

Ulster County

# **Transit System Development Plan Tech Memo 2: Community Outreach**

**January 2012**





## Table of Contents

	<b>Page</b>
<b>Chapter 1. Introduction .....</b>	<b>1-1</b>
<b>Chapter 2. Stakeholder Interviews .....</b>	<b>2-1</b>
Overview .....	2-1
Methodology .....	2-1
Summary of Stakeholder Responses .....	2-2
<b>Chapter 3. Passenger Surveys .....</b>	<b>3-1</b>
Overview .....	3-1
Methodology .....	3-1
Trip Purpose .....	3-2
Mode of Access .....	3-4
Frequency .....	3-6
Age .....	3-8
Customer Satisfaction & Improvements .....	3-9
Origins and Destinations .....	3-14
<b>Chapter 4. General Public Surveys .....</b>	<b>4-1</b>
Overview .....	4-1
Distribution .....	4-1
Collection .....	4-1
Summary of Responses .....	4-1
<b>Chapter 5. Public Meeting Comments .....</b>	<b>5-1</b>
Overview .....	5-1
<b>Chapter 6. Key Findings .....</b>	<b>6-1</b>
Summary .....	6-1
<b>Appendix A: Stakeholders</b>	
<b>Appendix B: Summary of Stakeholder Interview Responses by Topic</b>	
<b>Appendix C: Passenger Survey</b>	
<b>Appendix D: Synopsis of Public Meeting Discussion by Topic</b>	

## Table of Figures

	<b>Page</b>
Figure 3-1	Surveyors at the Kingston Trailways Station.....3-1
Figure 3-2	Survey Distribution by Provider.....3-2
Figure 3-3	Origin and destination type by provider.....3-3
Figure 3-4	Mode of Access To and From Bus Stops.....3-5
Figure 3-5	Responses of Trailways Customers Who Transfer to Another Transit Route.....3-5
Figure 3-6	Frequency of Use.....3-6
Figure 3-7	UCAT Frequent Riders .....3-7
Figure 3-8	Responses by Age by Provider.....3-8
Figure 3-9	Citibus Responses to Customer Satisfaction Question .....3-9
Figure 3-10	UCAT Responses to Customer Satisfaction Question.....3-10
Figure 3-11	Citibus Responses to Service Improvement Question.....3-11
Figure 3-12	UCAT Responses to Service Improvement Question .....3-11
Figure 3-13	Citibus Responses to Information Source Question .....3-12
Figure 3-14	UCAT Responses to Information Source Question.....3-12
Figure 3-15	Trailways Responses to Information Source Question .....3-13
Figure 3-16	All Trips - Origins and Destinations.....3-15
Figure 3-17	UCAT Origins and Destinations .....3-16
Figure 3-18	Trailways Origins and Destinations within Ulster County.....3-17
Figure 3-19	Citibus Origins and Destinations.....3-18
Figure 4-1	Frequency of Use.....4-2
Figure 4-2	Reasons for Not Using Transit.....4-3
Figure 4-3	Reasons for Transit Use .....4-4
Figure 4-4	Feelings About Transit Providers.....4-5
Figure 4-5	Distance to Access Transit .....4-6
Figure 4-6	Methods of Receiving Transit Information.....4-7
Figure 4-7	Service Improvement Suggestions .....4-9
Figure 4-8	Suggested Destinations .....4-11
Figure 4-9	Open Comments.....4-12
Figure 4-10	Access to Automobile .....4-13

## Chapter 1. Introduction

Ulster County and Ulster County Transportation Council (UCTC) retained Nelson\Nygaard Consultant Associates, along with Fitzgerald & Halliday, Inc. (FHI) to evaluate existing transit services and determine how service can be improved for county residents over the next decade. The study will identify service needs and opportunities, review existing service performance and productivity, and use this information to lay out a strategic plan to address gaps and opportunities with the goal of improving service delivery over a ten-year planning period. The analysis and resulting recommendations are intended to include the full spectrum of service delivery spanning organizational, communication, capital, and service structures.

A key part of conducting a Transit Development Plan is understanding how well the existing service is working and how the services could be improved; it is also essential to collect this information from people currently using the system as well as those not using the system. As a result, the study team conducted a variety of outreach activities designed to reach as many people as possible. These steps included structured interviews with stakeholders, surveys with passengers, surveys with members of the general public, and public workshops. This memo, Technical Memo 2: Community Outreach, reports on the input received thus far on the study from the Ulster County community.

The technical memo is organized into five chapters immediately following this introduction:

- **Chapter 2: Stakeholder Interviews** – an overview of responses received from the stakeholder interviews.
- **Chapter 3: Passenger Surveys** – an analysis of the passenger survey results.
- **Chapter 4: General Public Surveys** – an insight into the general public's perceptions of transit services in Ulster County.
- **Chapter 5: Public Meeting Comments** – a synopsis of comments received from public meeting attendees.
- **Chapter 6: Key Findings** – a discussion of the significant results from each of the community input methods and their implications for transit in the county.

Technical Memo 2 is the second memo in a series and is intended as a working paper. All findings and recommendations should be considered preliminary.



## Chapter 2. Stakeholder Interviews

### Overview

Shortly after the start of the Ulster County Transit System Coordination and Development Study, the study team conducted a series of stakeholder interviews. The series of interviews included five (5) distinct groups: transportation, housing, human resources, tourism, and major employers. Organizations and agencies invited to participate in the interviews represented a diverse array of interest in public transportation services within Ulster County. The purpose of these interviews was to collect input and comments from several different perspectives, including how well the county's existing transportation services do or do not meet the needs of county residents and visitors, what improvements could be made, and how transportation connections could be enhanced.

### Methodology

Ulster County Transportation Council (UCTC) staff, with input from Ulster County Area Transit (UCAT) and Citibus, led the process of identifying the most appropriate organizations and agencies to participate in the process. UCTC, UCAT, Citibus and the study team (Nelson\Nygaard and Fitzgerald & Halliday) shared the responsibility of contacting each organization or agency to establish a contact person or to reach out to an already identified contact person. After finalizing the contact list, UCAT sent out an initial invitation for the meetings via one email for each of the stakeholder groups. The study team then sent follow up emails and made several phone calls to increase participation and ensure invitees had every opportunity to participate.

The meetings were held on November 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> at UCAT's facility at One Danny Circle in Kingston, New York. The meeting schedule was as follows:

November 16<sup>th</sup>, 2011

- 9 AM – Transportation
- 11 AM – Housing
- 1 PM – Human Resources

November 17<sup>th</sup>, 2011

- 9 AM – Tourism
- 11 AM – Major Employers

Each meeting started with the study team introducing the project and a statement of the goal for the interview process. Attendees were also assured that the conversations at the meetings would be confidential and that comments would not be attributed to any individual or organization. The study team explained that while there were some specific questions for the group, individuals were encouraged to bring up anything that they felt was relevant to better inform the development plan. This document includes the results of the five meetings. Appendix A contains a full list of the organizations and agencies interviewed.

Each interview was tailored to suit that specific group (transportation, housing, human resources, tourism and major employers), but the interview primarily focused on the following questions:

- Do you, your employees, clients or customers use UCAT and/or Citibus? How effectively do the existing transit services meet their needs?
- How well connected are the UCAT and Citibus services? Is it easy to transfer from one service to another?
- Are there things that UCAT and/or Citibus are doing well? What are they and how are they successful?
- Are there opportunities for UCAT and/or Citibus to improve? What are they and what are the challenges?
- What improvements do you think UCAT and/or Citibus should prioritize in the next 3 to 5 years?
- Are there examples of other transit agencies or cities that get transit right that could serve as a model for UCAT and Citibus?
- Are there peer systems to which to compare UCAT and Citibus?
- What are the external forces that influence transit use in Ulster County (congestion, geography, weather, economy, etc...)?
- Are there any future projects or developments that may impact UCAT or Citibus?
- Are there any other issues that you would like to share?

In addition to the formal stakeholder interviews, study staff also interviewed bus drivers. UCAT drivers were interviewed in an open-house style session at One Danny Circle; Citibus drivers were interviewed at Kinston Plaza and on-board buses. These interviews were less structured than the other stakeholder interviews, and participants were invited to provide input on any transit-related topic.

## Summary of Stakeholder Responses

While there were a variety of comments and concerns expressed by the interview participants, several recurring themes emerged. These are summarized below. A more complete synopsis of stakeholder responses are shown in Appendix B.

- **In general, existing transit service is valued by the community.** Stakeholders are generally appreciative of the existing transit services and feel they are valuable community resources. This sentiment is especially true for representatives of the tourism human services industries.
- **High marks for fleet and staff.** The perception among stakeholders is that UCAT and Citibus vehicles are in good condition and are well maintained. Drivers and dispatchers for both systems have a reputation of being courteous and helpful.
- **Better coordinating services would benefit riders.** A common frustration expressed by several stakeholders is the lack of coordination between the services, especially between UCAT and Citibus, but also between the local service and regional service. Stakeholders say it is difficult to transfer between systems because there aren't enough shared bus stops, the schedules aren't coordinated and fares are different. There is also

a sense that some services are redundant (i.e. UCAT commuter routes and Trailways routes).

- **There are gaps in existing services.** There are gaps in the existing services, especially in the more rural areas. Specific underserved destinations include Ellenville and the county jail. The lack of coverage affects workers, seniors and students. Very limited evening service also makes it difficult for some shift workers to ride the bus to/from work.
- **Connections to private transportation providers are insufficient.** Stakeholders said many people ride the regional private services, but it is difficult to get to these services using the local bus network. The main challenges include service frequency and the differential in fares.
- **Lack of awareness about the existing transit services.** Stakeholders also reported there is a lack of understanding about the individual services, how they work and how they work together. This is a challenge for fixed-route service as well as demand response services.



## Chapter 3. Passenger Surveys

### Overview

Understanding current transit riders' origins and destinations, customer satisfaction, and use of the bus routes is a key piece in creating recommendations for Ulster County. The study team created a passenger survey with input from the Steering Committee and distributed it on-board UCAT and Citibus vehicles from October 19-22, 2011. Considering the key role Trailways plays in serving Ulster County, the team also surveyed Trailways customers during the same period. Survey results, as discussed in the following section, provide valuable information on where the system is functioning well and where there are areas for improvement, which will inform the final recommendations of the study.

### Methodology

For Citibus and UCAT routes, on-board surveyors or bus operators handed out surveys to passengers. Every trip on both Citibus and UCAT's schedule was surveyed. Since Trailways provides long-haul service through several counties, passengers were surveyed at the four main Trailways stations in Ulster County – Kingston, New Paltz, Rosendale Park & Ride, and New Paltz Park & Ride. These four stations were especially important as UCAT's Ulster-Poughkeepsie LINK service also serves these stops.

The survey focused on a handful of questions:

- Origin and destination, including address and location type (home, school, work, etc.)
- Mode of access to the bus stop
- Frequency of bus use
- Satisfaction with existing service
- Improvements passengers would like to see
- Ways passengers would like to receive information
- Age

**Figure 3-1 Surveyors at the Kingston Trailways Station**



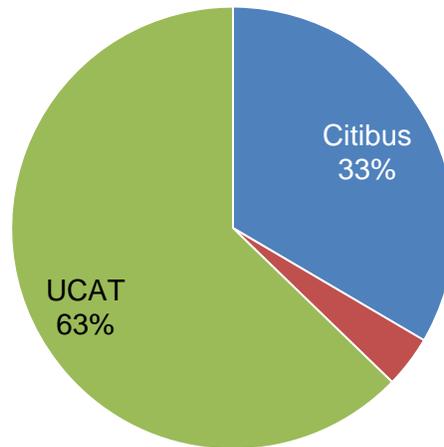
English and Spanish surveys were available at all locations. A copy of the English questionnaire is included as Appendix C.

In total, 1,114 surveys were completed, of which 605 were completed by Trailways customers, most of whom were destined for New York City. However, since this study is focused on Ulster County, only those respondents who were making intra-county trips on Trailways (20 responses) were included in this analysis. A total of 332 responses were collected from UCAT riders (representing 25% of average daily ridership) and 177 from Citibus (38% of average daily ridership). The lower response rate for UCAT can be attributed to their higher over-all ridership

and the survey distribution method. UCAT surveys were distributed by the bus operators, whose first priority is the safe operation of the vehicle and fare collection.

Figure 3-2 below shows the breakdown of responses analyzed in this memo by provider.

**Figure 3-2 Survey Distribution by Provider**

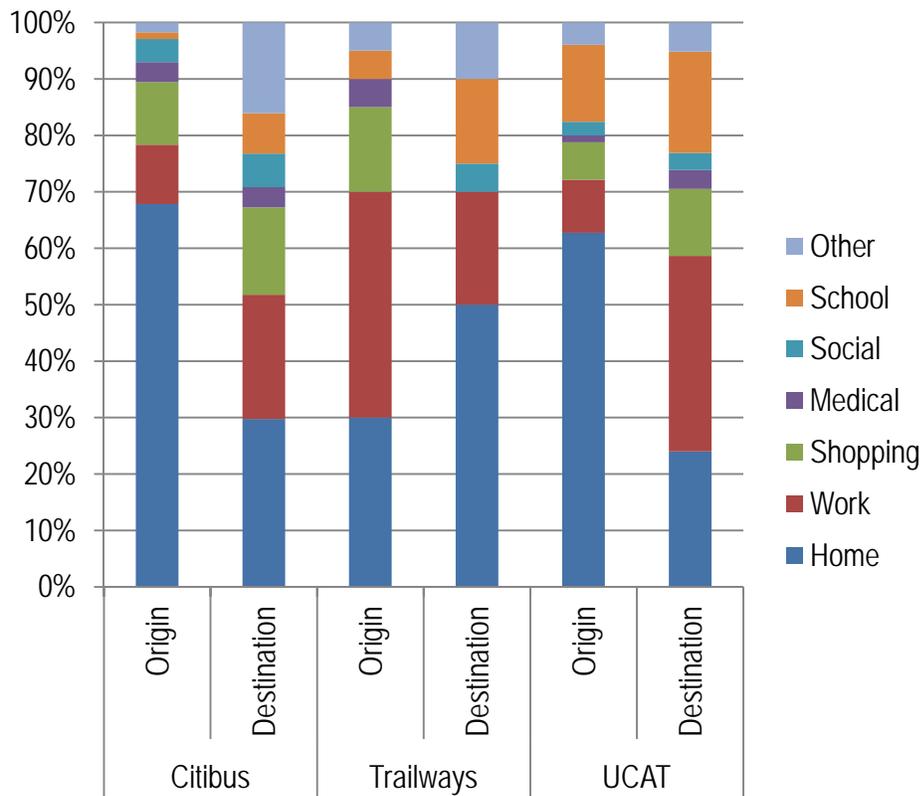


## Trip Purpose

To understand what type of trip people make via transit, the survey asked people where they started their trip and where they are going. Responses were classified into seven categories: home, work, shopping, medical, social, school, or other (see Figure 3-3).

The home to work trip is often one of the most common trips on transit. However, Citibus data shows that less than half the home-based trips are heading to work. Many respondents were out shopping or marked "other." Citibus also carries very few school trips. Trailways home and work trips make up the same percent (70) of both origins and destinations. On UCAT, trips originating at or destined for a school are nearly equal in number, which is unsurprising as the SUNY New Paltz service is a loop. UCAT serves a significant amount of work and shopping destinations.

**Figure 3-3 Origin and destination type by provider**



## Mode of Access

Most people riding UCAT and Citibus walk to the bus stop (see Figure 3-4), a pattern consistent with most local bus services. The average walk times are 5.5 minutes and 11.6 minutes for Citibus and UCAT riders, respectively. In the case of Trailways, which provides regional service, people also walk to the bus stop, but transfer from other services, drive, or get dropped off as well.

Passengers can transfer between UCAT and Citibus at Kingston Plaza. For Citibus riders, 14 transfers were stated as between “Kingston” and “Kingston” – which likely means between Kingston and the Town of Ulster. For UCAT riders, the most common transfer was between the S and the U route, for those coming from Saugerties and heading to SUNY Ulster.

On Trailways, the average walk time from the person's origin to the bus stop is 11.5 minutes. In the case of the New Paltz Park & Ride, the walk percentage primarily represents people walking to their final destination in New York City. The New Paltz terminal, which is in the heart of downtown and has the smallest parking lot, has the highest walk percentage.

The high level of transfer activity on Trailways is primarily due to customers transferring to MTA bus or subway in New York City to get to their final destination. However, there are a fair number of transfers between Citibus and UCAT to Trailways as well, which is further explained in Figure 3-5. During the survey fieldwork, a Trailways ticket agent stated that customers arriving in Kingston often ask how to access the city bus routes, presenting an opportunity to better link the Citibus and Trailways systems. The UCAT transfers to and from Trailways took place at either Kingston or New Paltz.

**Figure 3-4 Mode of Access To and From Bus Stops**

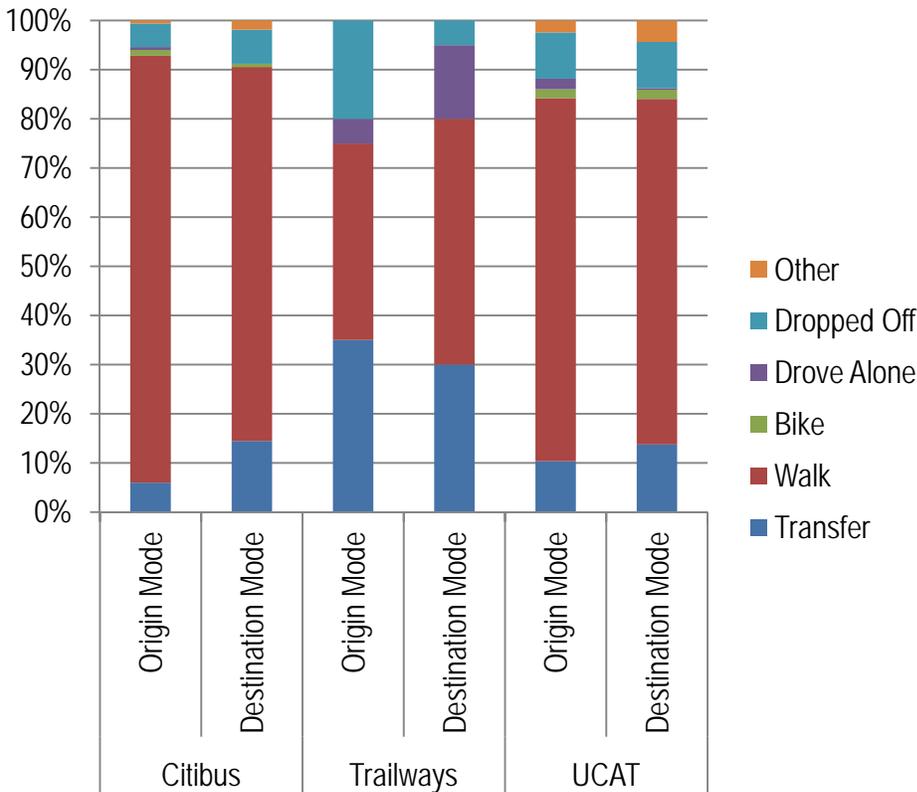


Figure 3-5 below shows Trailways riders who said they transferred. Although the sample size of Trailways users within Ulster County is small, this figure shows the variety of ways people have cobbled together their transportation. For example, one person started their trip in Rosendale on UCAT. When that person was surveyed they were waiting at New Paltz for a Trailways bus. Since their final destination is the Hudson Valley Mall, they will get off Trailways in Kingston and take UCAT Route K to the mall.

**Figure 3-5 Responses of Trailways Customers Who Transfer to Another Transit Route**

Began Trip In...	Transferred From	Completed survey while waiting At...	Destination	Mode to Destination
New Paltz	UCAT	New Paltz	SUNY Ulster	Pick-Up
Kingston	Citibus	Kingston	Port Ewen	Walk
Rosendale	UCAT	New Paltz	Hudson Valley Mall	UCAT
New Paltz	UCAT	Kingston	Mohonk Ave, New Paltz	Trailways
Kingston	UCAT	Kingston	Mt. Tremper	Walk
Kingston	Trailways	Kingston	New Paltz	Walk

## Frequency

Citibus and UCAT riders are primarily frequent users, with 80% of UCAT and 75% of Citibus riders taking the systems 2-5 days per week (see Figure 3-6). This is consistent with a system that serves a large number of commuters and/or serves a mostly transit dependent market. Those who take Trailways intra-county are also frequent users, with 75% taking the bus 2-5 days per week.

The survey intercepted a handful of first-time riders. Among first time UCAT riders, nearly half (10 respondents) were riding the New Paltz Loop. Given the time of the survey (mid-October), these first-timers may be SUNY New Paltz students who just started class in September. The one first-time Trailways user was traveling from Tillson to SUNY New Paltz.

Figure 3-7 shows the breakdown of frequency of ridership by route for UCAT. For riders on the G, U, S, and H routes, 90-100 percent of respondents ride two or more days per week. This shows that although ridership on routes like G and H is quite low, the riders heavily depend on the service.

**Figure 3-6 Frequency of Use**

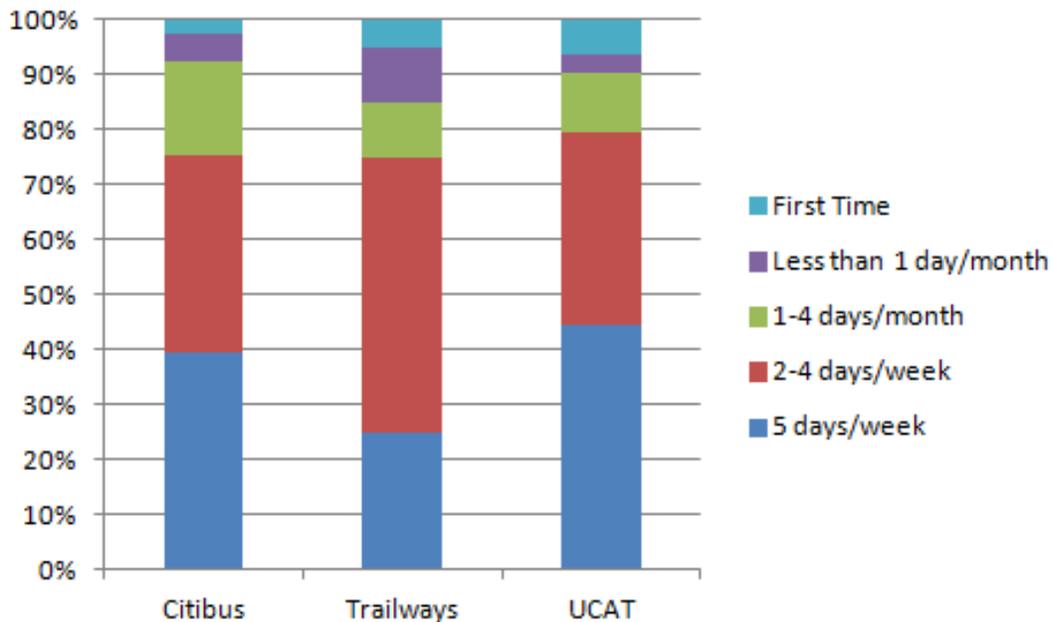
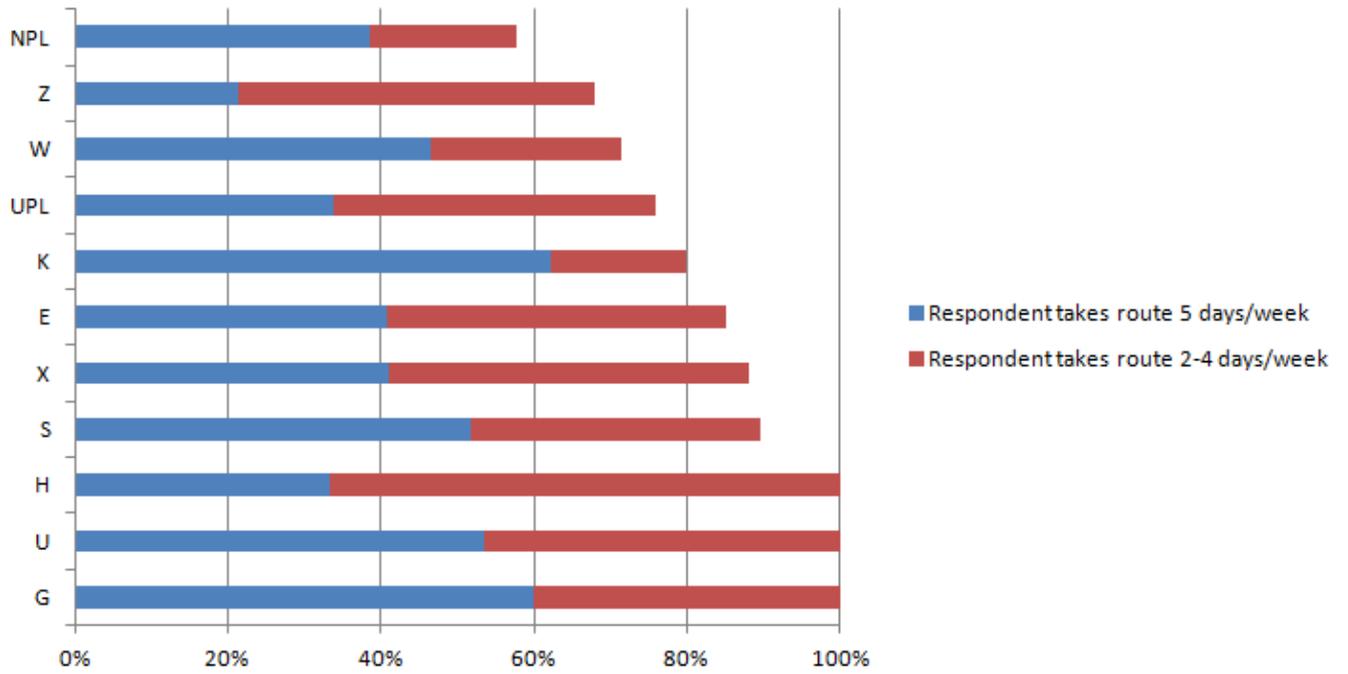


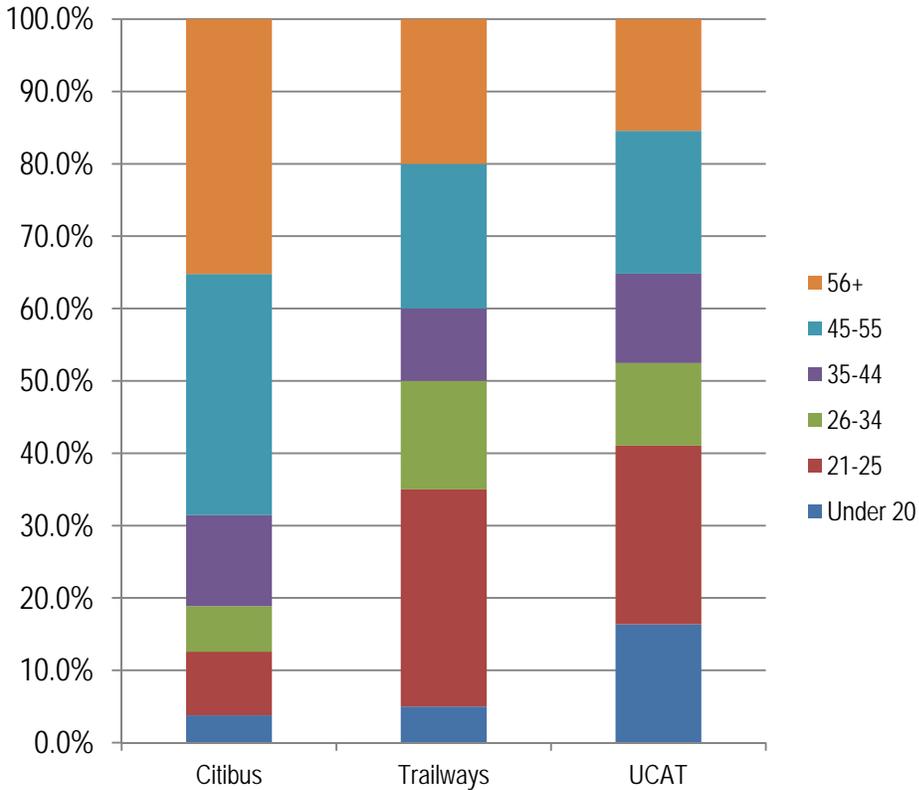
Figure 3-7 UCAT Frequent Riders



## Age

Citibus primarily serves an older market (see Figure 3-8), while UCAT has a very young market, indicative of the large student population.

**Figure 3-8 Responses by Age by Provider**



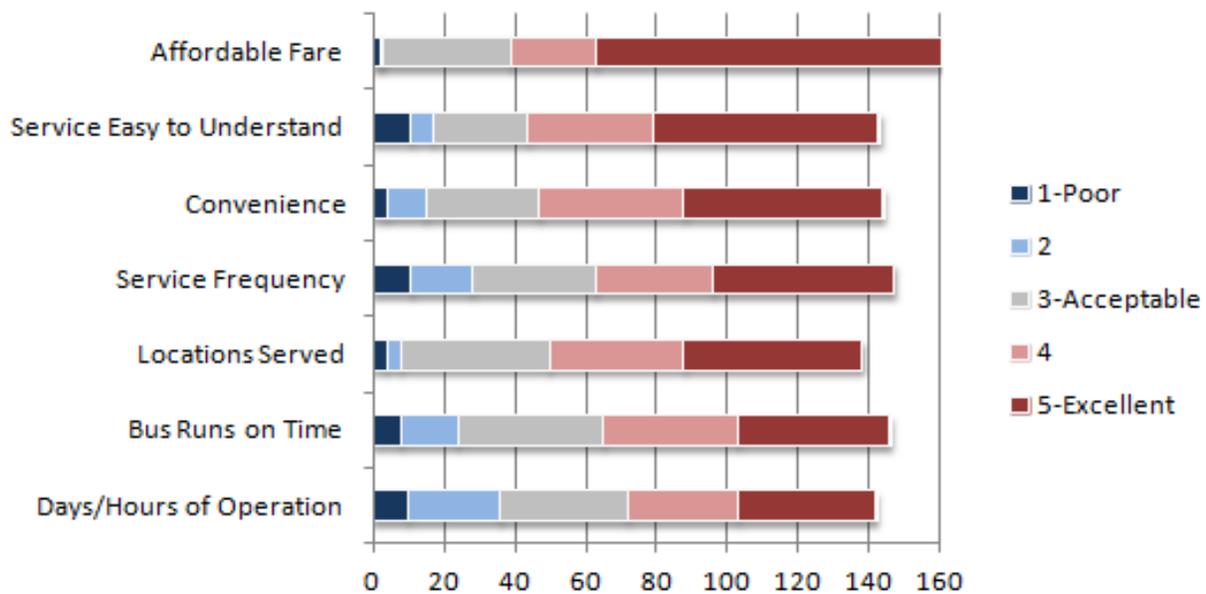
## Customer Satisfaction & Improvements

Four questions asked riders to rank their experience with the existing service, including where the system needs improvements, and places they wish the bus would go:

Based on their responses, customers are generally pleased with the existing service (see Figures 3-9 and 3-10). For both services, passengers are most satisfied with the current fare and least satisfied with the days and hours of operation.

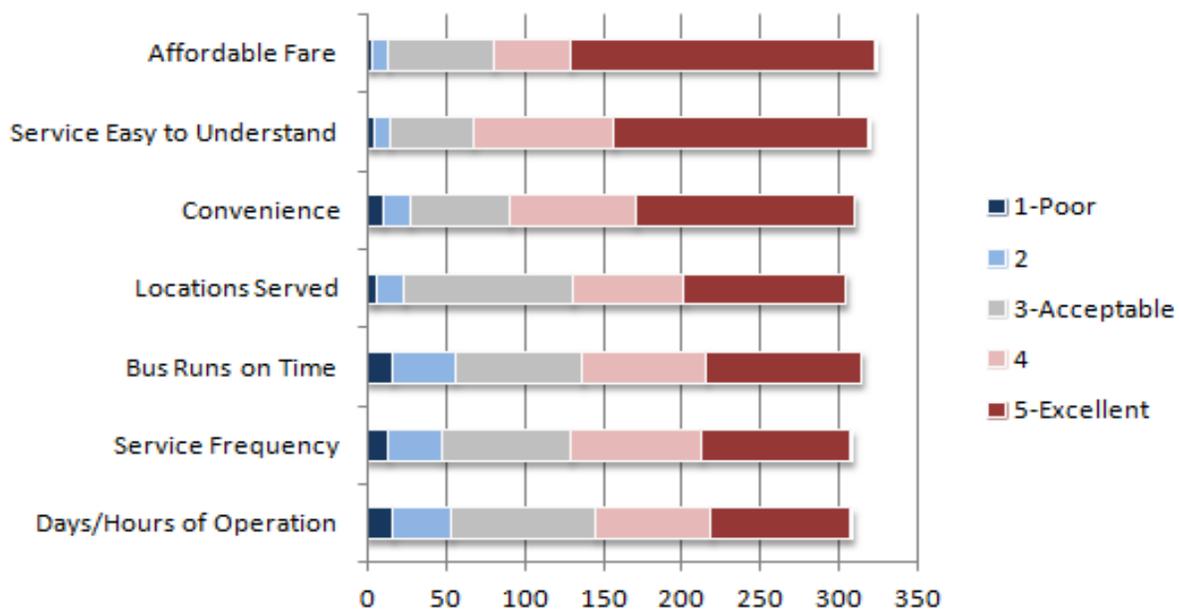
**Question 1:**  
 Tell us how you feel about UCAT/Citibus. Please circle the number that most closely reflects your experience. (1=Poor to 5=Excellent)

**Figure 3-9 Citibus Responses to Customer Satisfaction Question <sup>1</sup>**



<sup>1</sup> Question was not asked to Trailways passengers.

**Figure 3-10 UCAT Responses to Customer Satisfaction Question<sup>2</sup>**

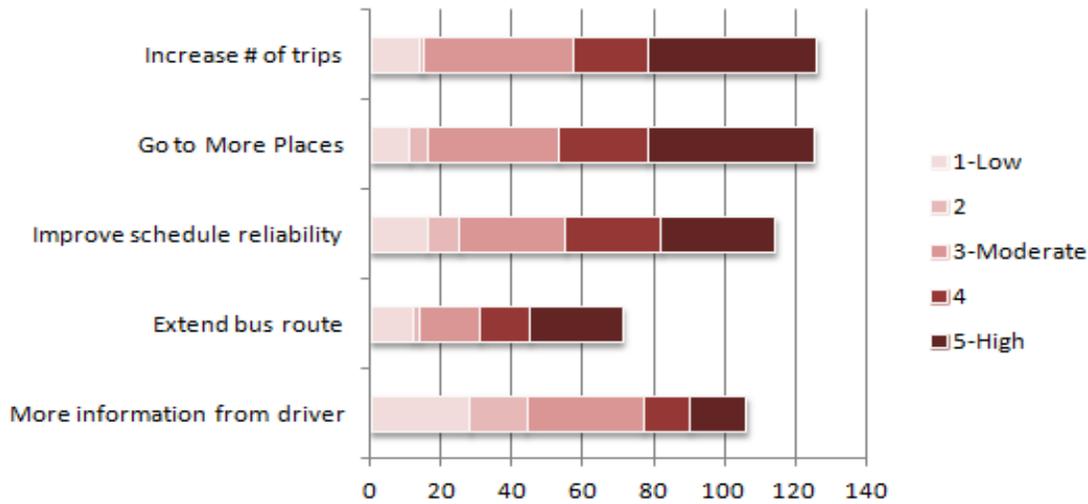


When asked how service can be improved, Citibus and UCAT customers preferences fell in a similar order, with increasing the number of trips as the highest priority. Next to the “extend bus route” response, space was provided for people to write in where they wanted service. For Citibus riders, the most common place was the “Malls” – presumably Hudson Valley Mall (7 respondents). On UCAT, customers listed a wide range of places, including many places UCAT serves today. This likely indicates the need for better customer information. The most common response for UCAT riders was service on weekends (9 respondents).

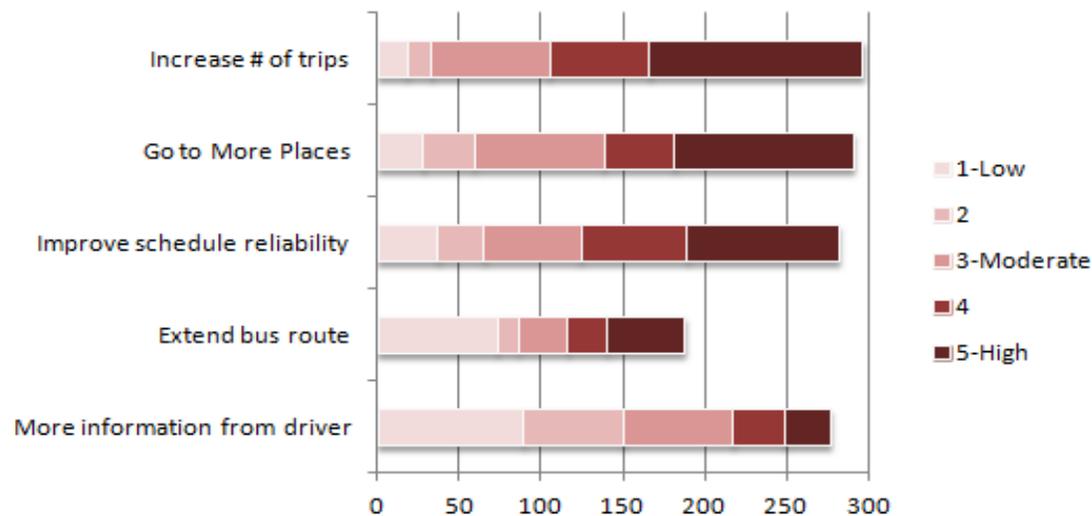
<sup>2</sup> Question was not asked to Trailways passengers

**Question 2:**  
 What service changes would you like to see? Please circle the number that most closely reflects your priority. (1=Low to 5=High)

**Figure 3-11 Citibus Responses to Service Improvement Question<sup>3</sup>**



**Figure 3-12 UCAT Responses to Service Improvement Question<sup>4</sup>**



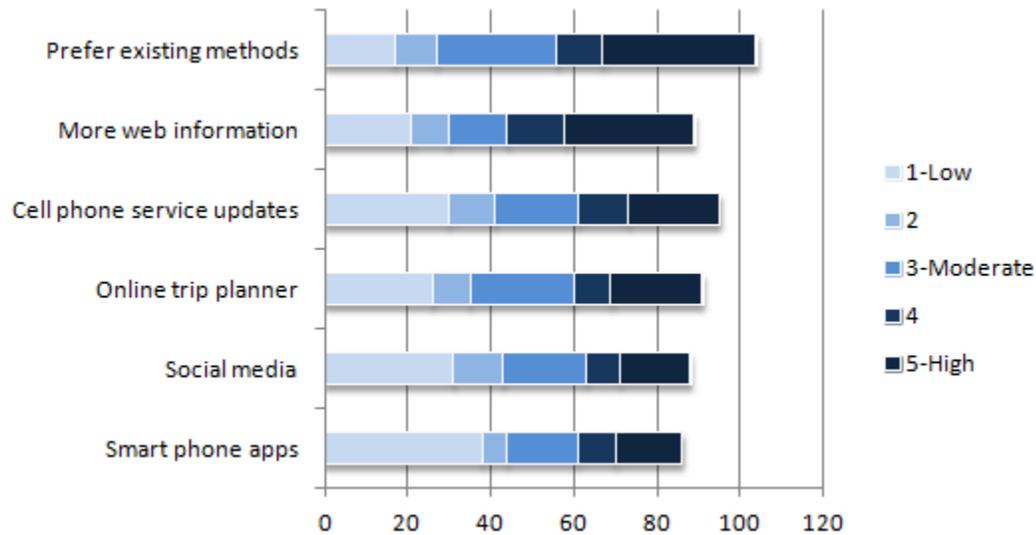
Citibus and UCAT riders said they preferred existing methods for obtaining information (see Figures 3-13 and 3-14). This compares with Trailways customers who expressed more openness to online and cell phone-linked information and updates (see Figure 3-15).

<sup>3</sup> Question was not asked to Trailways passengers

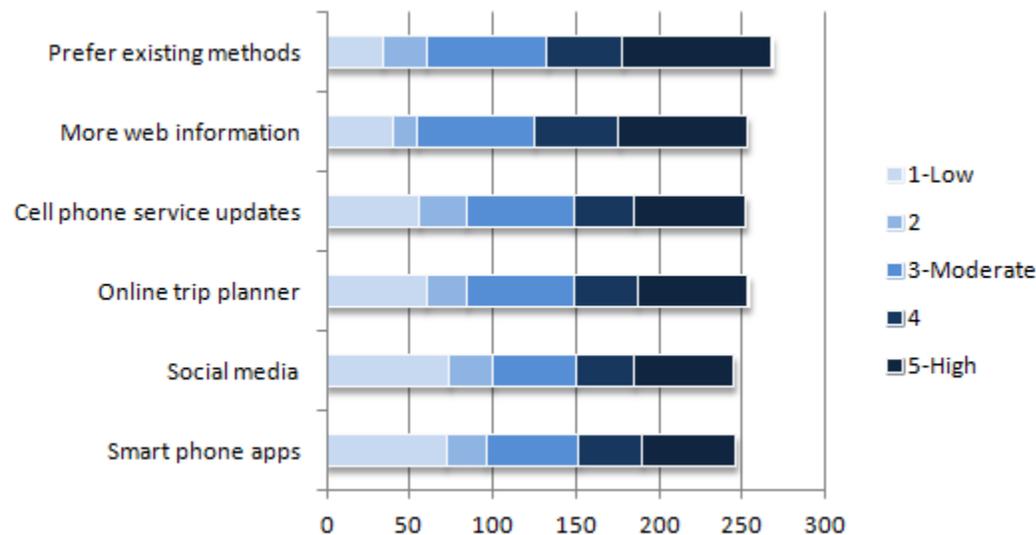
<sup>4</sup> Question was not asked to Trailways passengers

**Question 3:**  
 How would you like to receive information about UCAT/Citibus/Trailways? Please circle the number that most closely reflects your priority. (1=Low to 5=High)

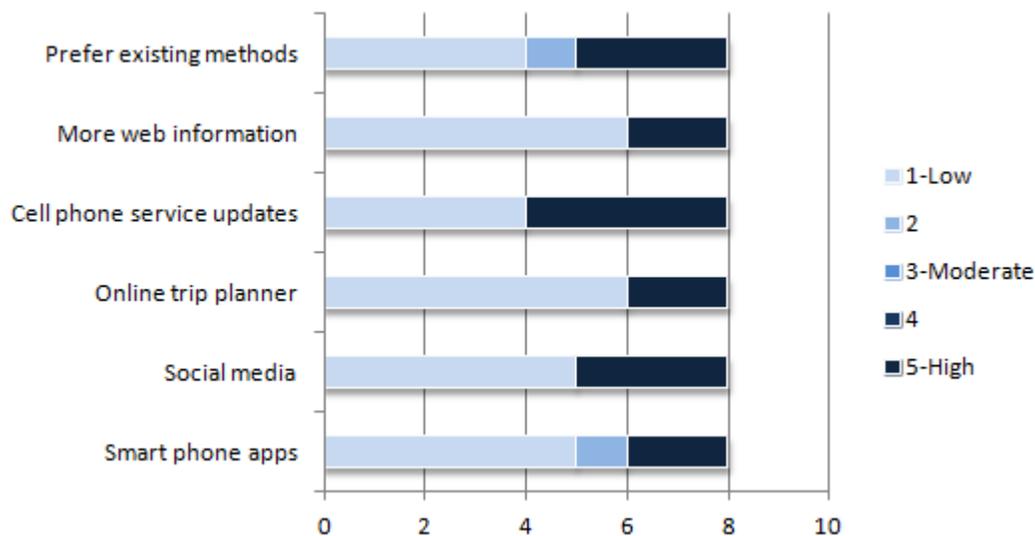
**Figure 3-13 Citibus Responses to Information Source Question**



**Figure 3-14 UCAT Responses to Information Source Question**



**Figure 3-15 Trailways Responses to Information Source Question**



**Question 4:**

**Are there any places that you wish the bus went to? (Open-ended response)**

Responses to this open-ended question were similar to responses to the service changes question, with people requesting the Hudson Valley Mall and weekend service the most. On UCAT, customers requested the following locations (places requested by multiple respondents are shown first):

- Poughkeepsie Galleria (6 respondents)
- Newburgh (3 respondents – Newburgh is served by UCAT Route X)
- Kingston on weekends (presumably on Route K)
- More service between Ellenville and Stone Ridge
- Saugerties to SUNY Ulster
- Weekends on New Paltz Loop
- Dutchess Community College (many students come from New Paltz)
- Earlier UPL at Rosendale
- Downtown Kingston destinations like the YMCA and the Strand area – this shows that many UCAT riders do not know about, or prefer not to transfer to Citibus

Citibus responses clearly show that there is a lack of information about UCAT services. This was observed during fieldwork, as riders (most of whom are regulars) were often asking various drivers if their bus went to the mall, or to other places. To the passenger, the designation of Citibus for Kingston and UCAT for Ulster County is arbitrary when major destinations like the mall are viewed as part of the Kingston core. Places Citibus survey respondents wish to go are:

- Hudson Valley Mall or stores in the mall like Wal-Mart (18 responses)

- Places served by UCAT like New Paltz and Woodstock

Trailways respondents listed just three places:

- Pine Hill
- Woodstock
- Gardiner

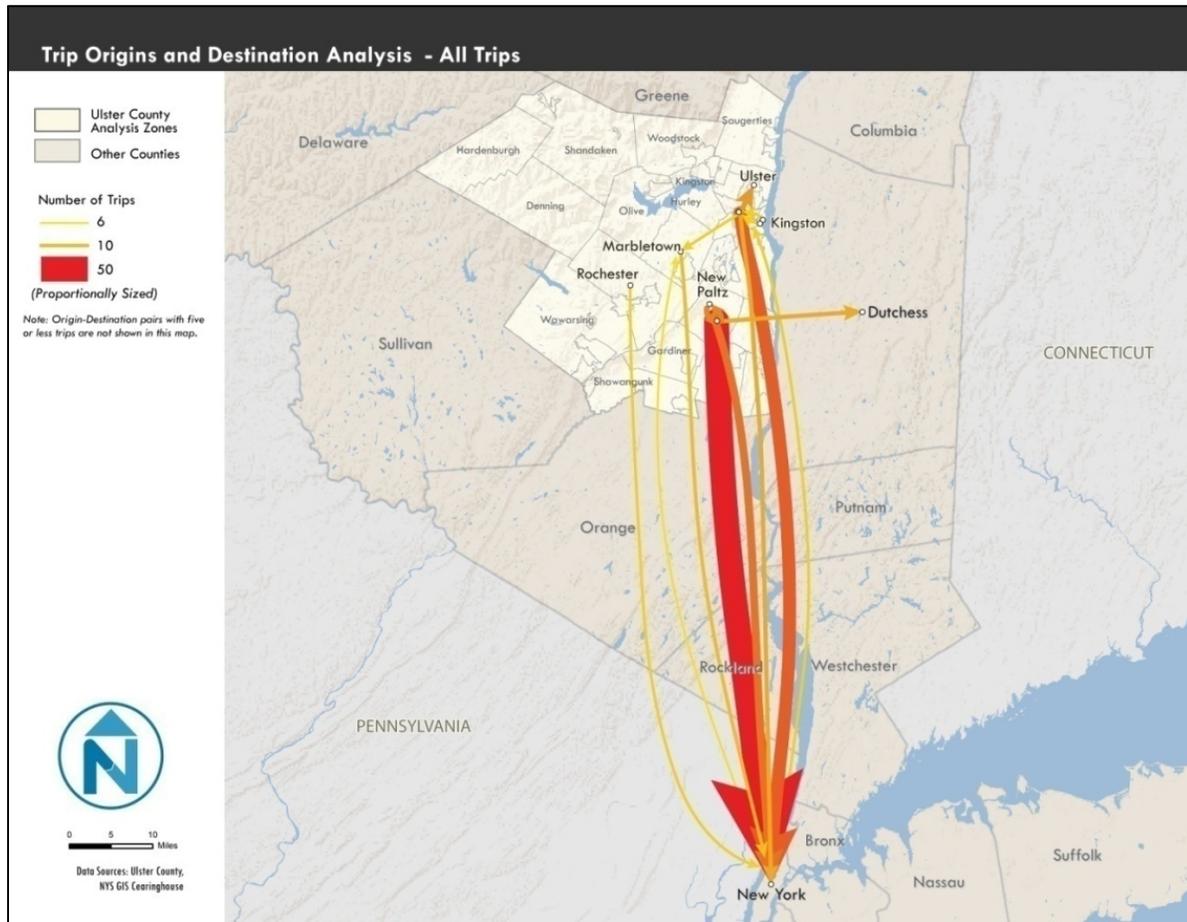
## Origins and Destinations

The rider survey asked people to list the cross streets and town of their origin and destination, and 62 percent of the surveys had both an origin and a destination that the study team could map using GIS. This study consolidates the origin and destination information into analysis zones to obtain a finer level of detail of travel patterns in the county. These analysis zones consist of Census Designated Places (CDPs), towns, and block groups (for the City of Kingston only). The Census defines CDPs and uses them to represent concentrations of population that are not necessarily coterminous with village or town boundaries. Within Kingston, where Citibus provides local service, block groups provide an even smaller geography to assess trips. Any trips going outside Ulster County were classified by county.

Figure 3-16 shows the travel patterns for all survey respondents, including Trailways trips going outside the county, to show the overall travel patterns from Ulster County. The figure omits origin-destination pairs with less than six trips to ensure legibility.

The vast majority of people traveling to New York City were taking Trailways; seven respondents were taking UCAT's UPL.

Figure 3-16 All Trips - Origins and Destinations









## Chapter 4. General Public Surveys

### Overview

A ten-question transit survey was compiled by the study team and reviewed by the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC). This survey was intended for widespread distribution to the stakeholders, at public meetings, online and at senior resident centers. The goal of the survey was to collect feedback on how well UCAT and/or Citibus are or are not meeting the needs of County residents. This survey differs from the on-board ridership survey, which focuses more on trip specific information for each rider, such as origin and destination.

### Distribution

The general public survey was distributed to stakeholders as a printable pdf and as a link to an online version of the same survey ([www.ulstertransit.info](http://www.ulstertransit.info)). Stakeholders were asked for their assistance in further distribution to their clients, customers and/or constituents. The survey was also distributed in a hardcopy format at the public meeting held on December 1, 2011, including both the afternoon kiosk information session at Hannaford Plaza and the evening meeting at George Washington Elementary School.

### Collection

A total of 111 surveys were collected. 26 were collected via the online survey; 18 were collected at the public meeting and 67 were mailed in to the UCTC office.

The results of the survey are shown individually for each question, and include the number of responses received for each answer option, as well as its corresponding percentage. This is the percentage that each answer was selected based on the number of responses received for that individual question.

Not every question was answered on each survey. Therefore, the data also shows how many respondents answered each individual question and what percentage this was out of the 111 surveys received.

### Summary of Responses

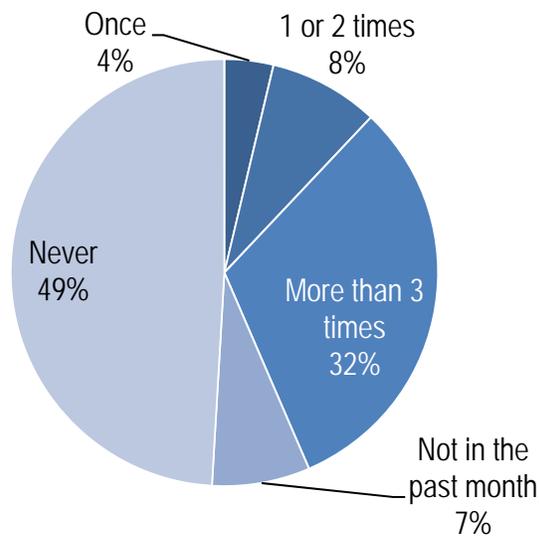
Nearly half of the general public survey participants have never used either UCAT or Citybus (Figure X). Of those who do use the services, the majority use transit very regularly. The diverse nature of this cohort may explain the high number of skipped questions among the respondents. Some survey takers may have decided that certain questions were not relevant to their situation.

Below is a summary of the responses to the general public survey:

**Question 1:  
How many times have you used UCAT or Citibus in the past month?**

**Figure 4-1 Frequency of Use**

Answers	Number of Responses	Percentage of Responses
Once	4	3.7%
1 or 2 times	9	8.3%
More than 3 times	34	31.5%
Not in the past month	8	7.4%
Never	53	49.1%
<i>Answered Question</i>	<i>108</i>	<i>97.3%</i>
<i>Skipped Question</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>2.7%</i>



The high frequency of transit use among the majority of survey participant who reported using UCAT or Citibus in the past month is consistent with the data collected through on-board surveys (discussed in Chapter 3). Transit use in Ulster County appears to be an all-or-nothing proposition, with very few occasional users.

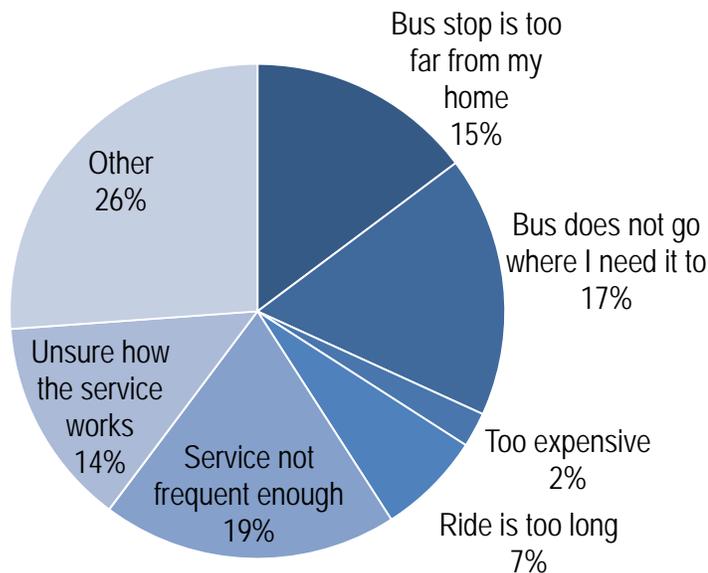
**Question 2:**  
 If you have never used UCAT or Citibus or have only used it a couple of times, what is your primary reason for not using these two services (check all that apply)?

**Figure 4-2 Reasons for Not Using Transit**

Answers	Number of Responses	Percentage of Responses
Bus stop is too far from my home	13	14.8%
Bus does not go where I need it to	15	17.0%
Too expensive	2	2.3%
Ride is too long	6	6.8%
Service not frequent enough	17	19.3%
Unsure how the service works	12	13.6%
Other	23	26.1%
<hr/>		
<i>Answered Question</i>	<i>60</i>	<i>54.1%</i>
<i>Skipped Question</i>	<i>51</i>	<i>45.9%</i>

Write-in comments included:

- Bus will not go back to the 5000 Bldg at Birchez Assoc. Housing.
- Citibus breaks too long.



The greatest reason for not using UCAT and/or Citibus was reported as 'Other'. Additional reasons reported include 'Bus stop is too far from my home,' 'Bus does not go where I need it to' and 'Service not frequent enough'. A significant number of respondents also claimed to be 'Unsure how the service works'. This indicates that better communication and education about UCAT/Citibus is needed.

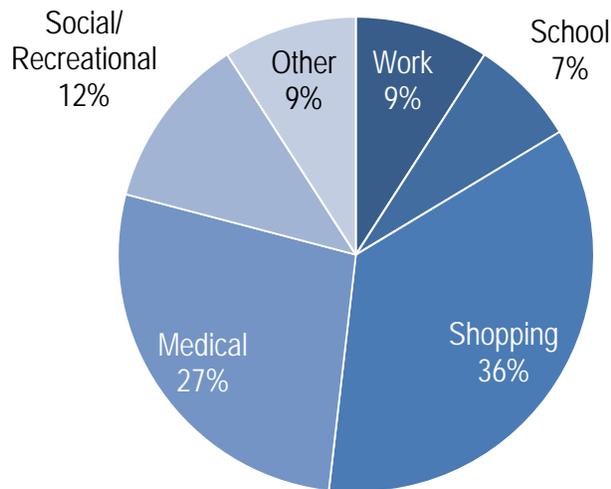
**Question 3:**  
 If you use UCAT or Citibus at least once a week, for what reasons do you use it (check all that apply)?

**Figure 4-3 Reasons for Transit Use**

Answers	Number of Responses	Percentage of Responses
Work	10	9.1%
School	8	7.3%
Shopping	39	35.5%
Medical	30	27.3%
Social/Recreational	13	11.8%
Other	10	9.1%
<hr/>		
<i>Answered Question</i>	<i>53</i>	<i>47.7%</i>
<i>Skipped Question</i>	<i>58</i>	<i>52.3%</i>

Write-in comments included:

- Post office, errands, etc.
- Everything.

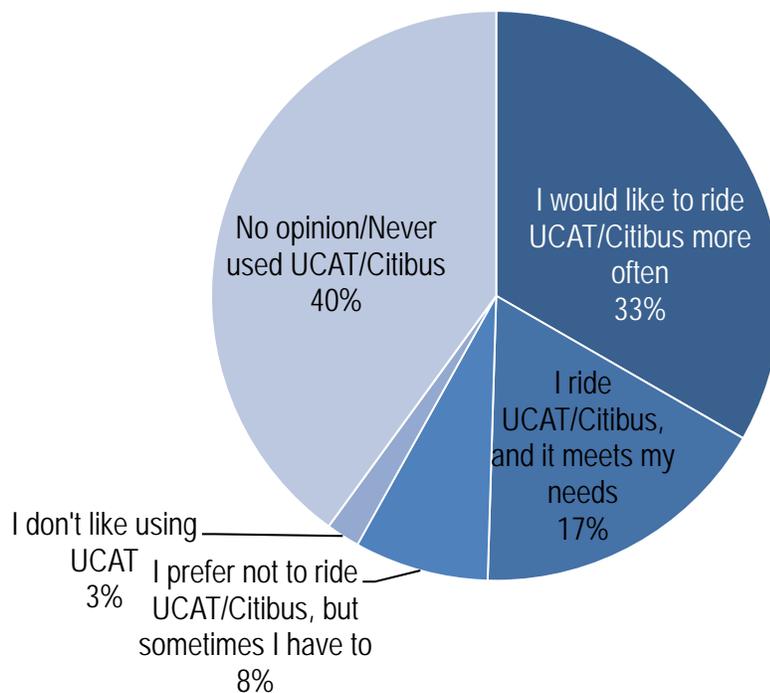


An overwhelming majority of respondents use UCAT and/or Citibus for shopping and/or medical needs. Other needs, including work, school, social and other share an even distribution of around ten (10) percent each based on the responses.

**Question 4:**  
Which of the following best describes your feelings about UCAT and/or Citibus?

**Figure 4-4 Feelings About Transit Providers**

Answers	Number of Responses	Percentage of Responses
I would like to ride UCAT/Citibus more often	35	33.3%
I ride UCAT/Citibus, and it meets my needs	18	17.1%
I prefer not to ride UCAT/Citibus, but sometimes I have to	8	7.6%
I don't like using UCAT/Citibus	2	1.9%
No opinion/Never used UCAT/Citibus	42	40.0%
<i>Answered Question</i>	<i>101</i>	<i>91.0%</i>
<i>Skipped Question</i>	<i>10</i>	<i>9.0%</i>



The majority of respondents either have no opinion because they have never used the services or claim that they would like to ride UCAT/Citibus more often – suggesting a high degree of goodwill toward the transit providers. A large number reported that UCAT and/or Citibus currently meets their needs, while only a small percentage (3.0%) claimed that they do not like using UCAT and/or Citibus.

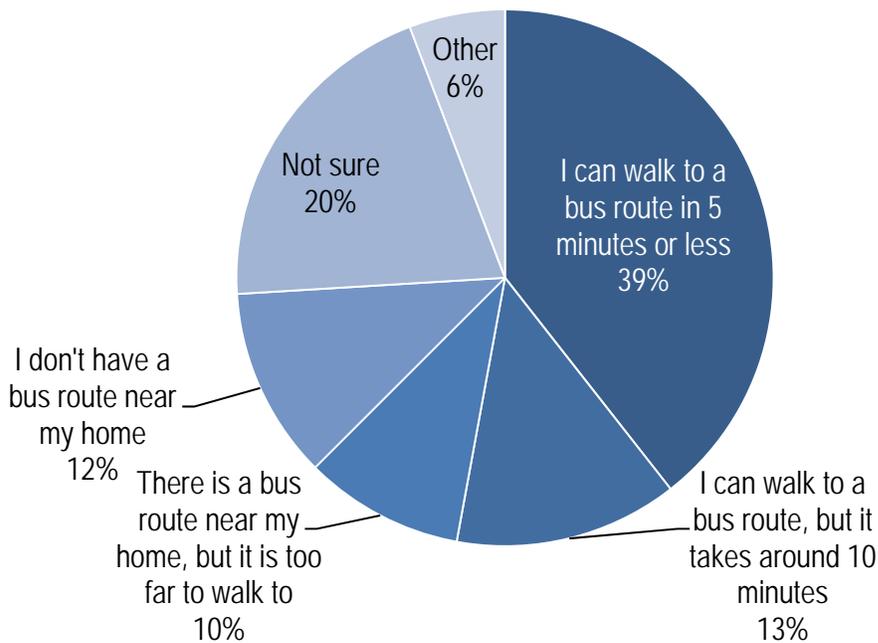
**Question 5:**  
Which of the following best describes the location of the nearest bus service to your home?

**Figure 4-5 Distance to Access Transit**

Answers	Number of Responses	Percentage of Responses
I can walk to a bus route in 5 minutes or less	41	39.4%
I can walk to a bus route, but it takes around 10 minutes	14	13.5%
There is a bus route near my home, but it is too far to walk to	10	9.6%
I don't have a bus route near my home	12	11.5%
Not sure	21	20.2%
Other	6	5.8%
<i>Answered Question</i>	<i>100</i>	<i>90.1%</i>
<i>Skipped Question</i>	<i>11</i>	<i>9.9%</i>

Write-in comments included:

- Have to drive to Stewart's and take bus from there.
- I ride my bike to the bus stop.



More than half of the respondents can walk to a bus route (either in five minutes or less or in around ten minutes). There are a number of respondents (10%) that claim that the nearest bus stop is too far to walk to.

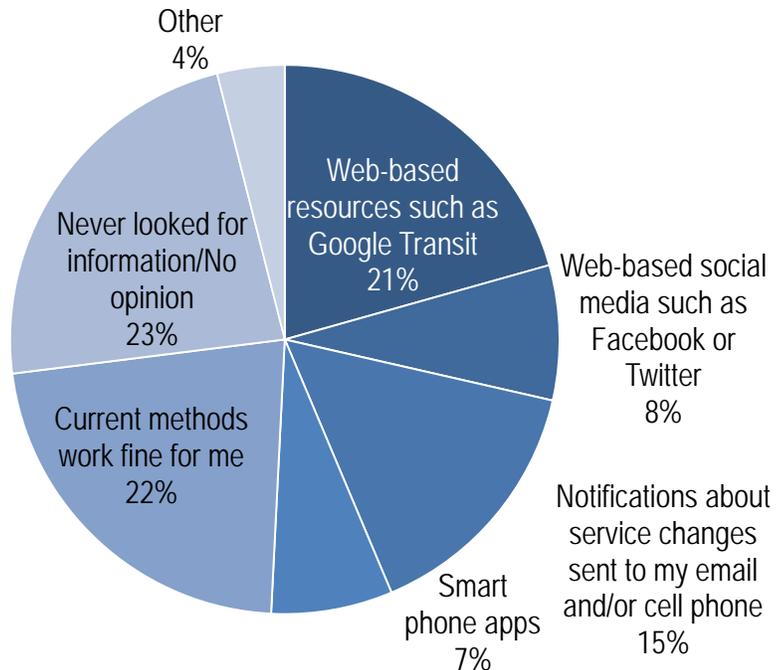
**Question 6:**  
**How would you like to receive information about public services, such as UCAT/Citibus (check all that apply)?**

**Figure 4-6 Methods of Receiving Transit Information**

Answers	Number of Responses	Percentage of Responses
Web-based resources such as Google Transit	26	20.6%
Web-based social media such as Facebook or Twitter	10	7.9%
Notifications about service changes sent to my email and/or cell phone	19	15.1%
Smart phone apps (i.e. ral-time information feeds)	9	7.1%
Current methods work fine for me	28	22.2%
Never looked for information/No opinion	29	23.0%
Other	5	4.0%
<hr/>		
Answered Question	95	85.6%
Skipped Question	16	14.4%

Write-in comments included:

- Website with schedules.
- Phone at bus stop.
- Need written schedules/maps for each bus.



Responses to this question did not show an overwhelming majority of responses to any one answer. Rather, it seems as though information needs to be distributed across a wide variety of media, including both traditional approaches such as hardcopies of schedules and maps, as well as experimenting with newer electronic distribution methods.

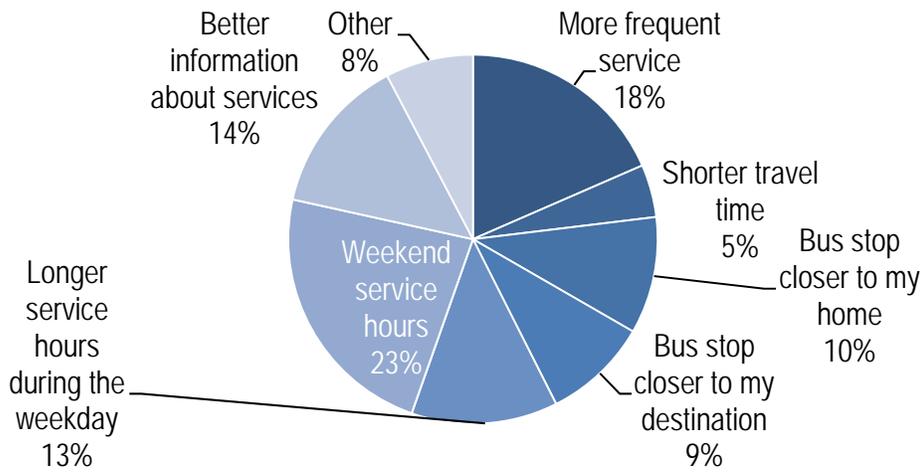
**Question 7:**  
 How might UCAT/Citibus change their service to better meet your needs and encourage you to ride the bus more often (check all that apply)?

**Figure 4-7 Service Improvement Suggestions**

Answers	Number of Responses	Percentage of Responses
More frequent service	36	18.5%
Shorter travel time	9	4.6%
Bus stop closer to my home	20	10.3%
Bus stop closer to my destination	18	9.2%
Longer service hours during the weekday	25	12.8%
Weekend service hours	45	23.1%
Better information about services	27	13.8%
Other	15	7.7%
<hr/>		
<i>Answered Question</i>	<i>85</i>	<i>76.6%</i>
<i>Skipped Question</i>	<i>26</i>	<i>23.4%</i>

Write-in comments included:

- Not having to wait 45 min in between transfers.
- UCAT and Citibus to agree on transfer times and connections.
- New shopping destinations.
- Buses run great.
- Need shelters and hardcopy schedules on buses.
- More transfers and buses that don't break down.
- Less complicated routes to Poughkeepsie and Newburgh
- No transportation between 9:00-10:00AM and 3:00-4:00PM



The majority of respondents selected a service improvement issue related to schedules such as 'More frequent service,' 'Longer service hours during the weekday,' or 'Weekend service.' This suggests that schedule adjustments may be more critical than routing adjustments as a key to increasing ridership.

**Question 8:**  
 Are there any specific destinations that you would like to see UCAT and/or Citibus go to? Please write in the name of the destination.

**Figure 4-8 Suggested Destinations**

Written-In Responses		
More rural areas	Port Ewen to Kingston	
Middletown, NY	Shopping at Aldi	
Poughkeepsie, Galleria	Esopus, New York	
More frequent access to Port Ewen BOCES and Ulster County Mental Health	230 Sawkill Road, Kingston	
West Shokan, NY	1 Webster Ave, Poughkeepsie	
Ellenville on weekends	Citibus should go to Town of Ulster	
Probation Department on Broadway	YMCA and Kingston Library	
28 A Route - West Shokan	CVS/Dunkin Donuts on Ulster Ave.	
Route 209 Past Davenports Farm	Shoprite	
More Kingston Parks	Ten Broeck Commons	
Kingston to New Paltz	Wal-Mart without a transfer	
Rail Trail Heads, Red Hook and Rhinebeck, farm stands on county and state roads.	New Paltz Family Medical	
212 to Woodstock	Mall	
West of New Paltz	From midtown between Burger King and Kingston High School to uptown	
Coleman School and Bailey School	Fishkill	
Ulster and Dutchess County Fairgrounds	Kingston to Margaretville	
East Kingston		
Answers	Number of Responses	Percentage of Responses
Answered Question	36	32.4%
Skipped Question	75	67.6%

The majority of respondents chose not to answer this question, which again suggest that scheduling may be a far more pressing issue than routing for both providers.

**Question 9:**  
Please use this area for any other comments or suggestions that you may have for UCAT/Citibus services.

**Figure 4-9 Open Comments**

Written-In Responses		
Although I drive and have a vehicle so I don't use the bus, I work with young people and adults, many of whom have disabilities, who need better public bus transportation in order to obtain employment.	I understand that transportation to the mall is very difficult for youth, especially those who are employed at the mall. In general, I think that youth should be heavily considered when making decisions for changes in the UCAT/Citibus system.	
There are no buses on the weekends, so I can't work outside of Ellenville due to weekend transportation issues.	More people should know bus routes, and the schedule should be printed in the newspaper.	
I think the current service is very confusing. I also think UCAT and Citibus should combine efforts.	Spanish schedules.	
The people on the bus could be friendlier.	Cleaner buses.	
It is very difficult/impossible for anyone coming from Ellenville to get to Port Ewen BOCES for classes.	Special events buses.	
Services to Ellenville are not offered on weekends - they should be.	Better linkages between events in Ulster and Dutchess Counties	
I am a student at UCCC, and UCAT service is too limited. I work and I can't get to the campus for night classes. From Saugerties to the BRC the service is good. I can get to the BRC on time, but to get to the campus it is just impossible. Look at the itinerary. It takes me one hour to get to Hannaford Kingston, and then twenty minutes to get to the Campus. On top of it, I have to wait at Hannaford Kingston: 25 minutes after 7:20 am, one hour and 10 minutes if I want to take the bus that arrives at 11:50 because there is no bus from Saugerties to Hannaford Kingston Plaza at 10:30, 40 minutes if I want to get at UCCC by 1:20, in short, it is too complicated to get to school. Night classes are a nightmare.	Sunday for church service and Saturday for recreation.	
	Schedules confusing for all routes.	
	Cart needed to carry groceries and accommodations for walkers.	
	Not having to wait on the corner of Stewart's on Albany Ave. for so long to come back to Birchez at Chambers 5000 Bldg.	
	Saturday C-Bus only comes 2 to 3 times.	
I don't ride the bus, but the route goes directly in front of my house often and never seems to have more than 2-3 people on it.	Ellenville needs more than just Kingston and needs more direct routes.	
Should be free to use for students.	Have a phone number to call for updates and closing information.	
I believe we should have one bus service, not two! If they were combined, there would be much better service.	Need a direct service to medical facilities for testing and visiting.	
The buses seem quite large for the number of riders on them. It makes me wonder if there could be smaller buses covering more routes.	More direct route between Saugerties and UCCC.	
	Need to have schedule printed in newspaper.	
Answers	Number of Responses	Percentage of Responses
Answered Question	30	27.0%
Skipped Question	81	73.0%

The free response questions covered several issues, including a number of recurring themes:

- There is a desire for a single transit provider in the County
- Passenger information should be improved and more readily available
- Service to Ellenville is insufficient
- Residents of the county question the choice of vehicles used by the transit providers

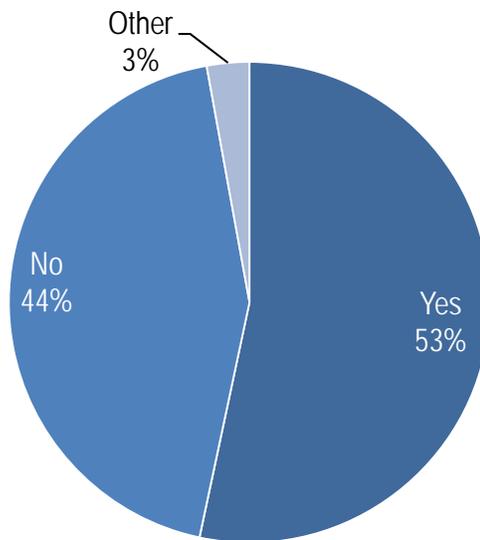
**Question 10:**  
**Do you currently have access to a personal automobile?**

**Figure 4-10 Access to Automobile**

Answers	Number of Responses	Percentage of Responses
Yes	56	53.3%
No	46	43.8%
Other	3	2.9%
<hr/>		
<i>Answered Question</i>	<i>104</i>	<i>93.7%</i>
<i>Skipped Question</i>	<i>7</i>	<i>6.3%</i>

Write-in comments included:

- Ask friends for a ride



The respondents included an even mix, almost half-and-half, of automobile owners and non-automobile owners.



## Chapter 5. Public Meeting Comments

### Overview

The study team held the first public meeting for the Ulster County Transit System Development and Coordination Plan on December 1<sup>st</sup>, 2011. The meeting consisted of an afternoon information session from 2:30 PM to 4:30 PM at the Hannaford at Kingston Plaza, 100 Plaza Road in Kingston, New York, and an evening meeting from 6:30 PM to 8:30 PM at George Washington Elementary School, 67 Wall Street in Kingston, New York.

The afternoon session attracted several dozen members of the general public, while the evening session was attended primarily by UCAT, Citibus, and Ulster County staff. Public comments from the afternoon session were recorded on surveys and are included in the responses discussed in Chapter 4.

The evening session started with a brief presentation of the study progress to date, and a discussion about two types of service design approaches: one that aims to maximize service coverage, but often has lower service frequency and one that focuses service in a few major corridors in order to maintain higher service frequency. This was followed by a series of questions presented by County staff and discussed by UCAT, Citibus, and project team staff. A full synopsis of this discussion is shown in Appendix D. Overall, there is a great deal of interest among the staffs of both transit systems in finding ways to provide the highest quality service possible to the greatest number of county residents. However, there appears to be very little consensus on the best path forward to achieve that objective. As this study progresses and service alternatives are developed, there will be greater opportunities for the transit agencies to coalesce around specific strategies.



## Chapter 6. Key Findings

Public and stakeholder input identify a number of system strengths that should be preserved as well as a number ways for how service can be improved. These opportunities are summarized in the following text.

### Summary

- Existing services are appreciated and valued by the community. In general, stakeholders feel that UCAT and Citibus have well maintained fleets and courteous drivers.
- UCAT and Citibus riders tend to be frequent users of the service, using the bus for most of their transportation needs. In general, they are middle-aged or older adults, using the bus for x, y and z.
- Most UCAT and Citibus passengers walk to access the services. The success of transit service in the county is thus tied to the quality of the pedestrian infrastructure.
- Riders are generally satisfied with the existing fares (\$1.00 per trip – adult cash fare for both services).
- Services currently are not well coordinated. UCAT, Citibus, and Trailways overlap services and are not well coordinated in terms of supporting transfers between systems. This is especially true for Citibus and UCAT, where passengers have a difficult time transferring between services. The supporting infrastructure, such as fare structures and marketing, are also not well coordinated. Closer coordination could result in a better utilization of resources, and improved service for passengers.
- There are opportunities to improve marketing. Both riders and stakeholders felt that UCAT and Citibus need to better market their services and educate county residents about existing transit options that are available. .
- Riders want more service. Existing services are not frequent enough, do not provide adequate service coverage, and do not operate sufficient hours in the evening/weekend, with almost no service on Sundays, making it difficult for residents without vehicles to get to and from work. There is also considerable demand for regional travel. This includes travel between Ulster County and New York City as well as between Kingston and the Hudson Valley communities.
- There are opportunities for increased coordination between human service agencies and the public transit system. There is a great deal of interest among Human Resources agencies in comprehensive transportation coordination, including vehicle sharing.
- Citibus and UCAT riders are primarily frequent users, taking the system 2 - 5 days per week. However, UCAT has a moderate amount of first-time riders as well, likely due to the on-going arrival of new students to the county. Citibus is not attracting new riders at the same rate, and the majority of Citibus riders are 45 years of age or older.
- UCAT and Citibus are missing key markets, such as choice riders/commuters and younger riders. Some of the strategies needed to develop these markets are specific to the individual markets but others are common across markets. For example, commuters/choice riders might need increased frequencies to be successfully encouraged to participate in the system; however, they would also need improved marketing and information systems. Improving the marketing and information systems would also help younger markets.



# Appendix A: Stakeholders

## List of Organizations Interviewed

### *Transportation*

- Trailways
- UCAT
- Coach

### *Housing*

- City of Kingston Planning
- Kingston Housing Authority
- RUPCO – Rural Ulster Preservation Company
- Kingston Planning Board

### *Human Resources*

- Family of Woodstock
- Gateway Community Industries
- RCAL – Resource Center for Accessible Living
- Ulster County Mental Health
- Ulster BOCES
- Ulster Greene ARC School to Work
- Ulster County Office for the Aging
- Ulster County Office of Employment and Training
- Ulster County Department of Social Services
- Ulster County Office of Employment and Training
- Ulster County Department of Social Services
- Youth Build

### *Tourism*

- Belleayre Mountain
- Ulster County Tourism
- Bardavon/UPAC
- Hudson River Cruises

### *Major Employers*

- Ellenville Regional Hospital
- SUNY Ulster
- Golden Hill Health Care
- Kingston Main Street

- Kingston Hospital
- Hudson Valley Mall
- Tech City
- New Paltz School District

## Appendix B: Summary of Stakeholder Interview Responses by Topic

### Effectiveness of Existing Services

#### *Transportation Group*

- Connections of existing services to private transportation providers are not effective. There is no data on the number of riders making connections or where they make these connections. The transit agencies may adjust schedules to better accommodate connections, but the greatest challenge with connections is the significant fare difference between private transportation providers and UCAT/Citibus. There is also a difference in the method of payment acceptable.
- There is not enough local service to sufficiently feed the private transportation providers for corridor service.
- There is an issue of overlapping service between UCAT/Citibus and the private transportation providers. The overlap of UCAT/Citibus with private transportation providers increased once UCAT began serving commuter populations and going beyond local transit service. This included the addition of service along Routes 28, 209, and 9W. Coordinated transit service spread throughout the day could solve the problem with service overlaps.

#### *Housing Group*

- UCAT and Citibus need to coordinate better, including the use of dual stops, such as the one at the Hannaford at Kingston Plaza.
- UCAT and Citibus should combine services for economic reasons and for the benefit of the riders.
- The hours of service operation are not late enough to accommodate shift workers, making it difficult if not impossible to maintain employment.

#### *Human Resources Group*

- There are gaps in the service, particularly to rural areas, such as Ellenville and transportation to and from the jail. There is also currently little to no weekend service.
- There is an issue with the on-demand service in that many riders do not know the day before that they will need transportation arranged.
- UCAT/Citibus need to actively market their services and educate the public on what transportation options are available.
- Several of the organizations represented at the interview maintain their own vehicle fleet; however, this is not sufficient to meet the needs of their constituents.

#### *Tourism Group*

- The service that exists is satisfactory and saves people money on gas.
- It is difficult for shift workers to use the existing public transportation because their work hours vary. Particularly in the tourism industry, workers cannot leave until they have

cleaned and readied things for the next day of business. Workers often do not know what time they will be able to go home.

- UCAT has been great at transporting patrons to and from some of the tourist destinations, particularly during peak times.

### *Major Employers Group*

- People do not understand the services that currently exist or how they can effectively make connections.
- Services do not extend to a number of locations that students and employees need to access.
- Seniors living outside of the Kingston area have a difficult time reaching transit service.
- Existing transit services are not effective enough; a number of people use cabs on a regular basis as their mode of transportation.
- There are not enough nighttime transportation options; this is critical for employees working late.

## Connection between UCAT/Citibus

### *Transportation Group*

- Connections between the two services are nonexistent. Citibus has its own jurisdiction within city limits; UCAT does not drop-off or pick-up within those limits, but this is a disadvantage for riders. UCAT only stops within city limits for a rider if it is after Citibus' operating hours.
- UCAT and Citibus need to coordinate schedules better. Private transportation providers have little interest in more than one stop per city. Their focus is on long-haul trips; they do not seek to increase local trips.
- There is insufficient marketing of the services and connections that are available.

### *Major Employers Group*

- Connections are difficult and time-consuming, taking several hours in some cases.

## UCAT/Citibus Successes

### *Housing Group*

- UCAT/Citibus equipment is in good condition and well maintained. Drivers are generally courteous and helpful.
- UCAT/Citibus do provide transportation options to the residents and visitors of Ulster County.

### *Human Resources Group*

- UCAT does reach a significant number of rural populations throughout the County.
- Overall, the services function well; there are just gaps that need to be filled.

### *Major Employers Group*

- A transportation hub at the new Business Resource Center would be very helpful to the county.

## UCAT/Citibus Challenges

### *Housing Group*

- The method in which ridership is obtained does not work; the buses are often empty. Consider using smaller vehicles or vans to serve areas with few riders.
- UCAT/Citibus need to market their services better and educate residents and visitors about their transportation options. Additionally, many transit users cannot obtain schedule and route information that is available online. The agencies should distribute this information in a hardcopy format such as a flyer.
- Scheduling gaps need to be filled, specifically service between Kingston and the Hudson Valley Mall. Service hours need to extend past 6:00 PM, and the existing gap in service from noon to 2:00 PM needs to be filled.

### *Human Resources Group*

- There is a stigma associated with taking the bus and so a number of Medicaid patients request medical cabs in lieu of public transportation. Federal funds pay for this. UCAT saw a 700 percent decrease in service from Medicaid users once medical cabs became available.

### *Tourism Group*

- It would be great if UCAT and/or Citibus could connect with the Metro-North Railroad Station in Poughkeepsie. This could enable passengers to visit some of the state parks as well as experience car-less vacations.
- There is a problem with the separation of the towns, particularly if people are out at bars and restaurants and should not be driving home. Night runs would be an effective way to transport people between towns.

### *Major Employers Group*

- Busses often run empty; the vehicles should be downsized.
- Residents of the county do not know what transportation options are available to them.
- Buses need to run at night as well.

## Recommendation Priorities

### *Housing Group*

- Improve schedule with longer hours and more weekend service.
- Improve coordination between UCAT and Citibus.
- Ensure adequate pedestrian connections to fulfill neighborhood service.

### *Human Resources Group*

- Sunday service, particularly so that students and shift workers can get to and from their place of employment on Sundays.
- Late night service to accommodate shift workers coming home.
- Mobility manager to go into the community and educate residents and visitors about their transit options.
- Expanded routes: Ellenville to Kingston, circulator service around Ellenville, similar to New Paltz.

### *Tourism Group*

- Communicate what services already exist; better educate the residents and visitors of Ulster County.

### *Major Employers Group*

- Have a main corridor for transit with branch buses feeding into it.
- Improve the alignment of the scheduled stop times with work schedules.
- Educate the public about the options that are already available and make schedules more accessible via outlets such as Google Transit.
- Consider better coordinating with other existing transit services, including the use of school buses.

## Peer Systems

### *Transportation Group*

- CDTA and Broom County.

### *Housing Group*

- Larger cities that have more transit. Promote having an intermodal hub or connection point and the usage of bicycles to get to and from transit stops.

### *Human Resources Group*

- The New York Department of Health has a new service that involves eight (8) counties in which transportation service is coordinated and this includes service within and out of each county.
- Albany has mobility managers and solid coordination of services.
- Otsego, Marlboro, and Tompkins Counties.

### *Tourism Group*

- Boston, Massachusetts has a way to get anywhere you need to, including ferries, subways, and buses. In Ulster County, you have to take cabs.
- Dutchess County conducts farm tours using a bus system loop. People come here from New York City to tour the farm stands. A similar tour could be organized in Ulster County using transit.

- Other places have planned transit excursions. These could be planned for Ulster County and listed on the website. One such option would be to see a show and then take a cruise on the river without needing a car.

#### *Major Employers Group*

- Other places have large transit maps that easily show passengers how to get from one location to another; it would be good to have these in key locations throughout the county, including inside malls at bus stations.
- New York City website that shows you how to get from one location to another – [www.hopstop.com](http://www.hopstop.com).
- Printed materials to help orient seniors on how to use the transit system.

### External Forces Influencing Transit Use

#### *Transportation Group*

- Gasoline prices, financial ability to own a vehicle, increasing senior population, and congestion, particularly in New Paltz at Main Street.
- Land use is an additional external factor, such as the community college, which is located in the middle of the county in an area that is very difficult to reach.

#### *Housing Group*

- Convenience of transit, price of taking a cab.

#### *Tourism Group*

- Price of owning and operating a vehicle and the cost of parking.
- Long commutes necessary for work or travel.
- Weather.

#### *Major Employers Group*

- International travelers.
- Aging population with an increasing number of adults who do not have a driver's license.

### Planned Developments and Projects

#### *Transportation Group*

- Walmart in Ellenville, Hudson Landing and the intermodal facility.

#### *Housing Group*

- Affordable housing development of 63 units in Woodstock.

#### *Tourism Group*

- Hudson Landing

### *Major Employers Group*

- SUNY Ulster new Business Resource Center location, possibly at TechCity.

### **Other Issues**

#### *Transportation Group*

- Fare structure issues between UCAT/Citibus and private transportation providers could be alleviated if the private transportation providers charged on a per-mile basis up to the county border and then switched to a \$2.00 per rider fare (as is currently used by UCAT/Citibus), with UCAT reimbursing the private transportation providers the difference in fare. Cutting the mileage would save UCAT more money than the difference in fare would total.
- The new Walmart is currently not planned to be transit accessible.
- A reverse route of the currently planned Lusterline Route was suggested and will be submitted separately.
- UCAT/Citibus need more education and marketing of their services so that residents and visitors understand what options are available to them.

#### *Housing Group*

- UCAT/Citibus need to better market their services and educate stakeholders such as those present at the meeting so that they can pass along the information to their constituents.
- Routes to certain places, such as the Hannaford at Kingston Plaza, are overly circuitous.
- None of the attendees offered their own transportation for their organization. They identified a need for door-to-door service in addition to regular fixed route service where riders walk or bicycle to reach the station. More station shelters are needed.
- Some organizations do offer their own transportation service, such as the Kingston Hospital and Hudson Landing, which will offer a shuttle service to link its residents to the train station.

#### *Human Resources Group*

- Some of the organizations represented at the interview could possibly consider sharing transit vehicles owned by some of the other organizations.
- UCAT seems to be the most suitable organization for a mobility manager.
- A comprehensive system is needed. It is possible to consider coordinating program times to standardize transportation times.
- Organizations represented at the interview have the option to help fund the county's local match to obtain federal funds currently available. The funding for UCAT would then enable service improvements to better serve the needs of those organizations.

#### *Tourism Group*

- There seems to be a long wait for passengers at the Hannaford at Kingston Plaza.
- UCAT and Citibus should become one entity.
- There should be special trips planned with a specific itinerary that enable people to take car-less trips to destinations within and around the County.

### *Major Employers Group*

- Improve coordination between UCAT and Citibus.

### **Citibus Driver Comments**

#### *Customer complaints*

- Infrequent service.
- Two-hour gap in mid-day service.
- Service ends too early.
- Not enough benches and shelters.
- No service to Ulster Mall (UCAT provides it).
- Not enough trips to BOCES in Port Ewen.

#### *Other comments*

- Schedules can be difficult to keep (especially on the B route),
- No radio communications with UCAT driver (cannot call for a driver to wait for a transferring passenger).
- Routes are not bi-directional but rather one-way circuits. Some streets do have service on both sides of the street, but its two separate routes that happen to be passing.
- The first week of every month is very busy as people travel to social services at this time.
- Routes do not change on weekends, even if ridership does (example: Mental Health and Gateway are closed, but bus still goes by).
- Buses operate in parking lots at some stops (Birches Senior Housing, BOCES, Gateway/Mental Health, Mountain Valley Manner).
- The road leading to the jail is very narrow and dangerous.

#### *Top destinations (estimated)*

- Ulster Plaza
- Mental Health and Gateway
- Yasmin Tower
- BOCES
- Colonial Gardens
- Boarding house on Chestnut Street

### **UCAT Driver Comments**

#### *Customer Complaints*

- People do not understand bus schedules or know route numbers.
- Ellenville wants Saturday and/or Sunday transportation.
- Ellenville service is one large loop with not enough frequency.
- People cannot make late night connections.
- The community college route needs a Saturday and/or Sunday bus.

- Access to Newburg via New Paltz.
- The wait for transfers is often very long. The schedules do not line up well.
- Seniors need more Saturday and/or Sunday service to get to church.
- People get very upset that UCAT is not allowed to pick them up within City of Kingston limits and that they have to continue waiting.
- The paratransit call-in system needs to be simplified. It takes passengers a long time just to be able to cancel an existing appointment via the current phone system.

### *Other Comments*

- The mall circulation route is often empty and starts too early in the morning (before the mall is even open).
- There are long dwell times because people take a long time to find their money and sit down.
- The Ellenville to Kingston route needs another bus.
- Some schedules are very difficult to meet.
- The same name should be kept for the entire route.
- The head signs on the buses currently have the names of towns on them, and this confuses people. It should say the destination city, not the city you are leaving.
- There is little to no ridership from Spring Glen.
- The zone fare system is very confusing for people and time-consuming for drivers to determine the appropriate fare. A flat-rate system is needed.
- There is a discrepancy between the manner in which buses are held; some drivers hold up a bus full of people to wait for one transferring passenger, whereas others will not wait at all. Passengers now expect buses to wait on them and do not modify their schedule to be on time.
- The New Paltz route can expand to one bus per hour.
- Some routes are too tight in terms of time, while others allow for too much down time. The time allotments are not true to schedule.
- There is nowhere to safely pull over to input the GPS data in to the new system.
- Drivers need to be able to take breaks to use restroom facilities.

# Appendix C: Passenger Survey



## Help Improve Bus Service in Ulster County!

Please tell us about your current or most recent **one-way trip** taken on UCAT/Citibus. If you have already completed one survey, **DO NOT** complete another.

1. What route are you taking today? \_\_\_\_\_

2. What time did you get on the bus? \_\_\_\_:\_\_\_\_ AM / PM

3. Where are you coming **FROM**?   
 Home       Work       Shopping  
 Medical/Dental     Recreation or social  
 School/College (Name of School: \_\_\_\_\_)  
 Other (Explain: \_\_\_\_\_)

4. Where is this **PLACE**?  
 List nearest intersection (For Example: Broadway & O'Reilly)  
 OR Name of unique location or landmark (For Example:  
 Hudson Valley Mall, etc.)  
 \_\_\_\_\_ in \_\_\_\_\_  
 Street Name & Cross-Street Name      Town

5. How did you **GET TO** the bus stop to board **this** bus?  
 Transferred from another bus route  
 Walked (How many minutes? \_\_\_\_\_)  
 Biked  
 Drove alone to bus stop  
 Was dropped off at bus stop  
 Other (Explain: \_\_\_\_\_)

6. Where are you going **TO**?   
 Home       Work       Shopping  
 Medical/Denta     Recreation or social  
 School/College (Name of School: \_\_\_\_\_)  
 Other (Explain: \_\_\_\_\_)

7. Where is this **PLACE**?  
 List nearest intersection (For Example: Broadway & O'Reilly)  
 OR Name of unique location or landmark (For Example:  
 Hudson Valley Mall)  
 \_\_\_\_\_ in \_\_\_\_\_  
 Street Name & Cross-Street Name      Town

8. How will you **GET FROM** this bus to your destination?  
 Transfer to another bus route  
 Walk (How many minutes? \_\_\_\_\_)  
 Bike  
 Drive alone from bus stop  
 Get picked up from bus stop  
 Other (Explain: \_\_\_\_\_)

9. How often do you ride UCAT/Citibus?  
 5 days per week     Less than 1 day/month  
 2 to 4 days per week     First time  
 1-4 days per month

10. Tell us **HOW YOU FEEL** about UCAT/Citibus. Please **circle the number** that most closely reflects your experience.

	Poor	Acceptable	Excellent
Affordable fare	1	2 3	4 5
Service frequency	1	2 3	4 5
Days/hours of operation	1	2 3	4 5
Locations served	1	2 3	4 5
Bus runs on time	1	2 3	4 5
Convenience	1	2 3	4 5
Service easy to understand	1	2 3	4 5

11. What service changes would you like to see? Please **circle the number** that most closely reflects your priority.

	Low	Moderate	High
Increase the number of trips	1	2 3	4 5
Go to more places	1	2 3	4 5
Improve schedule reliability	1	2 3	4 5
More information from driver	1	2 3	4 5
Extend bus route to _____	1	2 3	4 5
Other _____			

12. How would you like to receive information about UCAT & Citibus? Please **circle the number** that most closely reflects your priority.

	Low	Moderate	High
On-line trip planner	1	2 3	4 5
Smart phone apps	1	2 3	4 5
Cell phone service updates	1	2 3	4 5
More web-information	1	2 3	4 5
Social media (Twitter, Facebook)	1	2 3	4 5
Prefer existing methods	1	2 3	4 5

13. Are there any places that you wish the bus went to?  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

14. Please tell us your age category.  
 Under 20       21 to 25       26 to 34  
 35-44       45-55       56+

Please make additional comments on the reverse side of the survey.  
**THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME!**  
 Please return this completed form to the surveyor or your bus driver today.



## Appendix D: Synopsis of Public Meeting Discussion by Topic

### Question and Responses

- **What things are UCAT and/or Citibus doing well?**
  - The focus of the UCAT system is currently primarily on maximum coverage. Passengers say this is working well, although they do wish there was service that is more frequent. Citibus' routes are circuitous with a number of stops, but they do offer good coverage.
  - UCAT service to the mall seems to be functioning well.
- **Are there opportunities for UCAT and/or Citibus to improve?**
  - They should make all of the buses available to all riders, thereby easing connections and ensuring that a bus does not have to pass by a passenger simply because they are within city of Kingston limits.
  - There needs to be uptown to downtown service.
- **What are the external forces that influence transit in the county?**
  - A number of residents in Ulster County moved from New York City and are already transit-minded. These people are culturally accustomed to transit and would be more likely to use it.
- **Are there examples of transit agencies or cities that could serve as an example for UCAT and/or Citibus?**
  - Los Angeles has branded subsets of transit under the umbrella of LA Metro. The two brands of UCAT and Citibus could exist under one umbrella brand and have one for the corridor or bus rapid transit (BRT) service and one for local loops or feeder service.
  - Another example is the Capital District Transit Authority (CDTA); this conceptual model could work for UCAT/Citibus.
- **How far are people generally willing to travel to reach bus service?**
  - This is proportional to the quality of the service. People will walk farther to reach a rail station than a bus station. They are more likely to walk to a bus station with good frequency and a friendly pedestrian environment.
  - It is tough to compare Ulster County to Los Angeles, and the county cannot have a BRT system. UCAT and Citibus are working well, and if one cannot reach a passenger, the other one can.
- **How do we best brand or communicate Ulster County's transit services?**
  - Google transit is one option, but to better reach the county, a revised version of each of the schedules (UCAT and Citibus), both uniformly designed and easy-to-read in hardcopy format, would work best.
  - The elderly do not always have access to computers, so transit information should be available in senior resident homes and civic facilities.
  - The transit information needs to be distributed to apartment complexes where seniors may be living, including Dutch Village.

- It is important to have hardcopy schedules available for riders too.
- There seems to be a barrier to access, as new riders have to learn how to use the system. This was noted by the new university students; seasoned riders complain that they do not know how to use the system or the flagging procedure.
- **Do human services departments ever handle transit outreach?**
  - Sometimes, as it can be a natural fit.
- **Are there routes we should add or modify?**
  - Once the final ridership numbers are evaluated, this can be determined. The study team will complete a route profile for each route. **Will this help with route planning?** Citibus buses are generally equally used, with Route A being a little bit busier.
  - Routes identified as being important include Kingston to Poughkeepsie, Kingston to Rhineback Station, and Kingston to Saugerties.
  - Transit is a very important issue for the increasing elderly population. More midday service is needed. The paratransit service should offer more hours.
- **Is there a way to gather people's transit needs and have supplemental transit service or share resources?**
  - This is called mobility management, and it ensures that all options are available to most people at all times. There are some insurance and legal issues to surmount with this option, but it will be explored.