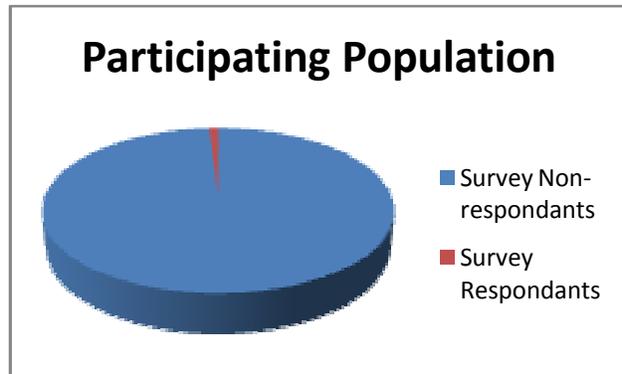


Summary of the North Liberty Transportation Survey 2009

From May 12 to June 15 the city of North Liberty invited its residents and others to complete a survey developed to determine the extent and nature of transit demand in North Liberty. The first statistic that must be noted is that 106 responses were received, despite a significant effort to publicize the project including the following:

- Web site posting;
- Significant story in the North Liberty Leader;
- Coverage in the Press Citizen;
- Distribution of surveys at the city website, recreation center, library, city hall, and financial institutions;
- Reminder printed on every city water bill sent in May;
- Reminder on NLTV multiple times every day from May 12 to June 15;
- Availability at Blues and Barbeque event;
- Complete survey printed in the North Johnson County (NOJOCO) paper;
- Announcement at a televised City Council meeting.



This number is important because the entire response group was about 1% of the total estimated North Liberty population (10,982). One may speculate about the reason such a relatively few responses were received, but throughout the following summary of the data the numbers relate only to that very limited sampling, and the numbers may not be assumed to be representative of the entire population, because the survey was not designed and executed to be statistically representative.

The following paragraphs summarize the survey results.

Resident Status

As might be expected, the vast majority of respondents are residents of North Liberty. Only 13 respondents either indicated they were not residents or were identified as such by their listed address. In conclusion, about 88% of the respondents were residents, or about .9% of the total estimated population.

Likelihood to Use Transit

Of the respondents, 88 of the 106 indicated they were likely to use a transit system if offered. This represents 83% of the participants, or about .8% of the North Liberty population.

Extent of Weekday Service Desired

Of the 88 respondents who indicated likely use of transit, the following indication was given for desired weekday frequency (some respondents chose more than one answer):

- 2.a.1. Every weekday, all year long 47
- 2.a.2. 3-4 days per week, all year long 20
- 2.a.3. 1-2 days per week, all year long 14
- 2.a.4. A weekday every once in a while 15

The most interesting figure here is that only about half of the respondents desire a daily service, which makes providing fixed-route bus service economically perilous.

Time of Weekday Service Desired

Of the 88 respondents who indicated likely use of transit, the following indication was given for desired service times (many respondents chose more than one answer):

- 2.b.1. Early morning (generally 6:30 – 9:00) 61
- 2.b.2. Mid-morning (generally 9:00 – noon) 25
- 2.b.3. Early afternoon (generally noon – 3:00) 34
- 2.b.4. Late afternoon (generally 3:00 – 6:00) 62
- 2.b.5. Evening (generally 6:00 – 9:00) 36

These answers generally support the timing of the current fixed-route service offerings of North Liberty.

Extent of Weekend Service Desired

Of the 88 respondents who indicated likely use of transit, the following indication was given for desired weekend frequency (some respondents chose more than one answer):

- 2.c.1. Every Saturday, all year long 19
- 2.c.2. Every Sunday, all year long 11
- 2.c.3. A weekend day every once in a while 54

These are very low numbers and would be very difficult to justify weekend consideration, especially since the large majority desires using such a service only once in a while.

Time of Weekend Service Desired

Of the 88 respondents who indicated likely use of transit, the following indication was given for desired weekend service times (many respondents chose more than one answer):

- 2.d.1. Early morning (generally 6:30 – 9:00) 25
- 2.d.2. Mid-morning (generally 9:00 – noon) 42
- 2.d.3. Early afternoon (generally noon – 3:00) 36
- 2.d.4. Late afternoon (generally 3:00 – 6:00) 36
- 2.d.5. Evening (generally 6:00 – 9:00) 24

It is somewhat difficult to explain why a relatively low number of respondents interested in weekend service identified such a large number of time-of-service preferences, but it may relate to the desire for only once-in-a-while service and an uncertainty about when that might be desired.

Most Frequent Destinations

The large majority of respondents mentioned Downtown Iowa City, University of Iowa Hospital, and to a lesser extent the Coral Ridge Mall area as preferred destinations. See Table A for a complete listing.

Types of Transportation Service Desired

The question, especially when related to the price sensitivity question, yielded some interesting results (some respondents chose more than one answer):

a. Fixed-route service: one or more buses that run on the same streets every trip every day.	72
b. Demand-responsive service: a vehicle that picks you up at your home, delivers you to your destination, then picks you up from your destination later and returns you to your home. You would have to call in advance each and every time you want this service, so it is not intended to be used for work-related trips.	12
c. Van-pool service: a vehicle is owned by the city and used by a group of people interested in riding together at the same times to destinations that make such an arrangement convenient, usually for work-related trips.	21
d. Car-pool service: a ride-matching system, probably Web-based, that is set up by the city to help you either offer rides or find rides with others, usually for a price negotiated by the provider and the rider. Car-pooling is most effective for ongoing daily use such as work trips, but could also be used for special-purpose or periodic trips.	8

Cost Question

Even though respondents were informed in the survey that the cost of providing a one-way trip may be about \$4, most were only willing to pay up to \$2, as shown below.

- a. \$.75 - this is the current cost for bus riders 42
- b. \$2 24
- c. \$3 5
- d. \$4 – the entire cost 12
- e. Don't care or don't know 2

Convenience Question

When asked how far they might be willing to walk to transit, a significant number of respondents replied that they were willing to walk from 3 to 4 blocks, which is somewhat farther than commonly planned for fixed-route systems.

- a. 1 block 6
- b. 2 blocks 17
- c. 3 blocks 20
- d. 4 blocks 22
- e. More than 4 blocks 12
- f. It must involve little or no walking 10

Other Comments

When given the opportunity to offer additional comments, many who responded opined on the advantages transit offers to the environment and traffic, and stated a need for more transit trips during the day to make the service more attractive and convenient. Table B includes all comments received.

Summary

A very small part of the North Liberty population participated in the survey, and even if every respondent who supports additional transit services used them, demand judged by survey response is weak.

Beyond the weakness in number of respondents, the survey results reveal substantial problems in providing additional cost-effective service:

- There were only 47 responses for daily weekday service, while 49 responses were for only periodic service. Only 19 and 11 responses were given for weekly Saturday and Sunday service, respectively; while 54 responses were for only periodic weekend service. Lack of a steady ridership base would make additional service very expensive.
- Service times desired were fairly evenly distributed throughout the day, with clustering at the morning and evening “peak” or rush hours. If service is not provided throughout the day as desired, many of the potential riders would likely not use the service, driving up the cost per trip.
- Very few of the responses indicated a willingness to pay more than \$.75 - \$2.00 for each trip, even though the costs per trip are much higher.

Some positive indications and potentials revealed by the survey responses include:

- The vast majority of respondents want to go to a very limited number of destinations, downtown Iowa City, University Hospitals, and Coral Ridge Mall, indicating that service targeted for those areas would produce the greatest potential benefits and potential cost-benefits.
- While fixed-route transit service was cited as most desirable by respondents, an interesting percentage of the total indicated an interest in van-pool service.
- Many respondents seem willing to walk up to 4 blocks to use a service. If that willingness proved true in practice, it would allow significant service coverage and ridership capture for minimal route miles.

Table A: Transit Survey Most Frequent Destinations

Amana	1
Coralville	1
CR	3
Coralville	1
Downtown	1
Downtown CV	1
Downtown IC	36
Dr	1
IC	2
Kirkwood	1
Mall	12
Mercy Hosp	2
NewPi	1
NL	1
NL Bars	1
Oakdale Campus	2
Rockwell Crlvl	1
Scott Ind Park	1
Shopping	1
Sports	3
Uofl	8
Uofl Hosp	25
VA	4

Table B: Transit Survey “Other” Comments (answers paraphrased for brevity)

1.	-
2.	-
3.	-
4.	-
5.	Minivan shuttle to mall. Supplement current route with added fixed route or dial-responsive at 6:30AM and 4:15PM, then shuttle to mall during mid-day.
6.	-
7.	More buses will mean more usage.
8.	-
9.	Interest is largely environmental.
10.	-
11.	Second later AM and PM bus would allow better timing for work.
12.	Would use if more buses to accommodate work hours: 8:30 – 5:00

13.	Would bike to Rec Center to catch bus, but has to use Penn Street.
14.	-
15.	Would consider using train to Uofl Hospital.
16.	-
17.	Alternative & effective transportation is a must. Anything benefitting seniors will benefit all. Consider buses that run toward high schools.
18.	-
19.	-
20.	-
21.	-
22.	Needs run from mall around 4:30 – 5:00 for riders who want to get home earlier than the 5:45 bus.
23.	-
24.	Need more options during day in case you need to stay late or leave on time.
25.	Do this ASAP. Also support rail from CR-NL-Coralville-IC.
26.	Wheelchair user needs accessible buses or more frequent SEATS service.
27.	(not readable)
28.	-
29.	It would be nice to have a bus to take to doctor or anywhere.
30.	Would like van service.
31.	-
32.	-
33.	-
34.	-
35.	-
36.	-
37.	Would be great to have bus from CR – Kirkwood & Downtown.
38.	-
39.	-
40.	-
41.	-
42.	-
43.	Would like service from NL to VA loop. Currently, many NL residents drive to Oakdale and ride Cambus to VA loop for free. Works at VA from 7:00 – 3:30.
44.	Current shuttle is great. Would be more convenient to offer routes during day and also an evening trip like 5:30.
45.	-

46.	We really need a bus from North Liberty.
47.	-
48.	One reason does not ride now is that sidewalks and trails are not shoveled earlier in winter. Not enough bus stops. Need 2 buses in case I miss one. Would take bus daily if these items were fixed.
49.	Rail route would be perfect if it was regularly scheduled.
50.	Rail service from CR to IC.
51.	Not enough options to be home earlier or leave later.
52.	-
53.	University student. Takes current shuttle and loves it. Was a factor in moving here.
54.	Would like to see route earlier than 7:00AM and earlier depart from IC than 5:00. Would like fewer stops so trip would be shorter. Van or car pool a good idea.
55.	-
56.	-
57.	Current service would be perfect, but does not want to rely on service that runs only once each way.
58.	Should have provisions for bicycle riders such as bike racks on vehicles.
59.	Run same as IC & Coralville with same rates. Using pass common to Coralville and IC systems works well for me. Keeps cars off the roads. Using a transit system & making it work will take education and time. Fewer cars on roads mean fewer accidents and lower emergency services budgets. Would like to serve if a board is appointed.
60.	Need larger bus in morning. Fees should be kept low to accommodate low/fixed income/elderly/disabled households & route times geared for same.
61.	-
62.	Would be nice to have service from NL to mall.
63.	-
64.	-
65.	Having service often is important to me, so is available if I have to work late.
66.	-
67.	Uses current bus in PM, but does not leave early enough in AM. What about bus on Dubuque street, and also 965 for trailer court residents. Would participate in focus group.
68.	Because of limited times, is not available for everyone.
69.	-
70.	-
71.	City should spend more time bringing in more businesses and residential development and not worry about transportation.
72.	-
73.	Need better taxi service.
74.	Current service is nice but leaves and returns too late for me.

75.	-
76.	Offer more route times.
77.	-
78.	Busing saves money if thought of as part of infrastructure. Reduces need for lanes, parking, fuel, etc. No system is self-supporting.
79.	-
80.	-
81.	-
82.	Elderly now and will likely need assistance getting around in future.
83.	Cab is \$25 to hospital, doctor visits, tests. We are elderly.
84.	-
85.	-
86.	Get us to the mall and we can go anywhere!
87.	-
88.	-
89.	-
90.	Survey should have been Web-based.
91.	-
92.	Would like stop closer to house on South Front. Would like bus leaving at 6:30AM.
93.	Bus or van to west NL would be nice. Also, more than one route time.
94.	Currently rides bus (resident of Coralville). More runs would be great.
95.	-
96.	-
97.	A route throughout the day would be great, especially during the summer.
98.	Bus should run from early morning until 11:00PM.
99.	We need this bus to run all day!
100.	-
101.	Has clients that would use public transportation (Lions Dr).
102.	-
103.	-
104.	Consider Facebook page to connect drivers with riders for car-pooling.
105.	-