

CATS

Partners in Progress Meetings

Results for April-June, 2005

October, 2005



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Public Outreach Report

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During the second quarter of 2005, staff from the Chicago Area Transportation Study took part in three “Partners in Progress” community outreach events in northeastern Illinois. The events were held to inform, educate and involve the public in the transportation planning process.

Presentations were given to groups of varying sizes representing chambers of commerce and community organizations as part of CATS’ overall outreach efforts in advance of the 2006 update of the Regional Transportation Plan. Some aspects of the presentations, such as how the planning process works and how the public can get involved, were generic to all audiences. Other aspects, such as scheduled construction projects, were aimed at the specific audience being addressed.

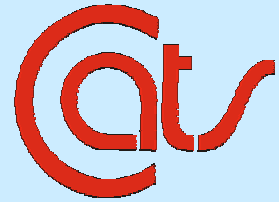
The meeting schedule and participants were as follows:

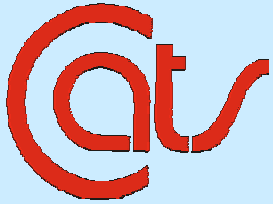
- The Fifth Representative District at two meetings in Chicago on April 20 and 23.
- The Steger and Crete Chambers of Commerce in South Chicago Heights on April 28.
- The Austin Chamber of Commerce in Chicago on June 29.

Speakers at the meetings included various CATS staff members and representatives from the freight railroads and the Illinois Department of Transportation.

All meeting participants were asked to fill out Transportation Opinion Surveys to help identify local concerns and issues affecting their communities. Survey results were then tabulated, put into reports and sent to the participating organizations, local elected officials, and the Public Involvement Task Force, the Regional Transportation Planning Committee and the Work Program Committee at CATS.

Survey results for the entire second quarter can be found on the following pages.





Second Quarter Transportation Opinion Survey Results

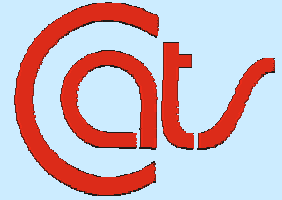
The following conclusions are to be regarded as general in nature. The results are not a product of rigorous quantitative or qualitative analysis. In several instances, the survey offered multiple options for answers, and as expected most respondents chose more than one option. Therefore, the responses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

The number of people completing the Transportation Opinion Survey in the first quarter of 2005 was 83: 39 males, 42 females and two not specifying gender. The average age of the respondents is 49 years, with the youngest being 19 and the oldest 83. Eighty-eight percent said they are employed, four percent don't work and seven percent said they are retired. Six percent are students at a university or community college in the Chicago area. Among the employed respondents, 48 percent said they can get to work using public transportation, with 40 percent saying they cannot, and 12 percent failing to answer the question.

Among the employed respondents, 59 percent said they use public transportation for non-work purposes, 30 percent said they don't, six percent were unsure and five percent failed to answer the question.

The primary means of transportation for 81 percent of the respondents is driving an auto, van, pickup or SUV. Thirty-five percent walk to their destinations. Thirty percent use the El/subway, with 22 percent each using Metra commuter rail and CTA/Pace or paratransit buses. Twenty-seven percent report riding as passengers in autos, vans, pickups or SUVs, slightly more than the 25 percent who ride bicycles. Seventeen percent use taxis.





Since the vast majority of the respondents drive to their destinations, their chief concern (82%) is traffic congestion. Poor road conditions (69%) were also cited as a major problem. Intersection delays (34%) and railroad crossing delays (35%) were also frequently cited. Inadequate signage (18%) was seen as a lesser concern.

The relatively low usage of public transportation can be explained by the following survey answers: it doesn't serve where I live (30%), service is infrequent (28%) and it doesn't serve my destinations (24%). Other problems cited include slow service (23%), expensive service (20%), feeling unsafe (14%) and lack of information about available service (13%).

Television (55%) is the primary source for transportation information for survey respondents. Radio (45%), newspapers (37%) and the Internet (33%) were also major information sources. Nineteen percent said they receive their information from the RTA/CTA/Metra/Pace, while 12 percent said they receive no information from any source.

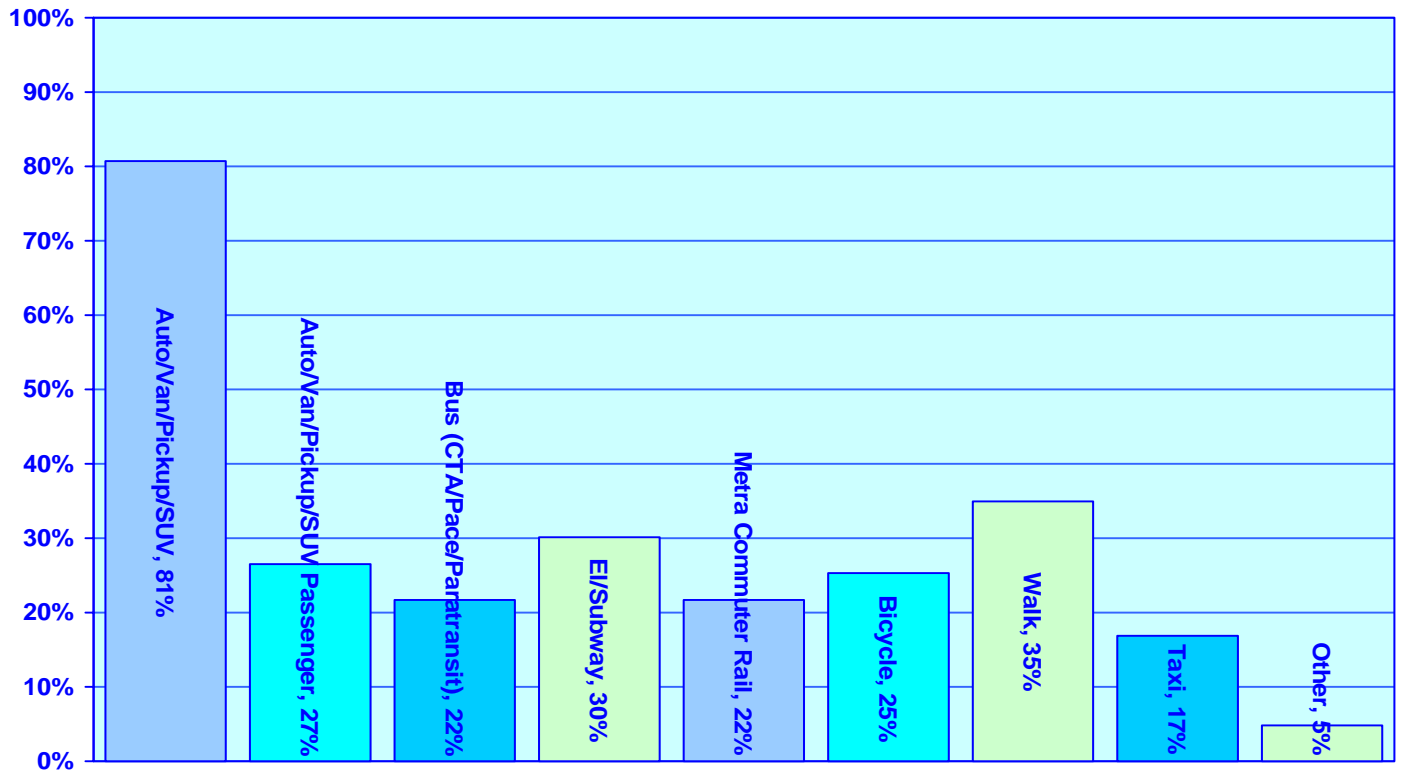
When asked to comment on what could be done to improve the transportation system in northeastern Illinois, the respondents indicated the following categories where improvements are needed:

- More public transportation;
- Better service on existing public transportation;
- Wider roads to improve traffic flow;
- Reductions in freight train delays.

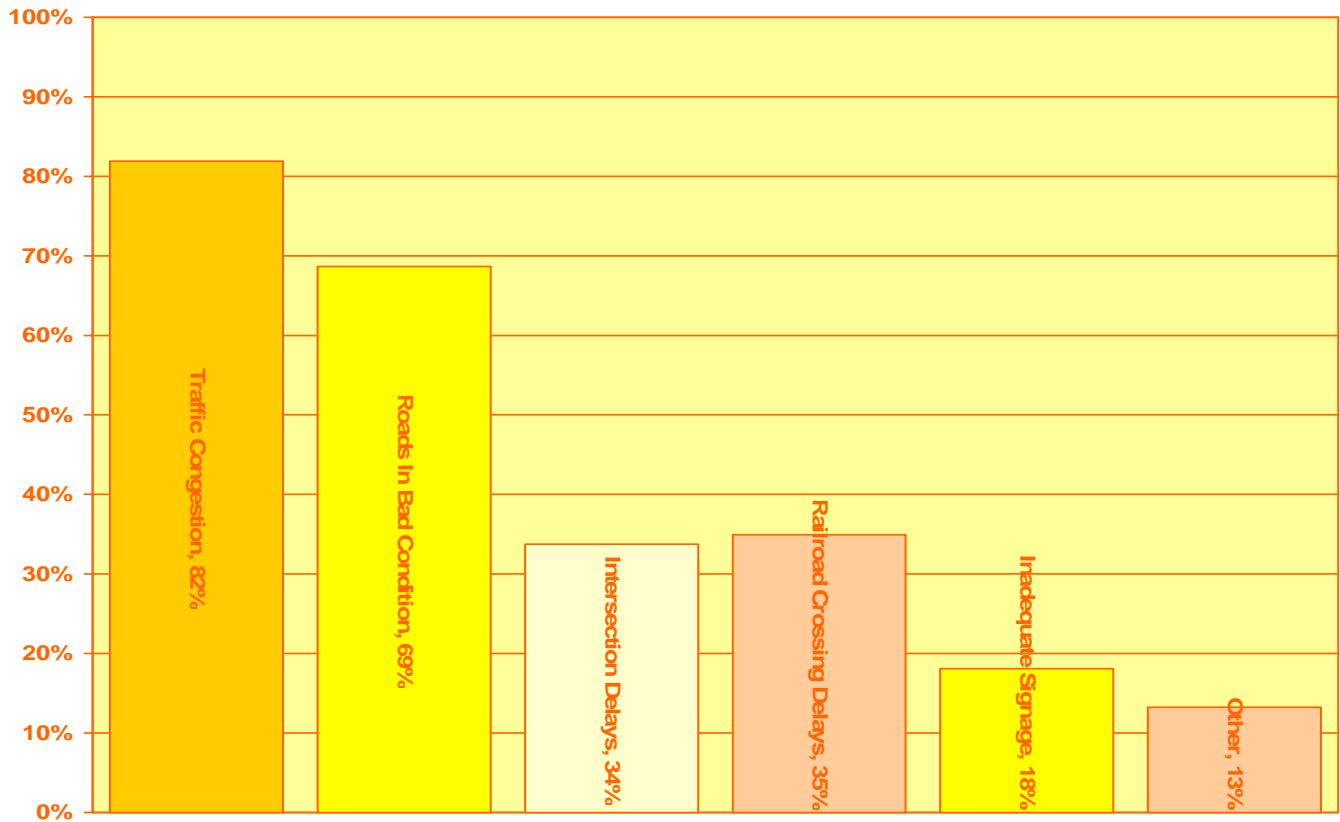
The charts on the following pages give breakdowns on responses CATS received from participants at the various meetings. Following the charts are the written responses to survey questions.



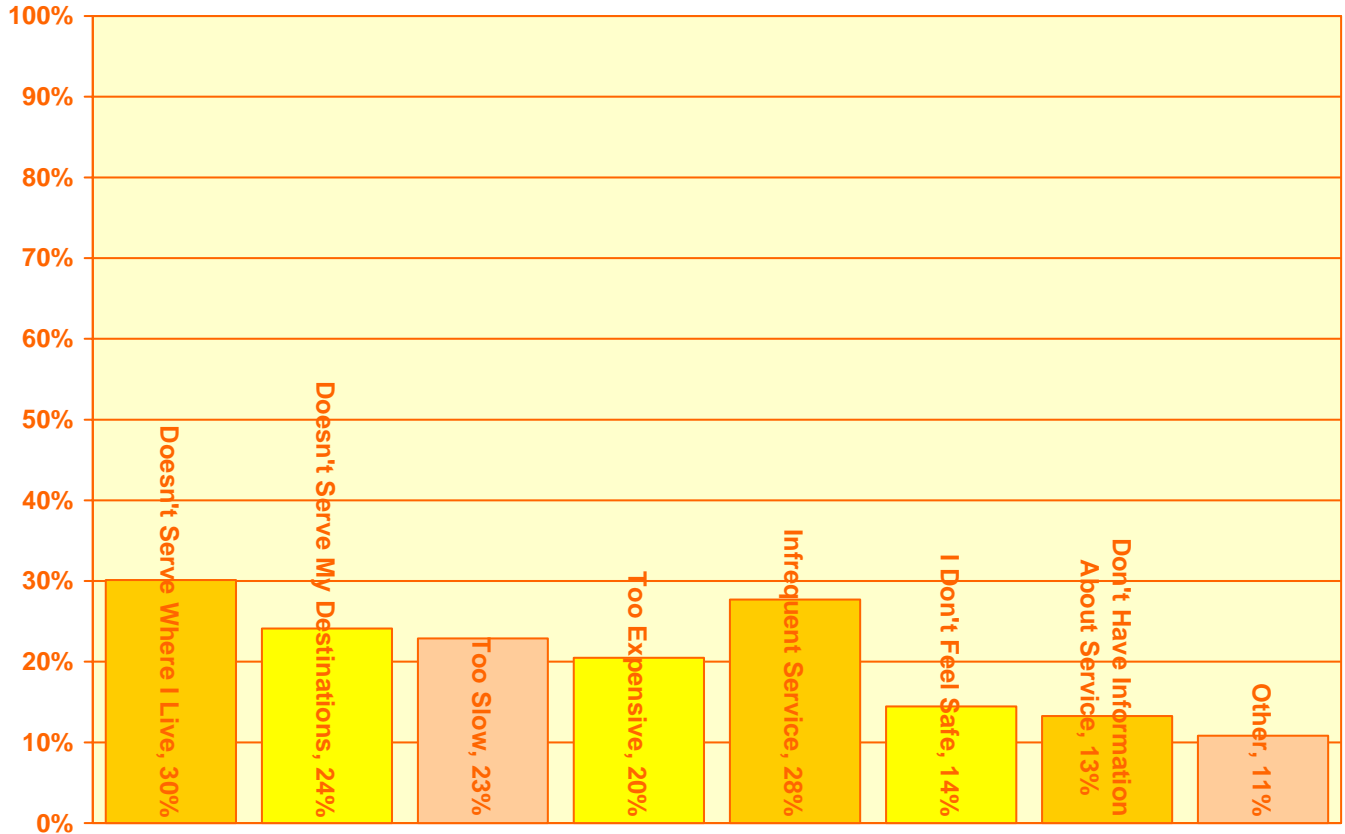
Question: What types of transportation do you typically use?



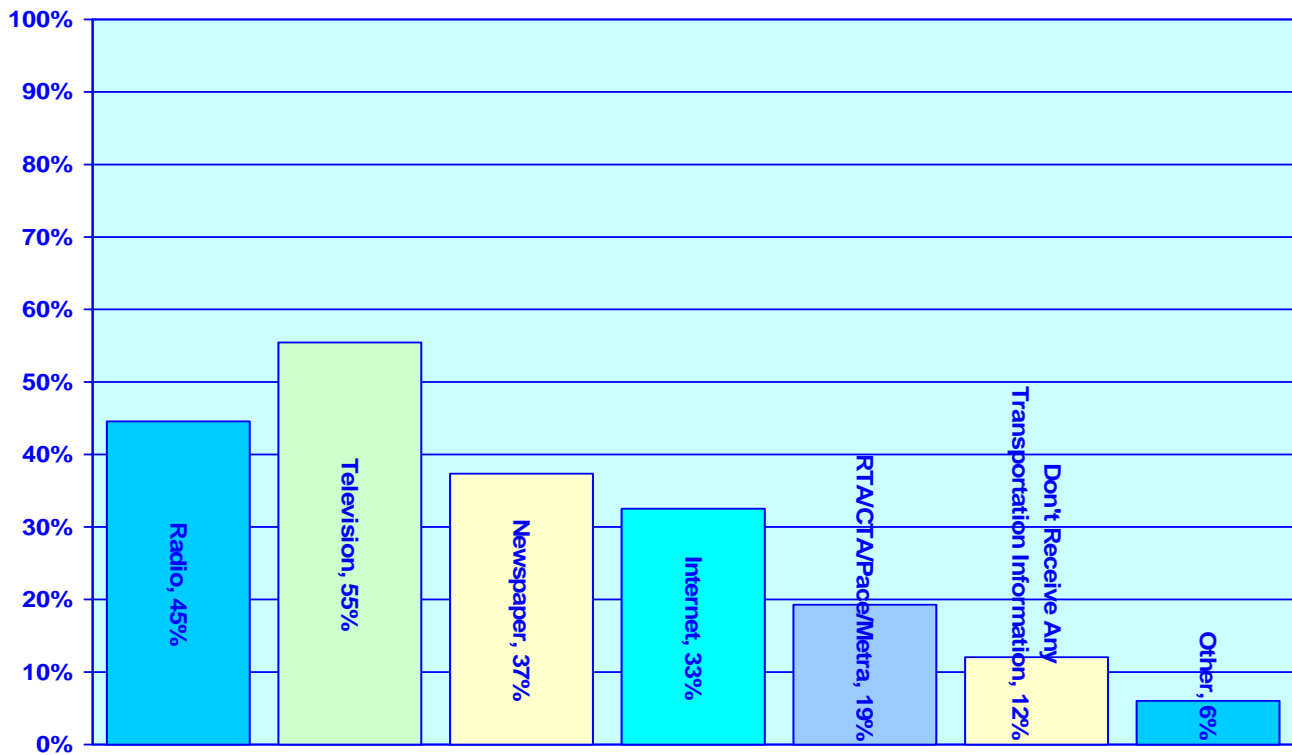
Question: What types of problems have you experienced in your daily travel?

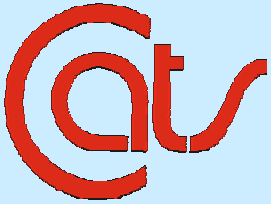


Question: Public transportation problems?



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).

Inadequate stop signs, especially for disabled and seniors.

Too many bottlenecks – for west and south side areas.

Hard access to transit stations over expressways; not ADA accessible or unsafe to walk to, no bike provisions.

Traffic on I-290.

Heavy interchange congestion.

All the above. It's way too late.

Streets are painted.

Construction sites seem or appear to be too long in completion.

2, 3 or more vehicles turning left after the green arrow (allowing a left turn) has gone dark and traffic from cross street should be moving thru intersection.

Signs are only in English! What about the Spanish and Chinese (Cantonese and Mandarin)?

None.

Delayed trains coming from the south side of Chicago-CTA.

Need multi-occupancy vehicle lanes on expressways.

Terrible crossing at State and Harrison.



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

Service being cut in Austin area of Chicago, IL.

See access problems above.

It's ok.

Excellent.

The Roosevelt (Rd.) station is a disaster! I come home on (Metra) electric at midnight. It's too dark, holes in platform.

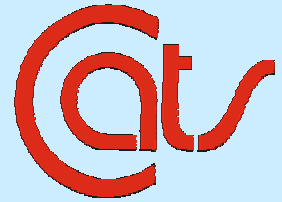
I think public transportation is excellent.

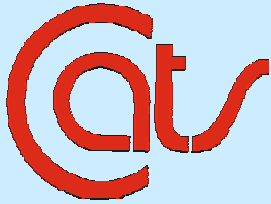
No Green Line stations at Morgan, Damen and Western.

I don't feel safe after 9 pm on Blue Line. I live in (the) South Loop and am thrilled with public transportation!

Only bus service (is) available.

Poor access from Southland to O'Hare and Midway.





Question 2C: Problems with other types of transportation:

Laramie avenue bridge at Lexington to Roosevelt Rd.

Too many railroads located in Maywood area

Too much cut back on some CTA bus lines.

Need to open El stops in key community areas. (The) Austin community (is) the largest community area in Chicago, with over 117,000 residents.

El stops.

Trains causing problems at crossings.



Getting to airports.

Bus and El delays.

Taxi service is not available in my area.

Cars too expensive. I rely only on public transportation.

The subways are outrageously filthy. I hate using the subway, specifically the stations.

Potholes and more potholes; no signage for slowing down for elderly and children.

No car pool lanes, too much road rage. No high speed rail to St. Louis/Milwaukee. Too many suburbanites coming into city and vice versa.

Roads are too crowded to drive to Chicago. No way to get to hospitals.

Too many cars, trucks.

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-Pass has reduced delays.

Seeing how there is nothing in Crete, there is nothing to like.

Convenient.

Hub – few stops.

Expressways (are) improving.

Don't use it.

Expanded train station (UP); more parking.

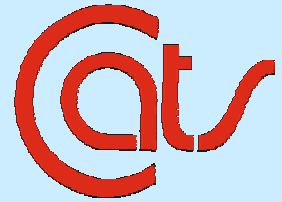
Different kinds of transportation.

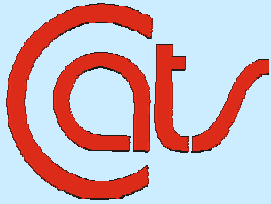
Nothing.

We need (the) South Suburban Airport.

Transit system pretty well developed in many regional areas – south not really being one of those areas.

In general, I feel it is good.





Accessible.

I like its extensiveness.

Drivers are more courteous.

El trains are too noisy (senior). The buses are also too loud (children being children).

It's better than most cities.

I can get almost anywhere.

That it services the suburban area.



As a resident of Chicago, I can get anywhere within the 6 counties and the city.

I can get to work in Lisle with public transportation.

I think that CTA (prior to cuts) was one of the most accessible and efficient transportation options in the country.

I enjoy the overall convenience of being able to get where I'm going without having to drive around 15 or 20 minutes looking for a parking spot.

I find CTA to be for the most part pretty good and efficient.

Many train and bus routes.

Extensive mass transit system is good, but we don't support it enough.

More stations on Green Line. Expand Congress Blue Line to Mannheim Rd. and run express bus to O'Hare.

Frequent, available.

Red Line is great.

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.)

Expand Eisenhower lanes.

Better monitoring of drivers who speed through residential areas, i.e. speed bumps, more stop signs.

Time schedule of evening hours or midnight to 4 a.m. for travel of (freight) trains.

Truck routes thru city.

More buses; faster service.

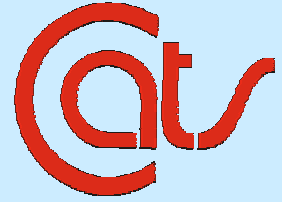
Work closer with the city to involve more entities in the process. Stakeholders: aldermen, chambers, schools and churches. Work with tollway on the maintenance on the land.

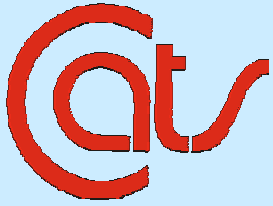
More funding for capital and operating of public transit.

On the expressway, opening up more lanes will make it easy for traffic congestion to lessen.

Need to have more community representation on the CATS board. Need to open the bidder process.

Extend the public transportation to (the) west down I-290.





Install a commuter line from Crete to Chicago.

Buses, trains to the area where I live.

Remove train tracks from intersections by overpasses/underpasses.

Passenger rail to Crete.

Metra train south.

Expansion of rail service. Separation of rail/auto. Provide funding for grade separations.



Stop talking about it and actually do something to fix it.

Use our high tax dollars to improve our area.

More stations; cheaper.

Enlarge interchanges; improve roads. Why weren't Monee and Peotone invited to this or even made aware?

Start building.

Take government out. Government is too wasteful and know-nothing.

Build a south suburban airport and bring infrastructure to region (south) and balance the regional economy.

More extensive cross-connects in south suburbs to facilitate more than N-S traffic.

Loop drives to facilitate bypassing major congestion points.

Cross-corridor from I-57 to IL 394 east to Rt. 41 Indiana. Rail line north to Chicago that mirrors IL 394.

Private passenger railroad service from downtown Crete to Chicago. "Turn-arounds" as in San Antonio, Texas, eliminate traffic problems and congestion. Frontage roads that go adjacent to expressways and do not end, but continue from town to town (example: San Antonio, Texas, expressway system).



Fund CTA!

Regular time service, consistently.

Less construction.

Accessibility for the handicapped.

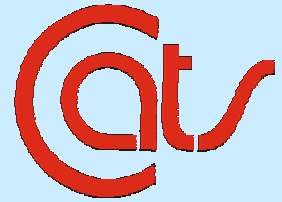
Bring the cost of public transportation down (make it affordable) to everyday commuters who don't have necessary auto transportation.

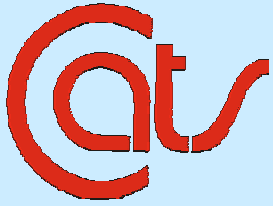
More consistent CTA service.

Fix up (the) Roosevelt (Rd.) Metra (station).

Additional funding for public transportation; more equitable distribution of transit funding.

Train bus drivers to be courteous, polite and respectful to commuters. (It would help if drivers were willing to answer questions.





Clean the subways.

More express service for reverse commute.

The only major problem that I have seen over the years is that when I have an extended wait on a CTA bus two or three come at the same time. In the Hyde Park area, I have always felt safe at bus stops and have been comfortable with the service.

The funding formula must be revised. It's been out of whack for years. Let's face the fact that Chicago does need more dollars because our ridership is greater. CTA must be audited to be sure they're using the funds correctly and that there is no graft or waste.

Wider highways to accommodate traffic. Density studies to improve traffic in specific areas.

Car pool lanes.

Stop spending so much on highways and (spend) more on mass transit.

CTA service in Chicago must be improved. Neighborhood service must be improved first before mega projects: No airport superstation or Circle Line until Green Line stations and Lake/Washington bus are restored.

1.) Fast service to O'Hare and Midway. 2.) Raise the fees, but give breaks to people who cannot pay.

Consistent bus routes M-F; weekends too.

