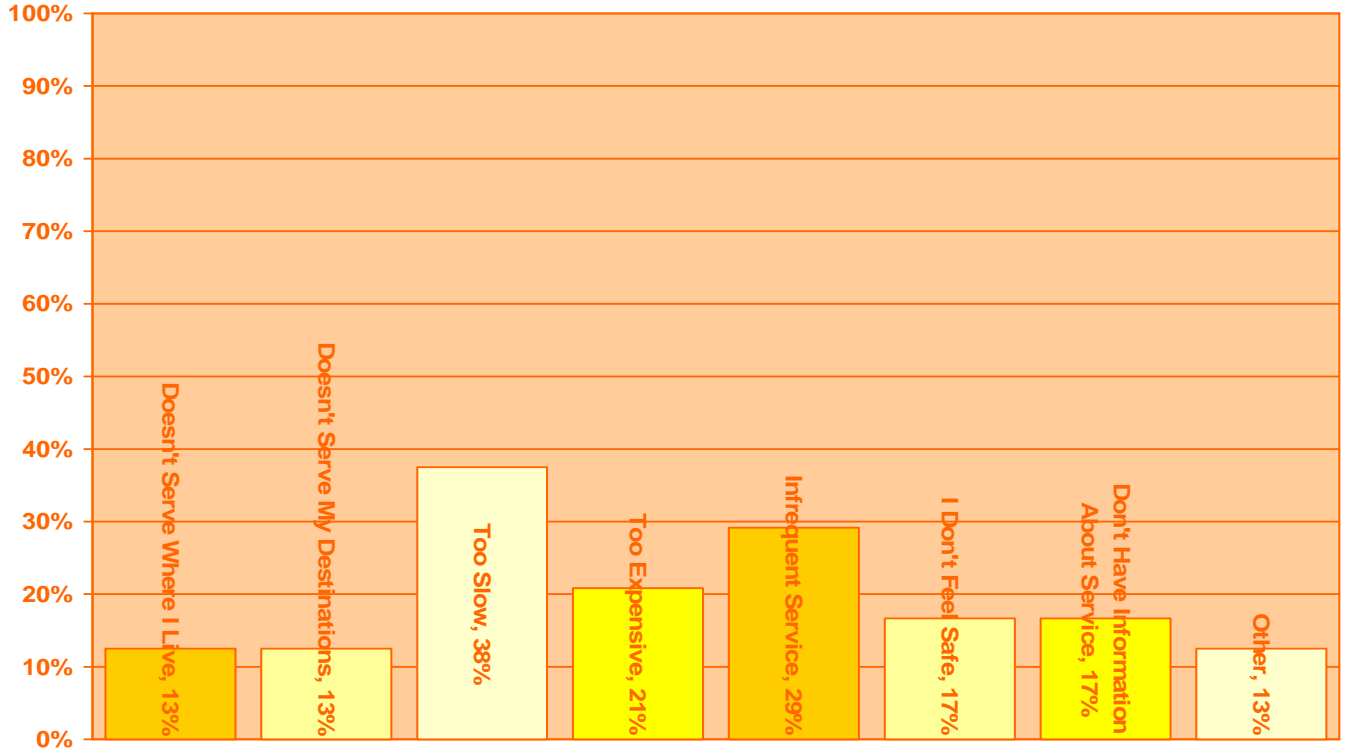
**Question: What types of transportation do you typically use?**



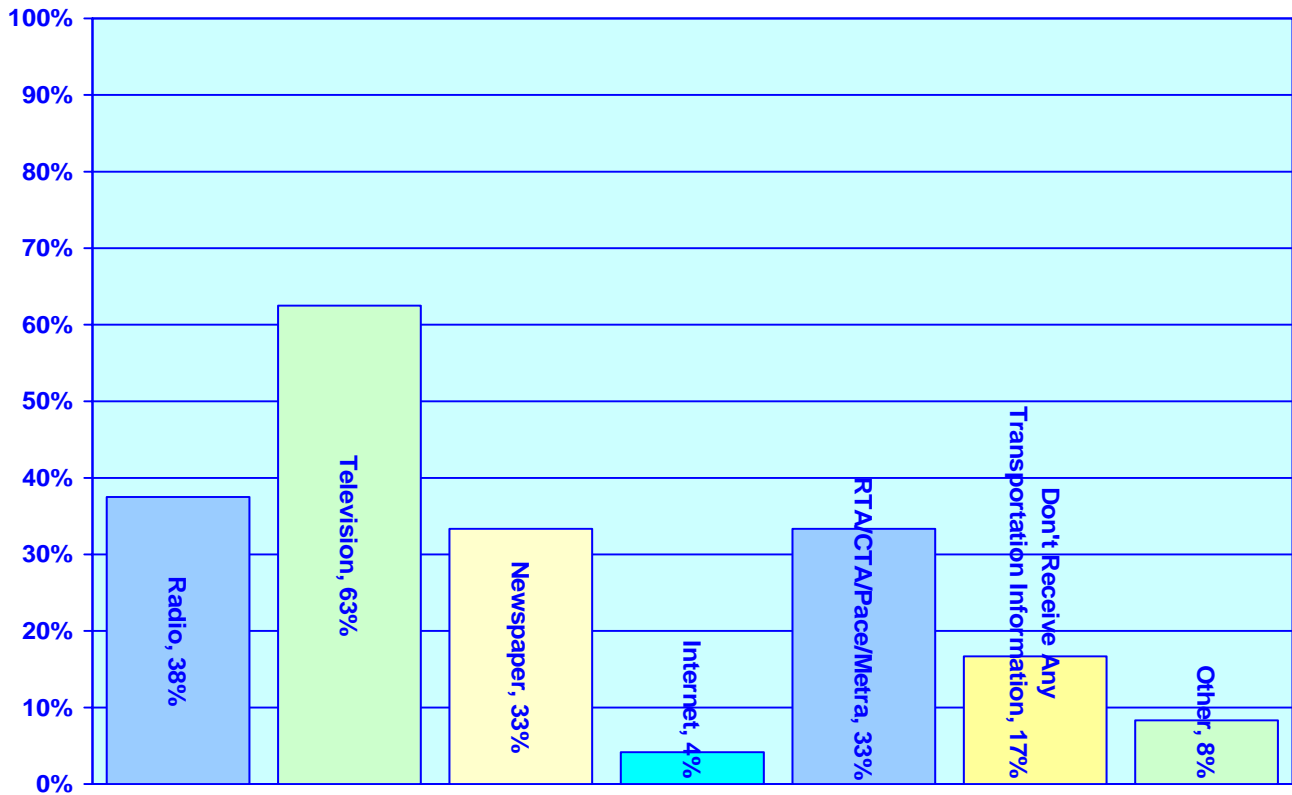
**Question: What types of problems have you experienced in your daily travel?**



**Question: Public transportation problems?**



**Question: How do you receive transportation information?**





## Written Responses To Survey Questions

**Question 2A. What types of problems have you observed or experienced in your daily travels? Other (please specify).**

Motorists who disobey traffic laws (turn right in front of buses, run red lights, etc.).

No emergency trucks to assist drivers who are stranded or broken down on Lake Shore Drive in Chicago after midnight.

No 156 bus service on weekends.

Street in front of senior building at Maple and LaSalle needs paving. Alderman Vi Daley said she doesn't have the money.

Insufficient traffic lights – none at dangerous crossings like Maple at LaSalle.

On-time service by CTA buses.

No buses when you need them. Then they come 2-3 at a time.

Need a stop sign or traffic light at LaSalle and Maple.

**Question 2B. Public transportation related problems. Other (please specify).**

For the most part our public transportation system in Chicago is great compared to other cities I've been in. A question – how often are the buses/trains cleaned up? I've noticed they are really dirty lately.

I find the transportation quite adequate.



Three buses arrive at the same time. (I don't feel safe) on the El in the subway.

Irregular service.

Please bring #11 bus back.

Bring back the #11 bus.

Three buses together after waiting 1/2 hour and more.

**Question 2C. Problems with other types of transportation.**

Autos running red lights; unsafe speeds at times.

Pace & CTA.

Cleaner buses and Els.

When I drive, all the problems under 2A above.



Need a stoplight at Maple & LaSalle.

Drivers can be rude without particular cause.

#11 (bus) no longer in service. Stop light at Maple Street. No buses on Saturday/Sunday on LaSalle Street. No bikes on the walk (is) a bad rule. All bus drivers need to learn route directions.

Need better bike lanes – seniors should be able to ride on (the) sidewalk – roads or bike lanes (are) like accidents waiting to happen.





**Question 3: Please tell us what you like about the transportation system in northeastern Illinois. Feel free to comment on all types of transportation.**

I think our transportation in Chicago is pretty good compared to other cities I've been in. I like the fact that our CTA has a reduced fare plan for seniors and other groups.

That it exists, thank God!

I think it (bus) is really good. I wish there would be more money for Metra to do the infrastructure so I can ride the train to Carbondale, St. Louis and New Orleans.

Safety and good drivers.

It stinks in Chicago and I'm only interested in Chicago.

Convenient, reasonably priced.

This area at 150 W. Maple is very well connected for transportation, by and large.

Metra and Pace are great. Buses and trains stick to schedule. Drivers are helpful. Clean.

I don't know all of northeastern Illinois.

The system is good, maybe C+, but additional users would reduce costs, and thus, fares.



**Question 16. In your opinion, what can be done to improve the transportation system in northeastern Illinois? (Please consider improvements to all types of transportation.)**

I know with the heavy usage of public transportation it is probably hard to do, but are the train cars and buses cleaned throughout? I've been in some nasty-looking cars and that's a bad reputation for the city – especially for tourists, Also, the subway stations reek of urine and there should be better security – especially in the subways.

Public information for all of us. Better safety at night. (Bus) windows that work. Drivers who are not belligerent about lowering the steps for people with canes.

Less expensive. OK now, yet would be nice.



More consideration to those who need help physically to get where they are going – whether it be wheelchairs, oxygen tanks – whatever it may be that puts them aside of other patrons. I'm an emphysemiac who needs oxygen wherever I go and I'm not in very good traveling shape.

Bus drivers often do not pull to curb; stepping down from them is very difficult.

I am not familiar with it.





Change habits so that car users use public transportation by using cash incentives. For example, go to private companies to induce employees to try public transportation.

Cleaner buses. Better directions given to travelers if requested. We need security person in subways to protect senior travelers.

Rules for bicycles on the street. Educating the public on what is available on traffic and transit.

Have the people at the top use public transportation during rush hour in the winter.

Need more accountability from workers, supervisors, etc. Make them more friendly. Hire a few seniors to watch and report good.

