

CATS

Partners in Progress Meeting

Results for Mather's – More Than a Café
Chicago, Illinois

November, 2005



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Public Outreach Report

Mather's – More Than a Café

November, 2005

On November 9, 2005, outreach staff from the Chicago Area Transportation Study hosted a “Partners in Progress” meeting designed to address the specific transportation needs and issues facing seniors in the Chatham/Avalon community in the City of Chicago.

This meeting was held at Mather's – More Than a Café, located at 33 E. 83rd St. Mather's Café is dedicated to serving more than delightful coffee and pastries. It specializes in serving the physical, mental and physical appetites of seniors and their guests.

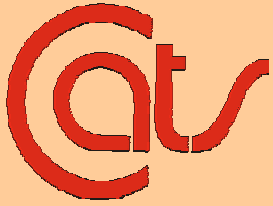
This establishment offers a range of social activities, computer training, trips and healthy, affordable meals that are pleasing to the palate and the pocket-book. Mather's Café and CATS both appreciate the economic power and personal impact senior citizens have on the local economy and we value their input on critical issues. We acknowledge their memories of past transportation systems and their current experiences as indispensable in helping develop a transportation system that is safe, efficient and affordable as we move into the future.

CATS was invited by Jim Holloway, assistant manager of Mather's Café, to conduct a meeting that would educate local area seniors about the “nuts and bolts” of transportation planning; inform them about who the decision-makers are and how transportation decisions are made; and impart to them the vital role their generation serves in helping shape the future of transportation.

Our keynote speakers were LynnToi Lawson, Public Involvement Coordinator for CATS, and Bryce Word, Special Projects Manager for PACE. Mrs. Lawson discussed the history of CATS, the Regional Transportation Plan, the TIP and the importance of public input and involvement. Mr. Word discussed the current status of paratransit services provided by PACE, their coverage areas, fare schedules and Pace's preliminary plans to acquire full control of all paratransit services by July 2006.

This “Partners in Progress” meeting featured an audience of approximately 35 astute and outspoken seniors. 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. Survey results can be found on the following pages.





Mather's – More Than a Café 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 Mather's Cafe was 22: 21 females and 1 male. The average age of the respondents is 66 years, with the youngest being 55 and the oldest 80. None of the respondents are employed, with 68 percent saying they are officially retired. Two are students at universities or community colleges in the Chicago area.

The primary means of transportation for 55 percent of the respondents is driving an auto, van, pickup or SUV. Forty-five percent said they ride CTA, Pace or paratransit buses, and 27 percent said they use the El or subway. Twenty-three percent said they walk to their destinations, while 14 percent take taxis and 14 percent ride as passengers in autos, vans, pickups or SUVs. Only five percent utilize Metra commuter rail, and none ride bicycles.

Since the majority of the respondents drive to their destinations, their chief concerns are traffic congestion (77%) and poor roads (68%). Railroad crossing delays were cited by 27 percent. Only 18 percent said they have problems with intersection delays, and 14 percent find signage inadequate.

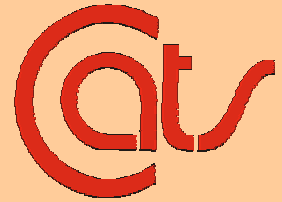


Respondents said their chief concerns with public transportation are that it's unsafe (32%) and they have no information about available service (27%). Twenty-three percent each said it is too slow or too expensive, while nine percent each said it doesn't serve where they live or service is infrequent.

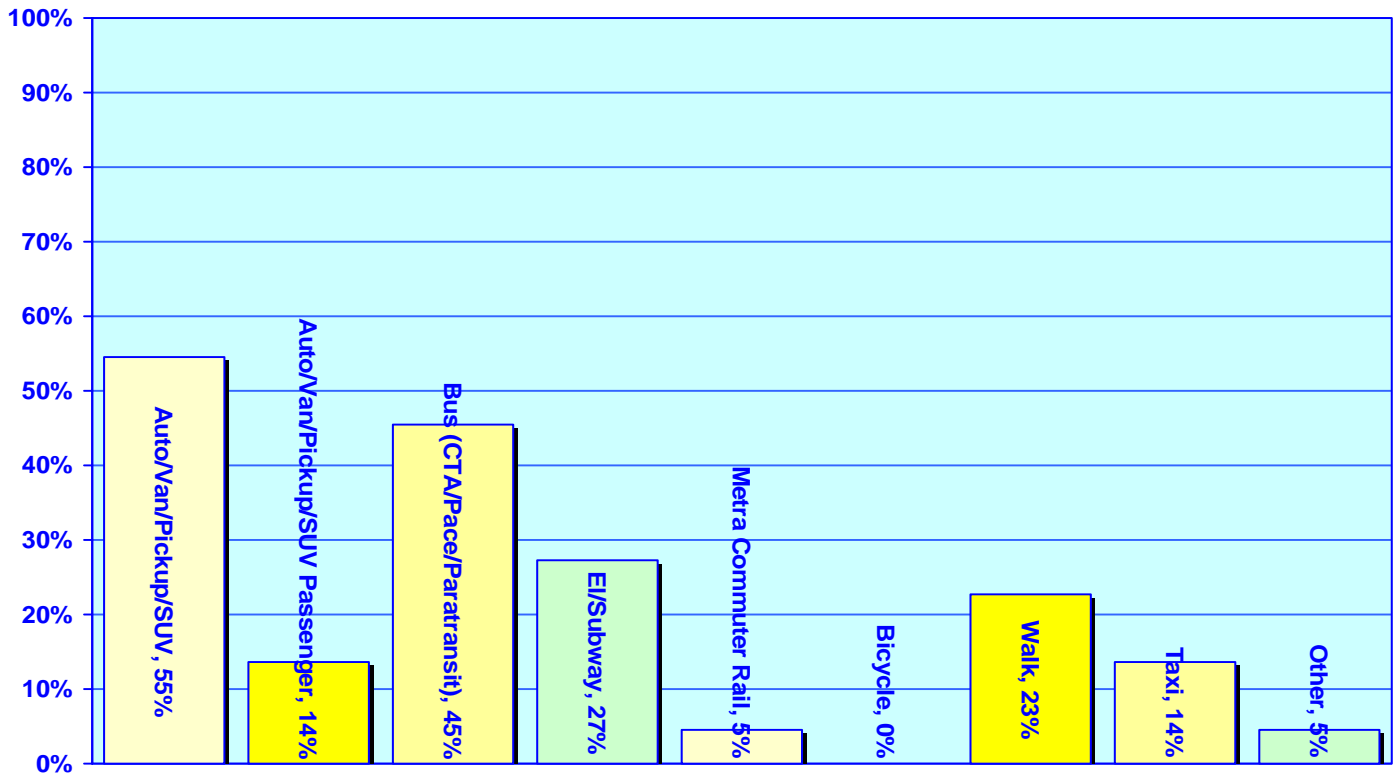
Television (59%) and newspapers (55%) are the primary sources for transportation information for survey respondents. Radio (32%) was the other major source. Eighteen percent said they get their information from the RTA/CTA/Metra/Pace. Only nine percent said they receive their information from the Internet, and five percent said they receive no information.

When asked to comment on what could be done to improve the transportation system in northeastern Illinois, the respondents indicated that public transportation needs improvement.

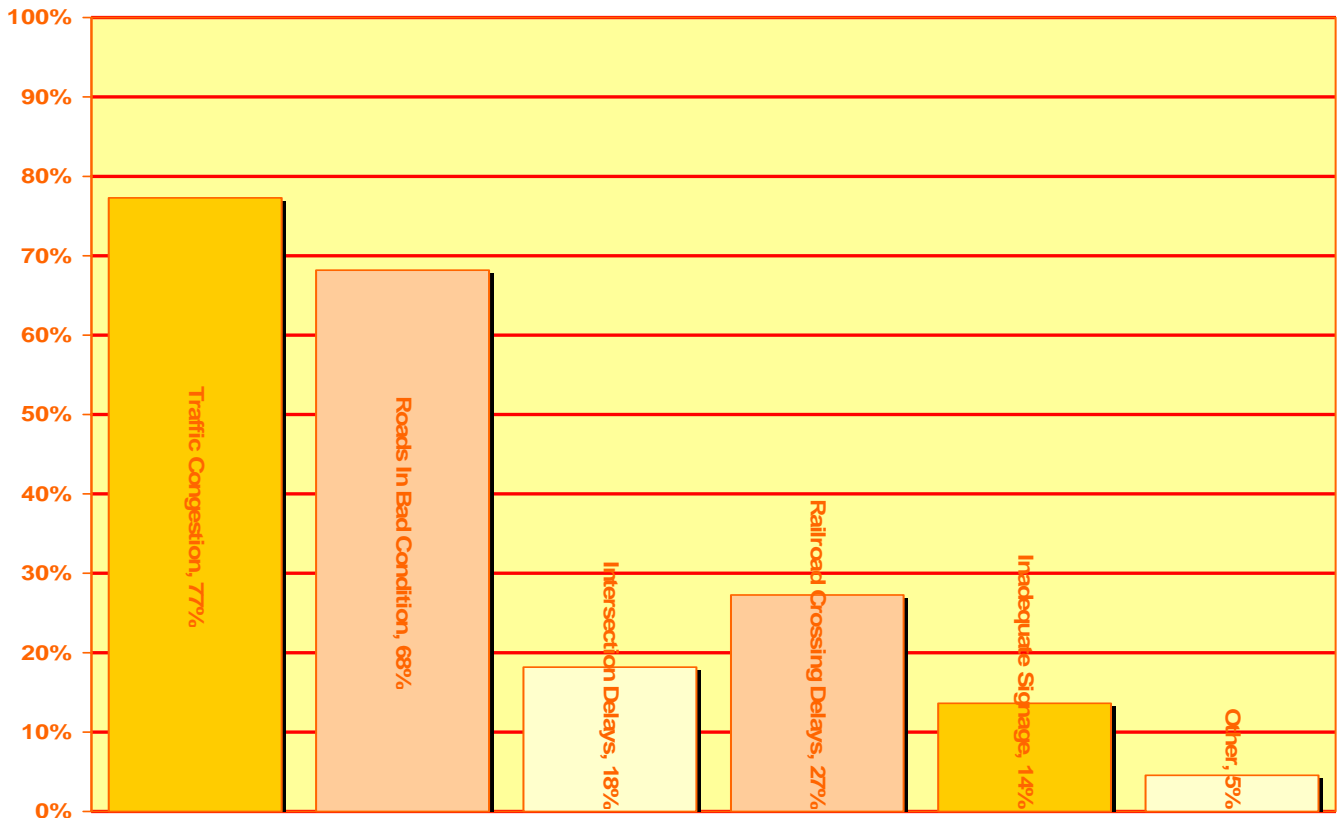
The charts on the following pages give breakdowns on responses CATS received from participants at the Mather's Café meeting.



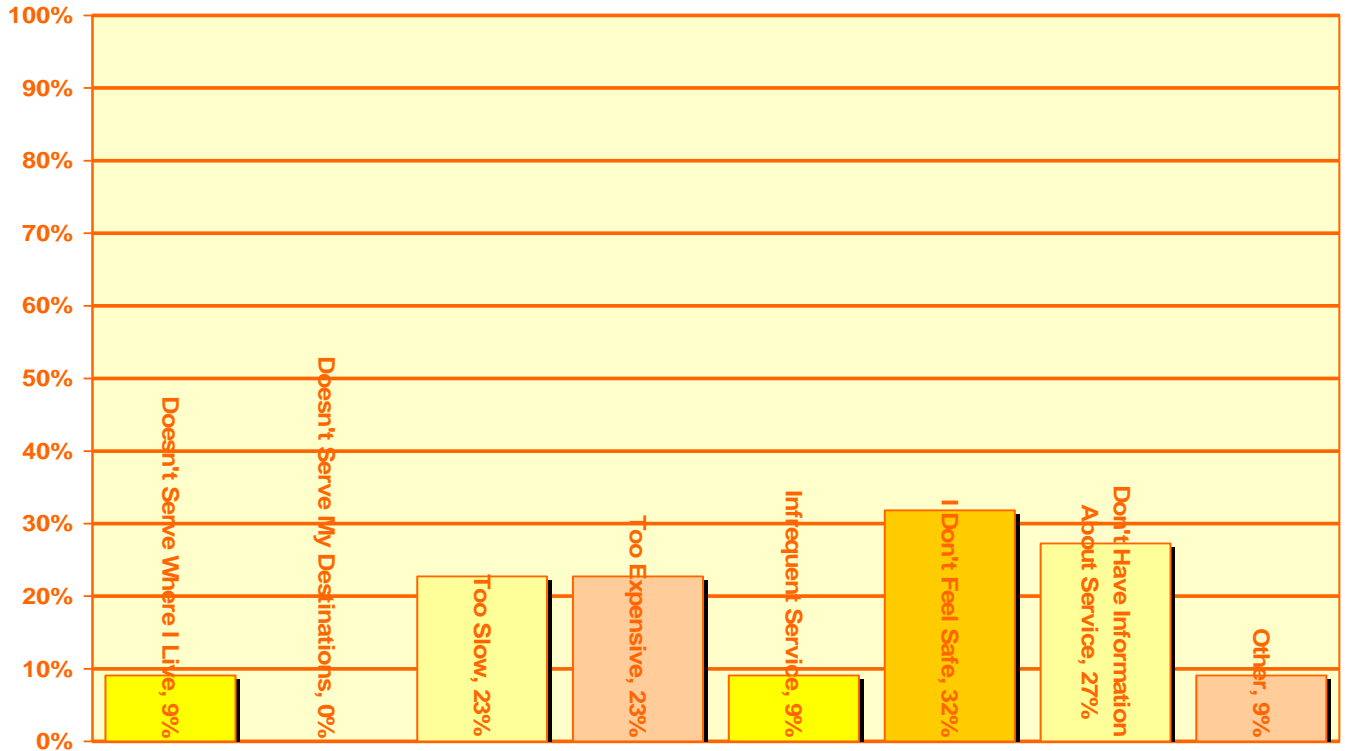
Question: What types of transportation do you typically use?



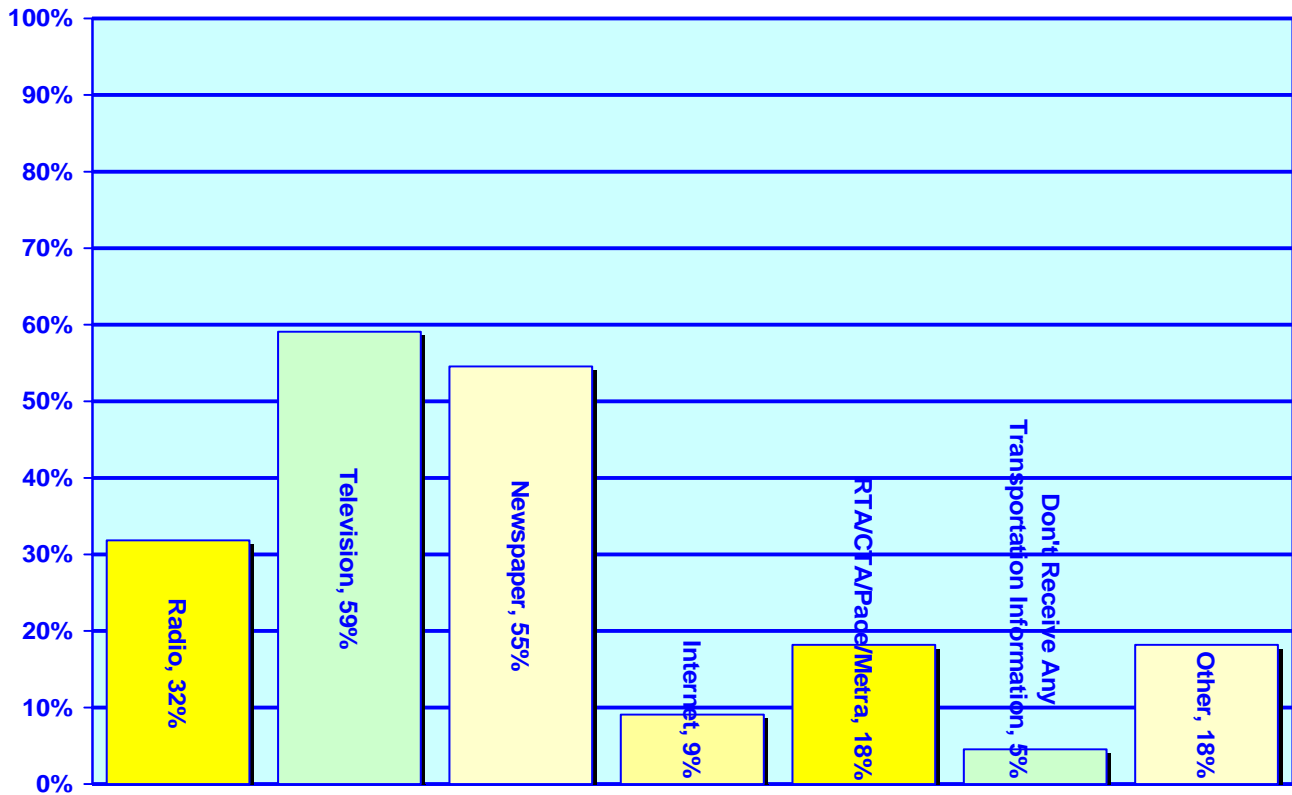
Question: What types of problems have you experienced in your daily travel?

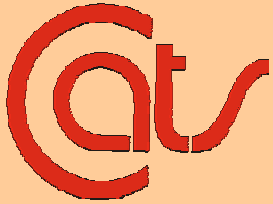


Question: Public transportation problems?



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):

Paratransit pick-ups late.

(Buses) run too far apart; buses going around buses that are letting others off.

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

Not close enough to home (about 2 miles).

(I don't feel safe.) This extends to community, especially those at or near peak transportation spots.

Cleanliness/lack thereof. CDT and other medical carriers too expensive.

Question 2C: Problems with other types of transportation:

Safety.

Tardy pick up from Arts. When you get thru after 9-10 A.M., only ARTS is left and they are always 15-30 minutes late.

SCR late pick-ups. I have waited 3 hours for them.



Medical carriers from Chicago to other suburbs are expensive and/or not available.

So far no problems.

Cleanliness, lewd behavior.

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

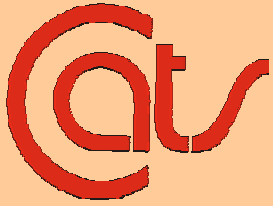
Fair to good, given the population in service area.

No communication when, for example, a train is delayed or stopped.

At the present time I don't use public transportation.

The availability of service.





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.)

Clean and safe transportation.

More consideration for people living in the designated EPA "hot spots" due to pollution along expressways, etc.

Be punctual. Go further south to River Oaks Mall.

On-board security. More attention to cleaning of vehicles.

Good communication. Lower fares.

Benches at (bus) stops.

More buses scheduled closer together. Buses run too far apart. The bus you want goes around the bus that is letting people off. Bus drivers will not ask young people to give seats to seniors. Buses come 4-5 at a time. If buses are going in, please let them take us to the EI station.

I don't really know the problems. I don't use public transportation.

Don't ride too often.

Length of time it takes to pick up and return. Limit the wait time.

