

**Senior Citizens Advisory Committee
Second Local Transportation Survey
Subjective Analysis**

In an effort to validate the information gathered in the first transportation survey conducted during April of this year, the Senior Citizens Advisory Committee (SCAC) conducted a follow-up phone survey. The survey included 15 questions related to senior transportation, perceptions of how well seniors are supported in Montclair, and their awareness of services available to them.

To assure consistency, all phone interviewers conducted practice interviews with a benchmark respondent, and their recorded responses were examined for accuracy. 50 households were contacted and the answers reflect responses from 58 seniors.

Conclusions:

The responses to the follow-up survey indicate that the information provided by the April survey was on target. The general perception of the senior community is that there are concerns about high taxes, pedestrian safety, need for a senior center, and mostly a need for better transportation options.

Two glaring conclusions of the survey:

- 1. Current senior bus service is ineffective and not responsive to the needs of the persons it is intended to serve.**
- 2. Montclair is not perceived to be senior friendly**

Survey Responses:

The basic issues addressed by the follow-up survey follow, and are categorized. Simply reporting responses as either positive or negative does not reflect the feelings of seniors as well as their reading their comments.

Issue One: The usefulness of the Senior Bus

The comments demonstrate that there are significant shortcomings with the Senior Bus Service in Montclair.

- a. "not useful; parks near me but I don't see it go anywhere"
- b. "doesn't know anything about the senior bus"
- c. "never used it"
- d. "add more stops to route"

- e. "better"
- f. "needs to be expanded"
- g. "only rode in bus once"
- h. "seating uncomfortable for a large person"

A follow-up question asked how many times the senior bus was used in the current year, and last year:

Respondents: 58
Respondents that have ever ridden the bus: 3
Rode the bus this year or last year: 2
Rode the bus last year: 2
Rode bus this year and last year: 1

Only one
the bus
and they

senior indicated riding
last year and this year,
only used it 1 time on

those occasions. Another senior who did not utilize the bus this year, did use it 12 time last year.

Issue Two: Why the bus isn't being used

The responses were as follows:

- a. "Didn't know about it"
- b. "Not a senior" (Some households have both a senior and a non-senior.)
- c. "I don't know where it is; no advertising or info."
- d. "able to walk and drive to all destinations"
- e. "Other towns have baskets at crosswalks on one side of the street. If you want to cross, you pick up an orange banner and wave it. Afterward, you deposit the banner on the other side of the street."
- f. "Still drive. Mother needs door-to-door service."
- g. "knows nothing about bus"
- h. "the routes are not good"
- i. "Never used or had any information on bus"
- j. "I want to come and go myself. I see no advantage."
- k. "Not sure of bus schedules or stops."
- l. "Didn't know about it."
- m. "Not close enough."
- n. "Heard about it but did not get information."
- o. "No need at this time."
- p. "Can't take you to doctor's appointments."
- q. "Not lived here long, about 6 months."
- r. "Not lived here long enough, about 1 ½ years."
- s. 21 respondents are still driving, or see do not see the senior bus as an alternative.

Approximately 1/3 of the respondents are still using cars. While it would probably be environmentally beneficial to have them use the senior bus, it also illustrates the need to address seniors at all levels of mobility.

Response “e.” doesn’t really address the issue, but nevertheless seems like a solution to be considered.

Issue Three: Continuing to live in Montclair

The responses to questions about remaining in Montclair after retirement were sparse. The few answers included:

- a. “I hope so.”
- b. “Maybe, if I can.”
- c. “Want to sell house; not sure where to move to – locally or leave area.”
- d. “If leaving it will be because of taxes.”
- e. “Probably not.”

2 Respondents indicated they will stay in Montclair.

The small number of responses may be indicative of people not giving much thought to leaving the town, or it may reflect a great deal of uncertainty about the future. The issue probably requires follow-up to address the tenor of seniors.

Issue Four: Is Montclair senior friendly

Instead of counting yes and no responses, it is more instructive to simply report the comments:

- a. “Not particularly”
- b. “Lack of transportation options; no senior center.”
- c. “sidewalks are terrible; pedestrian safety”
- d. “taxes too high; meters broken; streets too hard to walk; parking terrible; no senior services or center”
- e. “pleasant place; very walkable; good sidewalks”
- f. “not very; lack of parking near destinations; lack of senior center and centralized info for seniors”
- g. “no senior center”
- h. “taxes too high”
- i. “Montclair does not acknowledge needs of seniors. Only reason she has stayed in Montclair, is that she has lived here so long.”
- j. “High taxes; also residents move away once their children finish school. Montclair has become a commuter town.”
- k. “sidewalks are terrible – have fallen”
- l. “Cars don’t stop at crosswalks.. It is very difficult to cross.”

- m. "Yes and no. Need senior center that is accessible. Transportation is a problem."
- n. "No real services for seniors. Not good quality of life for seniors. Seniors are forgotten here. Community place is needed."
- o. "more programming is needed"
- p. "No provisions for seniors who are free and available – e.g. exercise classes and lectures."
- q. "I can drive now, but I feel we need a center and a tax consideration for seniors."
- r. "I haven't thought about it."
- s. "There are few services for seniors."
- t. "Too high taxes."
- u. "No good transportation for seniors."
- v. *"Generally a good place."*
- w. "Does nothing for seniors."
- x. "Taxes too high; bad transportation and services."
- y. "Taxes too high; too few services."
- z. "People are not friendly."
- aa. *"Aware that seniors make a contribution and are respected."*
- bb. "Not overly friendly."
- cc. "Transportation difficult; taxes high."

The three responses that are positive are in italics. The overall indication is that seniors do not feel that the town is friendly towards seniors.