

NESTS Transit Planning Project

A Study for the
Ithaca-Tompkins County Transportation Council

MULTISYSTEMS

May 22, 2002

Study Team

- **Multisystems**
 - Transit planning specialists
 - Leads team
- **CAST of Cornell University**
 - Survey research
- **Creighton Manning Engineering**
 - Traffic and facilities analysis
 - Consultant for NEST Study

Goal of the Study

- **Provide an attractive transit system that will support the NESTS Livability Goals**
 - **Reduce use of personal motor vehicles**
 - **Reduce traffic on neighborhood streets**
 - **Improve mobility with a multimodal system**
 - **Enhance coordination with pedestrian and bicycle modes**
 - **Support land use policies and patterns**

Our Approach

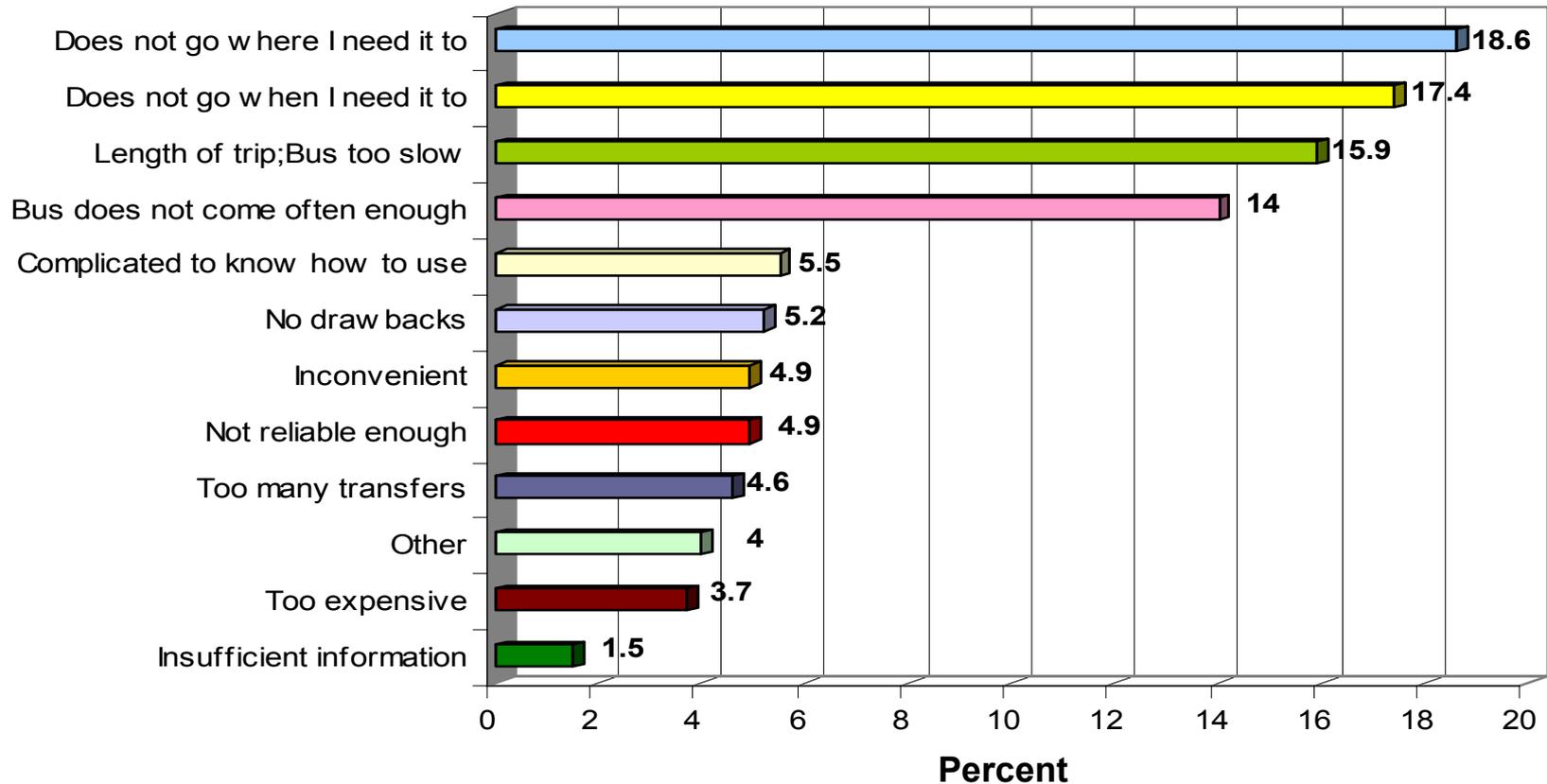
- **Market research**
- **Service planning**
- **Facilities planning**
- **Public participation**
- **Policy options**
- **Development of preferred strategy**

Market Research

- **15-minute telephone survey**
- **500 households randomly selected**
- **Target regular travelers in study area**
 - City and Town of Ithaca
 - Cayuga Heights
 - Town and Village of Lansing
 - Dryden and Caroline within ZIP code 14850
- **Response rate: 70%**
- **Current transit users comprise 1/3 of sample**
- **Other 2/3 are non-users**

Why Don't You Use Transit?

“Transit doesn't go where, when I need to go...”



Potential Users

If transit service was available so it was easy to use, convenient, inexpensive, and information was readily available...

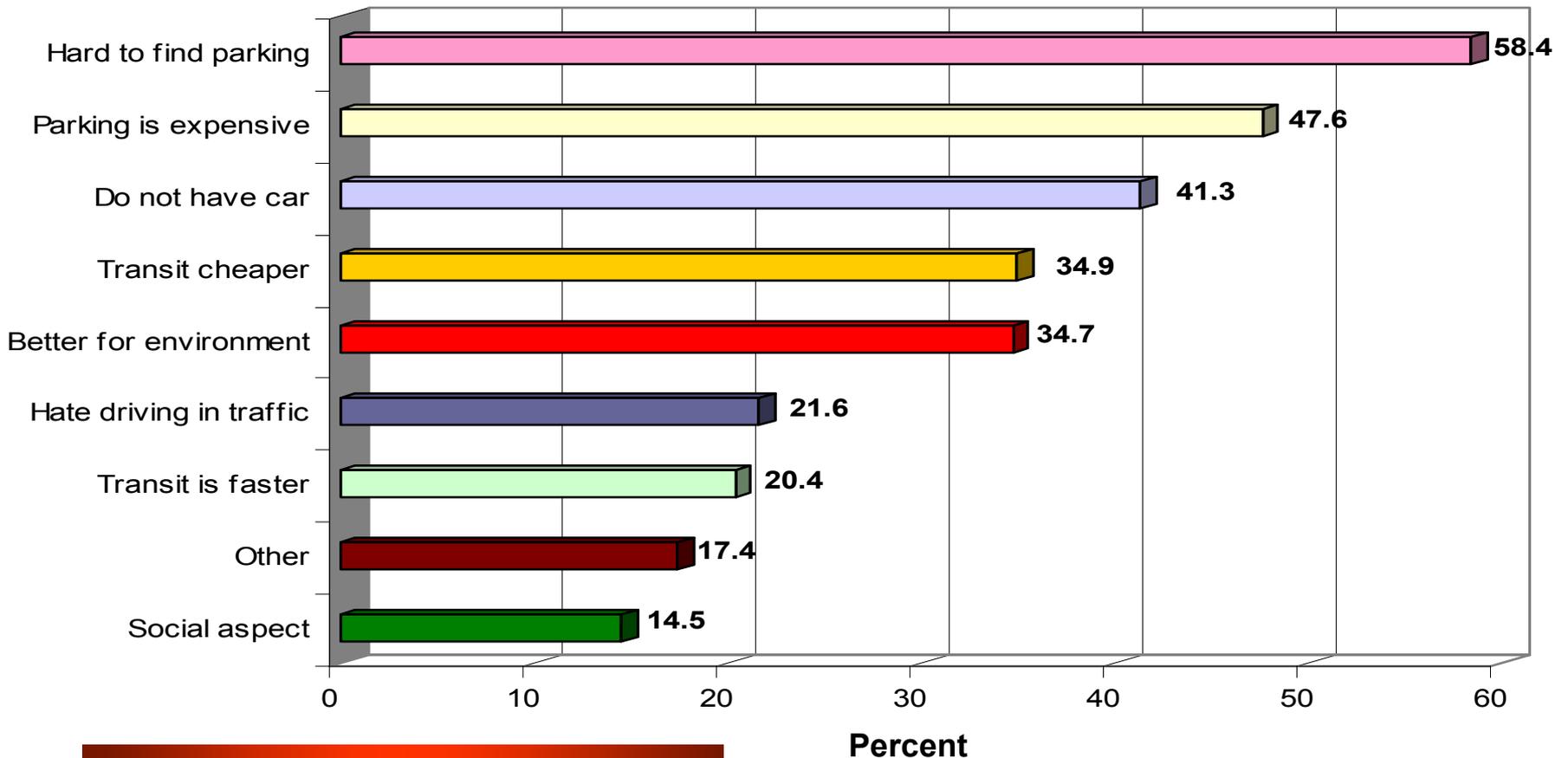
- **59% of non-users would use transit**
 - Most of these would use occasionally/rarely
 - Typical trip purposes (work, school, shopping, etc.) cited almost equally

Important Service Features

- **People would ride more if...**
 - **Bus ran every 10 minutes (instead of every 30)**
 - **It took 10 minutes longer than driving (instead of 20)**
 - **Fare was 50¢ lower**
 - **There were no transfers (instead of 1 transfer for non-downtown trips)**
- **Evening (7 to 9 p.m.) more important than Sunday**
- **Saturday more important than weekday late evening (9 p.m. to midnight)**

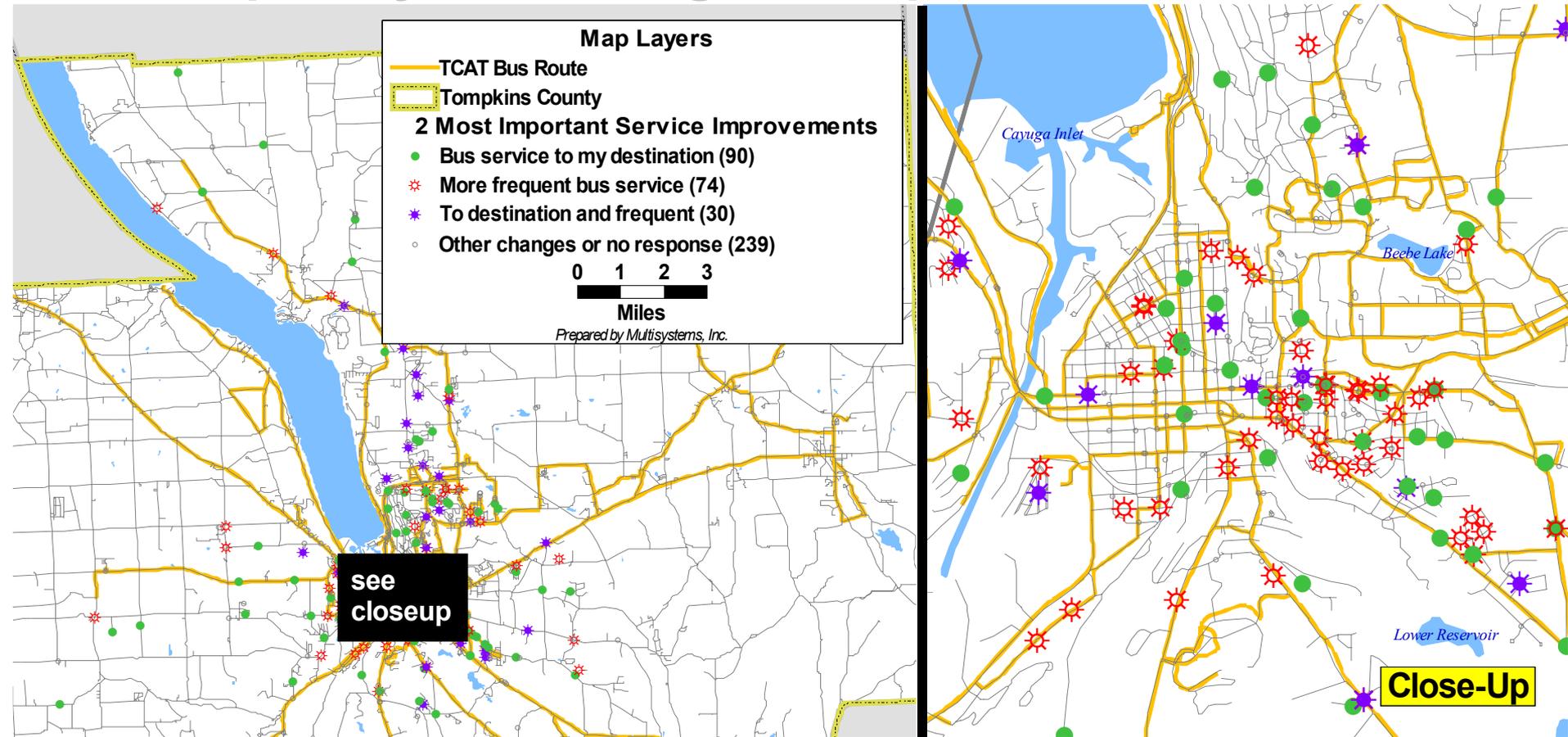
Current Users: Why Do You Ride?

“Mainly because of parking issues...”



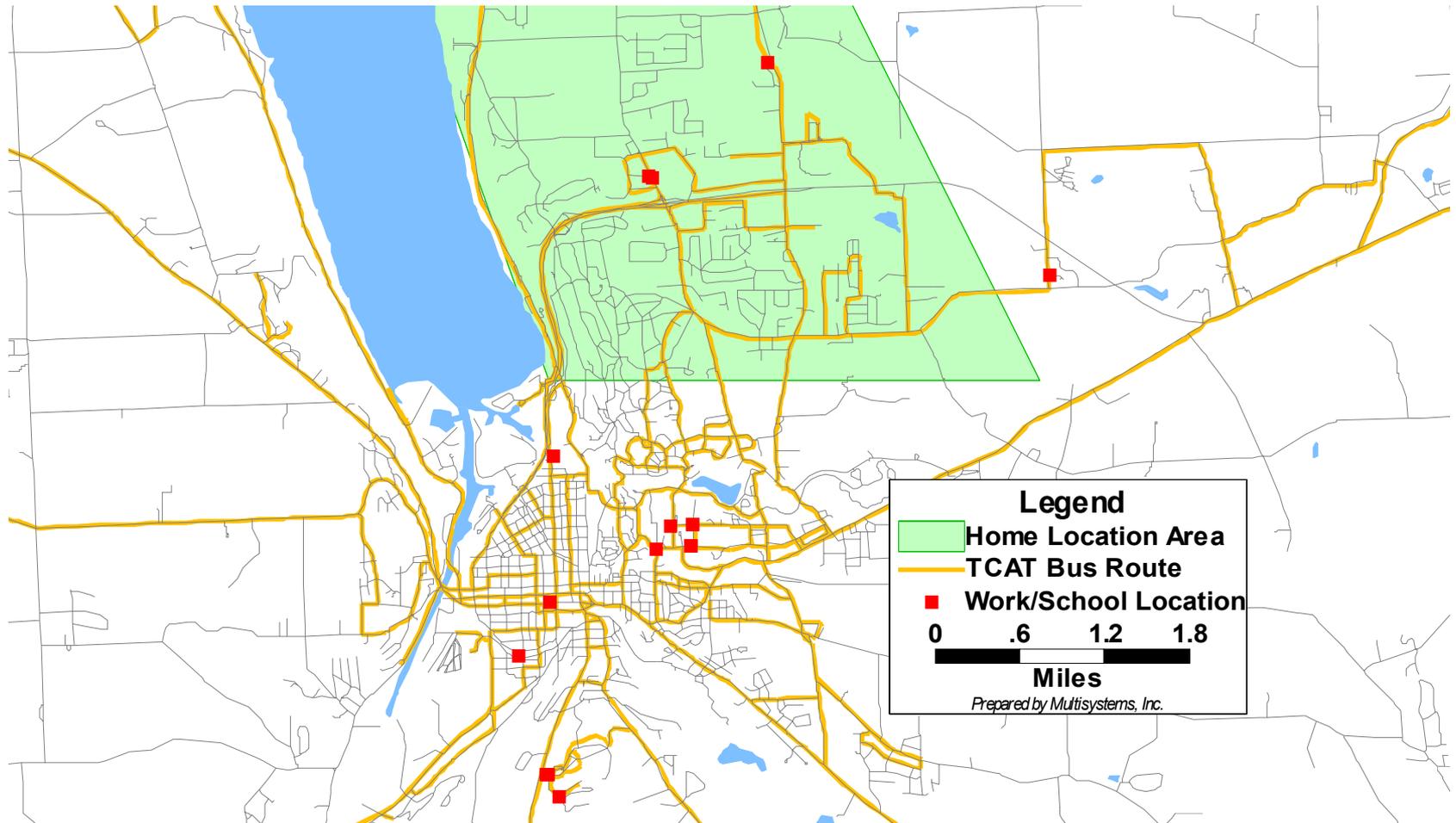
Important Service Improvements

Increased frequency in downtown area;
Frequency & coverage in Triphammer Rd. corridor



Potential Park and Ride Shuttle

Some potential for shuttle to Cornell



Hopeful Signs

- **Of Non-Users**

- **59% are receptive to transit**
- **46% would use a park/ride shuttle if parking fees rose by \$3/day**
- **50% find flexible service attractive**
- **43% find EZPass-type program attractive**

- **Of Users**

- **79% would ride more if buses ran more often**
- **64% would ride more with later evening service**

Service Enhancement Concepts

- **Improve service on current routes**
 - **Span of service (evening and weekend)**
 - **Frequency of service**
- **Develop new routes**
 - **Serving new areas**
 - **Offering faster and more direct service**
 - **Making pick-up/drop-off more convenient**
- **Improve connections between routes**

Faster and More Direct Service

- **Making existing routes more direct**
 - Routes 31 and 32
- **Introducing new express routes**
 - Service to Cornell
 - Service to downtown Ithaca
- **Timed transfers from feeder routes**
 - At a new suburban transit center

More Convenient Service

- **Flexible service**

- **Appropriate for suburban areas**
- **Can deviate from route to pick up/drop off riders at their doors**
- **Requires advance notice (or subscription)**

- **Circulator routes**

- **Route 13/ Triphammer Road retail area**
- **Cayuga Heights - Cornell**

Neighborhood Circulators

Mercedes Medio



Mercedes Sprinter



Orion II

Facility Enhancement Concepts

- **Passenger facilities**

- Transit center at Route 13/Triphammer Road
- Bus shelters throughout area

- **Transit priority treatments**

- Signal priority (for schedule adherence)
- Bridge signals (for transit preference)

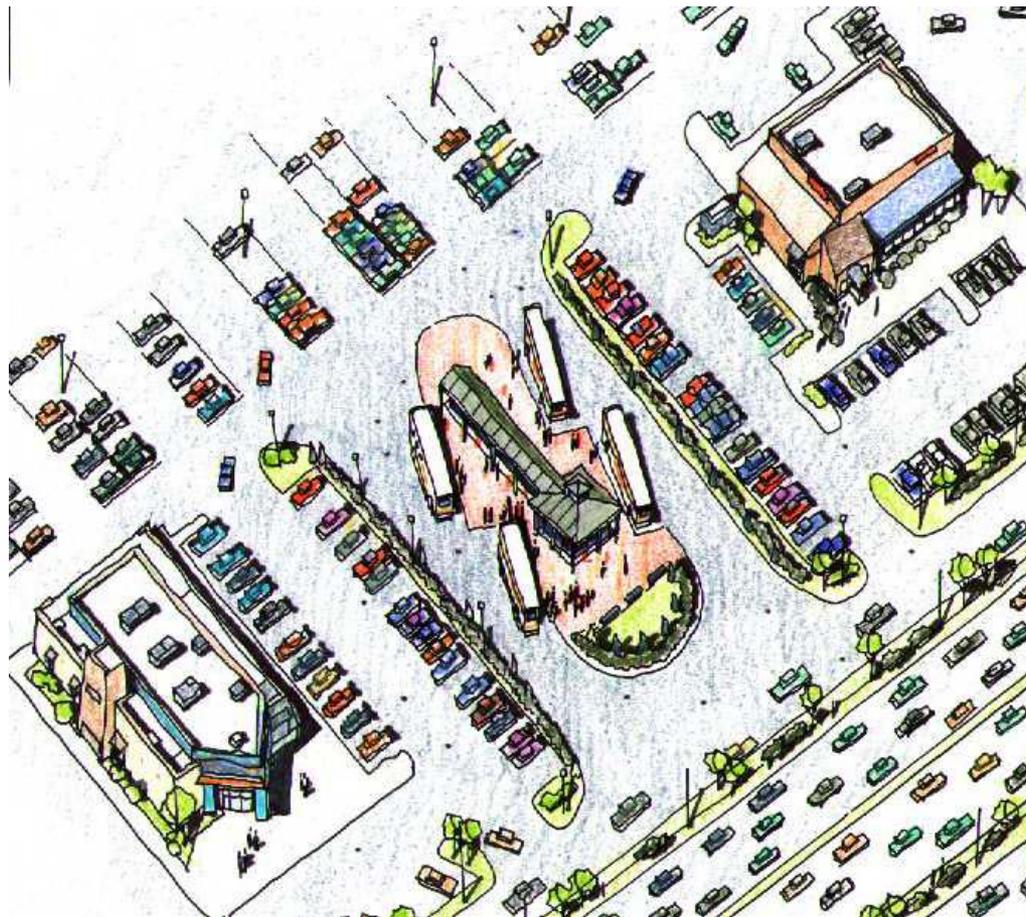
- **Traveler information systems**

- Web-based real-time bus arrival information
- Countdown signs at stops

Transit Center Features

- **Off-street bus bays**
- **Static and real-time information**
 - Schedules, maps
 - Countdown to arrival time of next bus
- **Sheltered/indoor waiting areas**
- **Protected pedestrian access**
- **Parking, pick-up/drop-off facilities**
- **Telephone, taxi stand, other amenities**

Sample Transit Center Layout



Example: Bellevue, Washington



Real-Time Information



Los Angeles MetroRapid Bus

Policy Options

- **Incentives to use transit**
 - Unlimited use passes (such as UPass)
 - EZPass-type payment system
 - Guaranteed ride home
- **Disincentives to driving**
 - Parking fee increases
 - Parking restrictions
 - Auto-restricted zones

Feasibility of Recommendations

- **Institutional**
- **Operational**
- **Physical**
- **Fiscal**
- **Cost-Effectiveness**

Next Steps

- **Complete service and facilities planning**
- **Incorporate feedback from public**
- **Complete evaluation of alternatives**
- **Analyze policy options**
- **Develop recommended plan**
- **Determine feasibility**

Open House Stations

- **Telephone Survey Results**
- **Initial Service Proposals**
- **Facilities and Technology**
- **Your Comments**