

CATS

Partners in Progress Meeting

Results for Wheaton Illinois

August, 2004



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Public Outreach Report

Wheaton Chamber of Commerce

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On May 13, 2004, staff from the Chicago Area Transportation Study took part in our third "Partners in Progress" community "Lunch & Learn" meeting with the Wheaton Chamber of Commerce at the Kline Creek Golf Club in Winfield.

CATS held the meeting to inform and involve local businesses, elected officials and other stakeholders in Wheaton and surrounding communities in the transportation planning process. By increasing their level of awareness on how the process operates, who the decision-makers are, and why certain decisions are made, we hoped to convey the need for community awareness and involvement in the process. We told them they have a place in the process and that CATS serves as the conduit through which their transportation concerns and issues can be conveyed.

Keynote speakers at the meeting were Patricia Berry, CATS Director of the Transportation Improvement Program, who discussed the 2030 Regional Transportation Plan, TIP and CMAQ Programs; Rick Curneal, of the DuPage County Mayors and Managers Association; Tom Zapler and Dave Grewe, of the Union Pacific Railroad, who discussed the Chicago Region Environmental and Transportation Efficiency (CREATE) Program; and John E. Noel, DuPage County Board member. Also on hand were Mark Avery, representing DuPage County, and other local dignitaries.

Some 85 business professionals attended, representing Wheaton, Batavia, Bartlett, Carol Stream, Elburn, Glen Ellyn, West Chicago, Winfield and Lombard.

CATS would like to extend a special note of thanks to Delores Simon, Executive Director of the Wheaton Chamber of Commerce, for her relentless commitment of time and resources, ensuring that the event was a success.

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





Wheaton Transportation Opinion Survey Results

The following conclusions are to be regarded as general in nature. The results were 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.

Twenty-five people completed the transportation opinion survey at the Wheaton meeting – 14 males, 10 females and one who didn't specify gender. Twenty-four respondents reported being employed, and one is a student. The average age of the respondents was approximately 43 years, with the youngest being 26 and the oldest 68.

The primary transportation mode for 92 percent of the respondents is driving an auto/van/pickup/SUV, and 24 percent ride as passengers in an auto/van/pickup/SUV. While 36 percent use Metra, no bus use or El/subway use was reported. Walking (28%) and biking (24%) to their destinations were popular choices for alternative means of transportation.

Congestion and railroad crossing delays each were reported as the most significant traffic problems by 88 percent of the respondents. Intersection delays (52%) and poor roads (28%) were reported as less significant, with poor or lack of signage reported by only 12 percent.





With regard to transit problems, lack of service where respondents live (24%) and where they need to travel (48%) were by far the most significant factors for not utilizing public transportation, with 72 percent reporting they are unable to use transit to travel to work. Slow service (16%), infrequent service (12%) and lack of information regarding service (16%) were ranked as secondary, with costs and safety considerations regarded as insignificant factors. Almost 80 percent of the respondents reported that they use transit for non-work trips.

Radio (48%), the Internet (36%), television (32%) and newspapers (28%) were reported as the primary means of obtaining transit information. Respondents indicated that information provided by CTA, Pace and Metra (4%) was a significantly lesser means of gathering information.

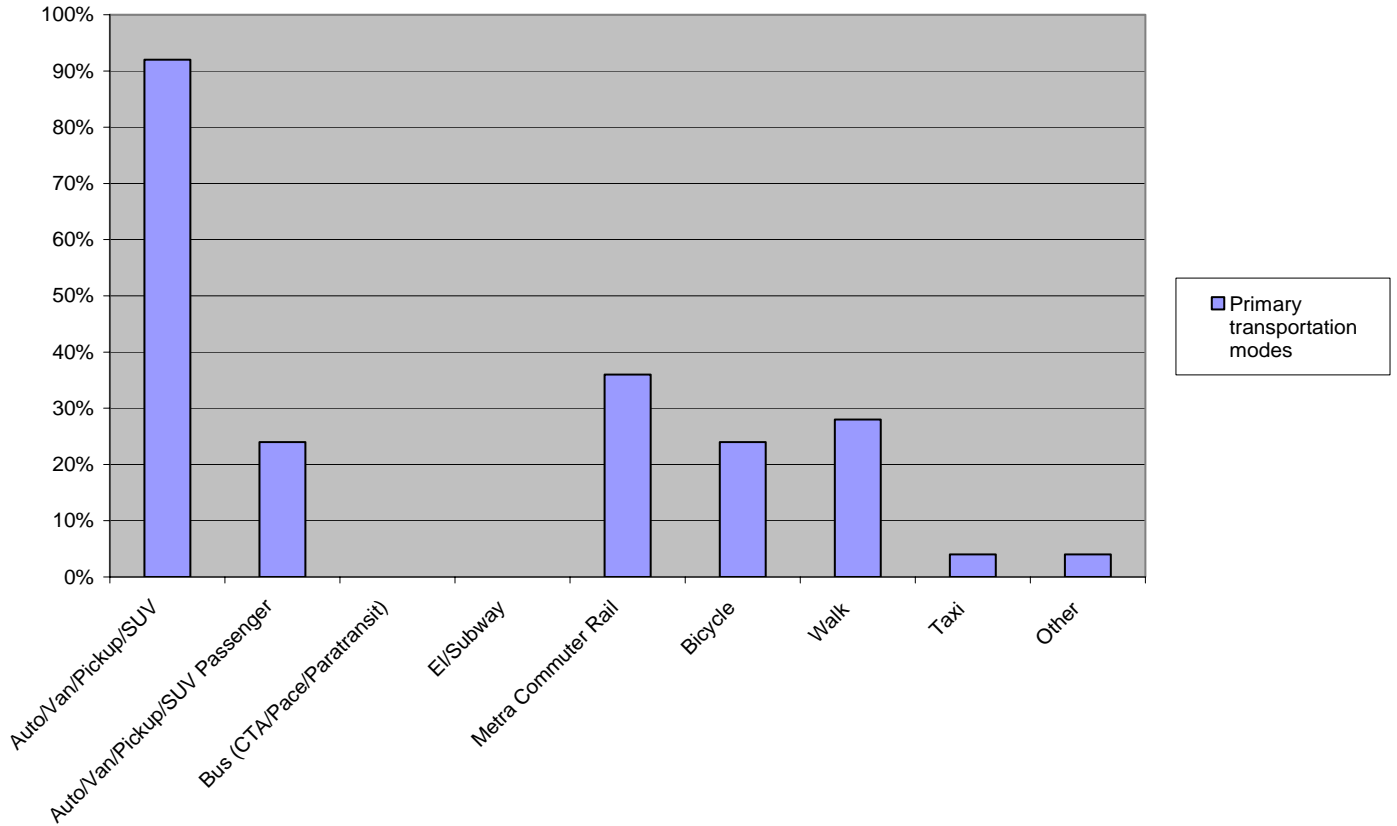
When asked what could be done to improve the transportation system in northeastern Illinois, the respondents indicated three categories where improvements are needed. These categories are:

- More public transportation.
- Increased use of signal interconnects.
- Reductions in railroad crossing delays, especially through Wheaton.

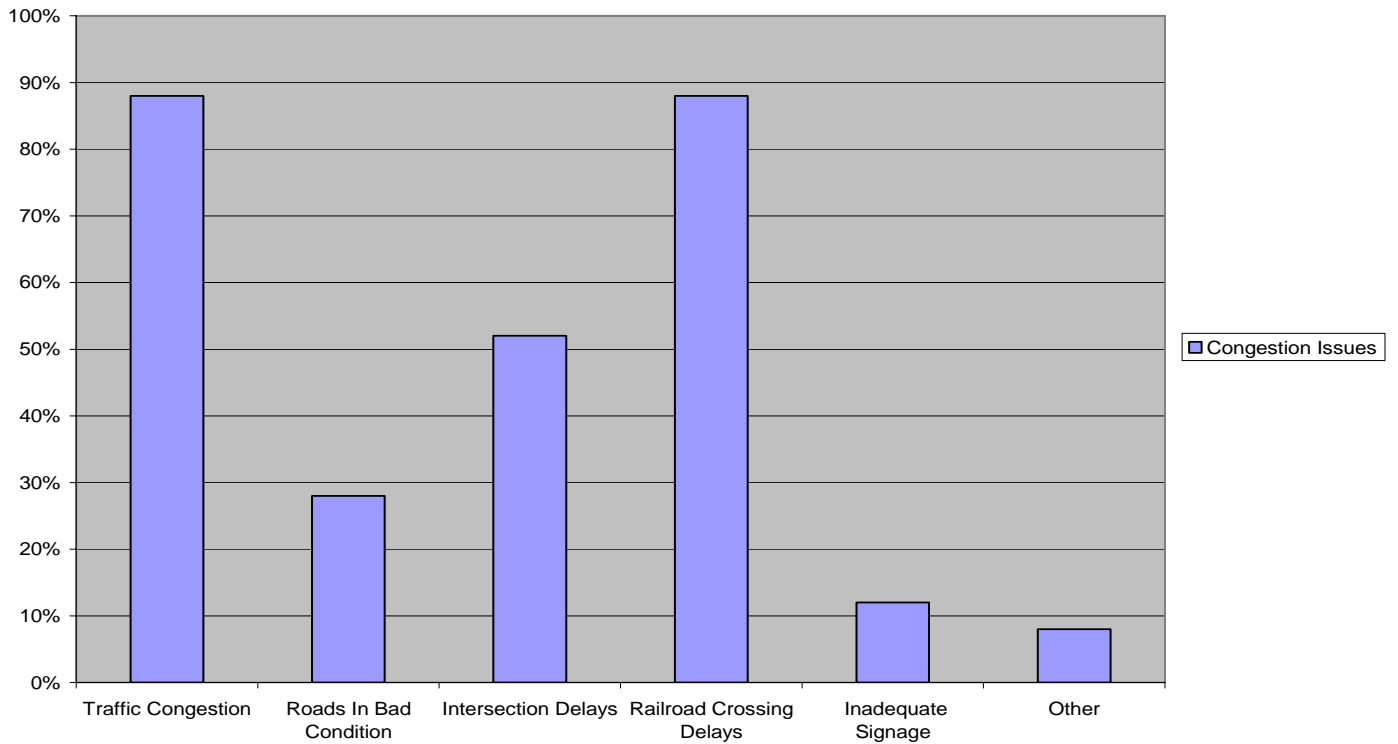
The charts on the following pages give breakdowns on the responses CATS received in Wheaton.



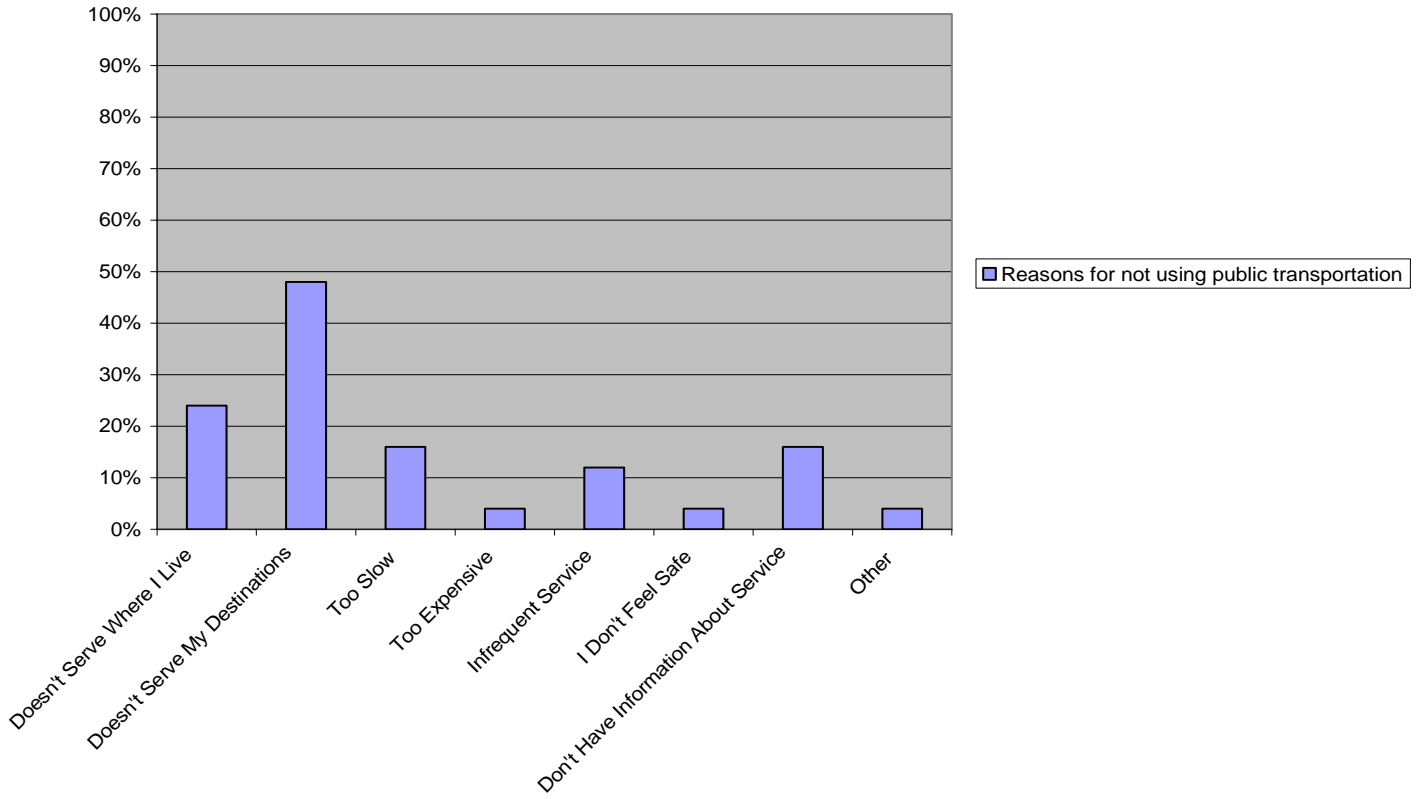
Question: What types of transportation do you typically use?



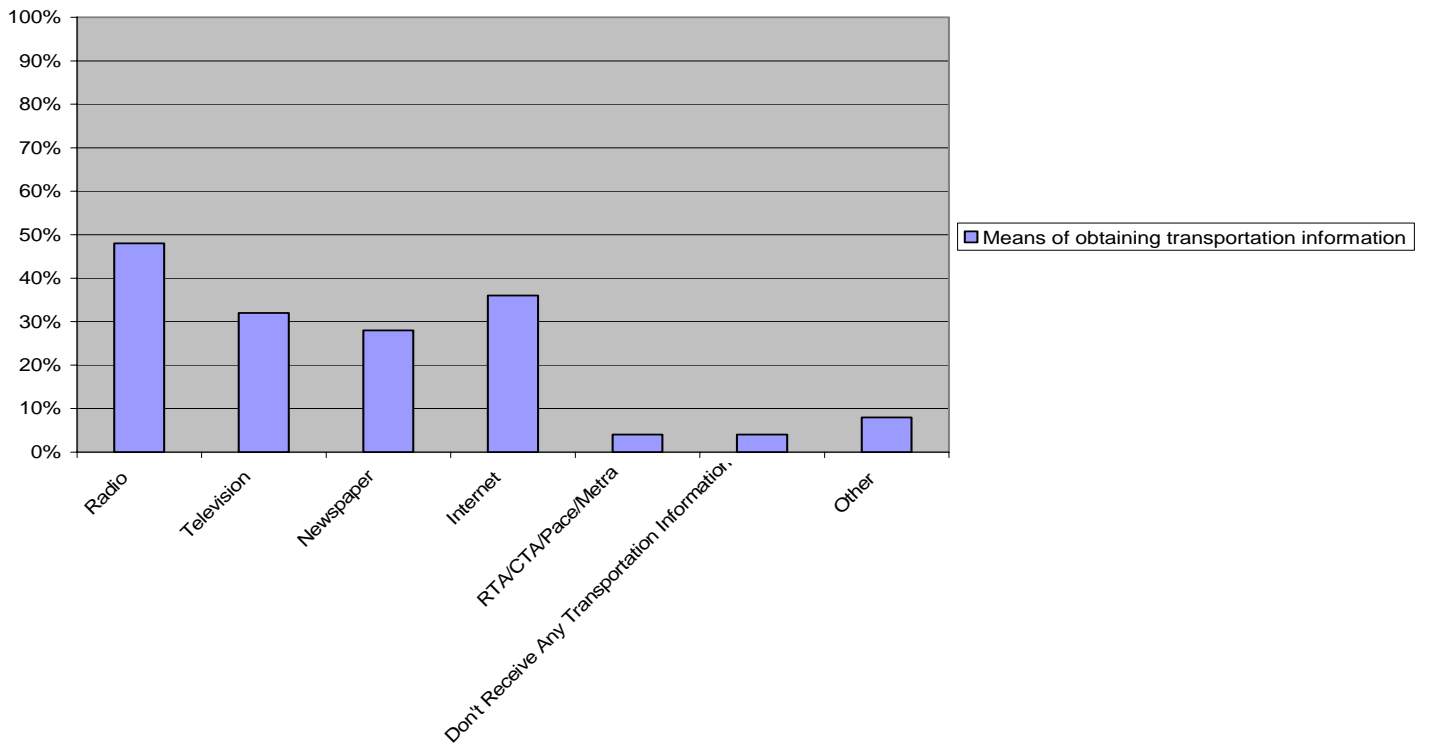
Question: What types of problems have you experienced in your daily travel?



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)

"Train crossings at Rt.38/Butterfield – too much traffic."

"Poor driver education – not turning into lane."

"Inadequate number of lanes."

"Railroad crossing at Roosevelt & DuPage Airport location can really tie up traffic for 15-20 minutes."

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

"It is fine in Kane along Rt. 31 Metra/Geneva, BN/Aurora."

"Railroad crossing in center of Wheaton."

Question 2C: Problems with other types of transportation

"Signage not consistent -- multiple names for the same roadway. Pace not willing to work with some communities such as Streamwood and Hanover Park."

"Drivers that do not follow the law."

"Times buses and trains are available."





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

"Commuter trains are efficient during rush hours; not as useful at other times."

"Good bike paths."

"Public transportation system is good to get to the city from most suburbs. Generally, roads are in good form."

"Good Pace activity/bus routes. Good rail service. Good road expansion."

"Trains serving Chicago are good – mostly on time and clean."

"Signage is generally good."

"Good commuter service to Chicago."

"Should have more public buses. Too many freight trains in Wheaton."

"Times buses and trains are available – I like that it is available."

"Love Metra and try to always use it when I go into the city."

"Variety of options of transportation."

"Bike paths: would like to see more links and bike routes on streets."

Question16: In your opinion, what can be done to improve the transportation system in northeastern Illinois? (Please consider improvements to all types of transportation.)

"More frequent bus service on set schedules with regular updates."





“Do road work at night.”

“Connect surrounding areas.”

“More options for public transportation to Chicago; more parking for area commuters.”

“Route planning is pretty good. Context-sensitive design needs to be a much higher priority.”

“Educate the public to use mass transportation.”

“Direct route to N-S Chicago.”

“We need transportation between suburbs without going downtown.”

“Better coordination of stop lights. Fix roads in poor condition.”

“As baby boomers get older and stop driving, public transportation will be extremely important.”

“Better traffic control light timing/coordination.”

“Traffic patterns should be looked at using real time. Changing light patterns. Blocking on-ramps by not allowing lane changes at on-off ramps.”

“Have trains operating all night long from suburbs & Chicago-metro.”

“Is there ever going to be an underpass at Main St. in Wheaton similar to Main St. in Lombard? What is with all of the double freights in Wheaton?”

“NS tollway in the west.”

“Passenger rail service north to south in DuPage or Kane.”