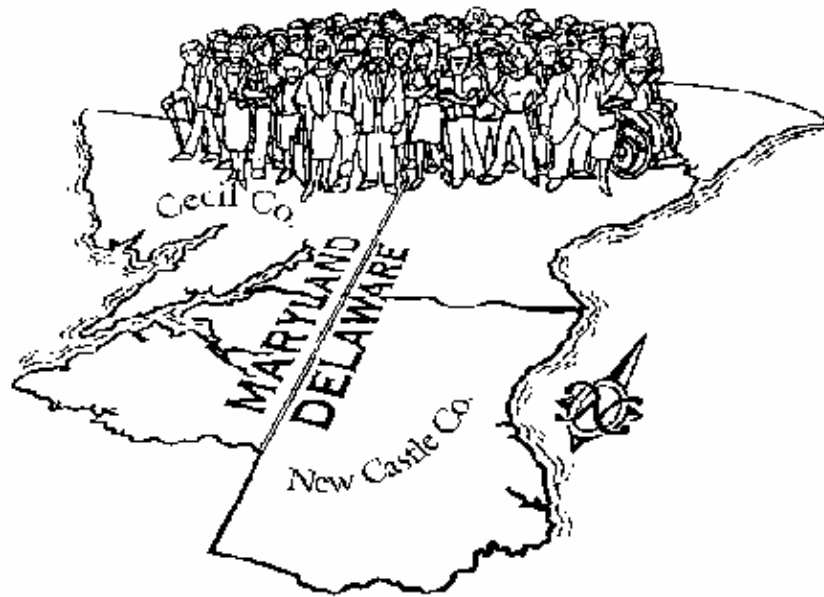


WILMAPCO

2009

Cecil County Public Opinion Survey Results Summary



*Survey completed by Public National Research Center Inc.
Report created by WILMAPCO September 2009*

www.wilmapco.org

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WILMAPCO

About the Survey

PURPOSE

The Wilmington Area Planning Council (WILMAPCO) conducts a Public Opinion Survey annually, to gather information on the transportation choices made by residents of Cecil County, Maryland and to gauge their perceptions and thoughts about transportation and the policies and strategies contained in the 2030 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP). New Castle County residents are included in this survey every four years, concurrent with RTP updates. This is the eleventh annual survey we have conducted. Specifically, the survey identified community:

- Perceptions about transportation
- Perceptions about congestion
- Resident mode choice
- Familiarity with WILMAPCO

PROCESS

The survey was conducted through telephone interviews using randomly selected telephone numbers. Surveyors interviewed 600 Cecil County residents, ages 18 years and older. Aspen Media and Market Research, a survey call center, conducted the interviews between July 6 and July 13. Each survey took approximately 10 minutes. Interview responses were imported into a dataset for analysis by National Research Center, Inc. The sample selection has a confidence level of 95% and a sampling error of +/- 4%. Surveyors had a response rate of approximately 21%.

RESULTS

The results summarize responses about satisfaction with the transportation system, travel mode choice, perception of congestion, ratings of public transportation, familiarity with WILMAPCO and the demographics of those surveyed. The results are provided with comparisons of previous years when applicable.

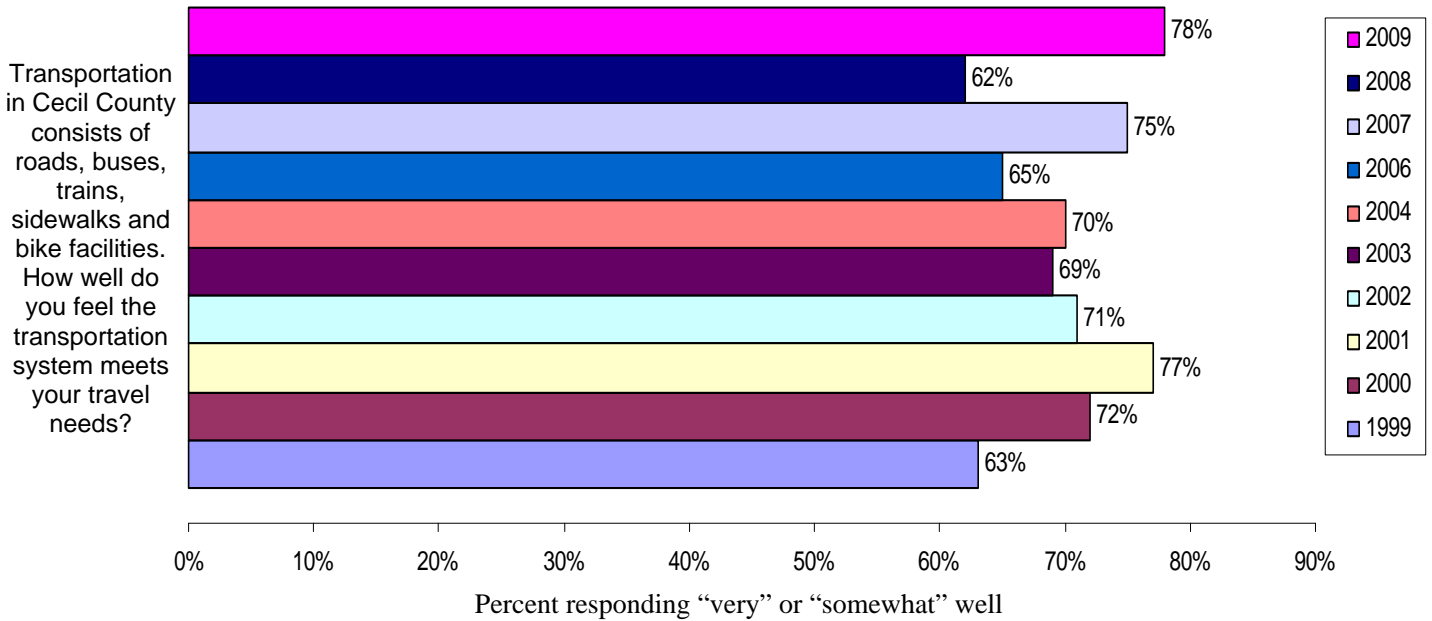
This is a summary providing highlights of the survey. If you would like more details on the complete report, please contact:

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Perceptions of the Transportation System

Those interviewed were asked how well they felt the current transportation system meets their travel needs. Over three-quarters of respondents reported feeling that their transportation needs were “somewhat” or “very” well met in 2009, up from 62% in 2008 and slightly higher than results from 2007 (see Figure 1).

Figure 1: Rating of current transportation system



When asked to rate the condition of roads and highways in Cecil County, almost two-thirds of respondents (64%) thought they were “excellent” or “good” (see Figure 2), similar to ratings in 2008 and up from 2007. The portion of respondents who felt that the condition of county roads and highways had gotten worse dropped from 22% in 2007 to 13% in 2008 and 10% in 2009 (see Figure 3). About a third of respondents said they had noticed improvements made by the State to the transportation system; about a quarter of respondents noticed improvements in 2007.

Figure 2: Ratings of the Overall Condition of Roads and Highways

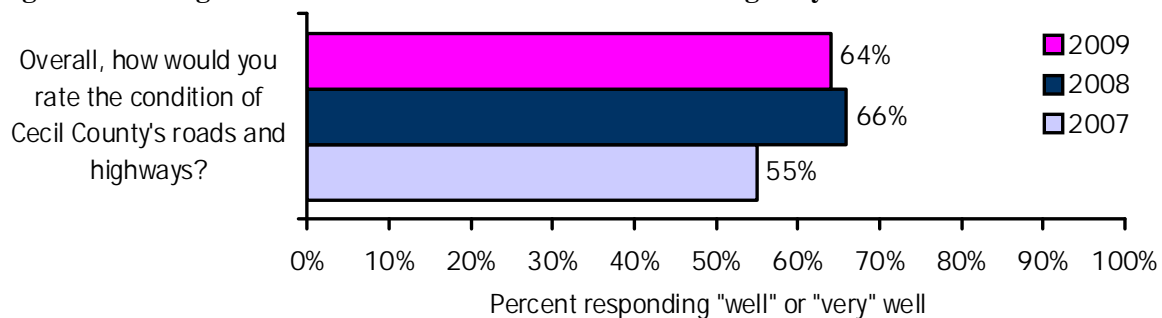
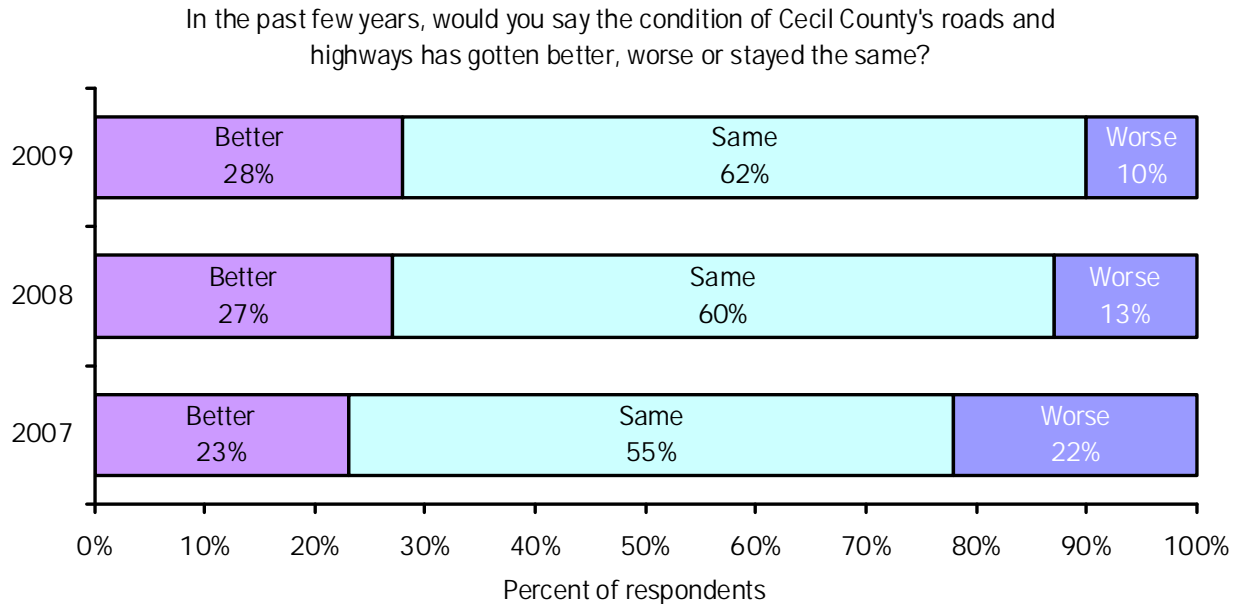


Figure 3: Resident perception of roadway condition



Perceptions of Congestion

Employed respondents were asked how often they experienced traffic congestion during their work commute. Fewer respondents reported finding themselves in traffic congestion on the way to work in 2008 and 2009 compared to 2007 (see Figure 4). Respondents were asked two questions related to the lengths of their commutes: one asked the average length and the other asked how long their commute would be if there was no congestion. The responses between these questions were compared to gauge the perceived change in the length of the commute. The percent of respondents indicating that their commutes would stay the same if there was no congestion has increased in 2008 and 2009 compared to 2009 (see Figure 5).

Figure 4: Perceived Change in Commute without Traffic Congestion

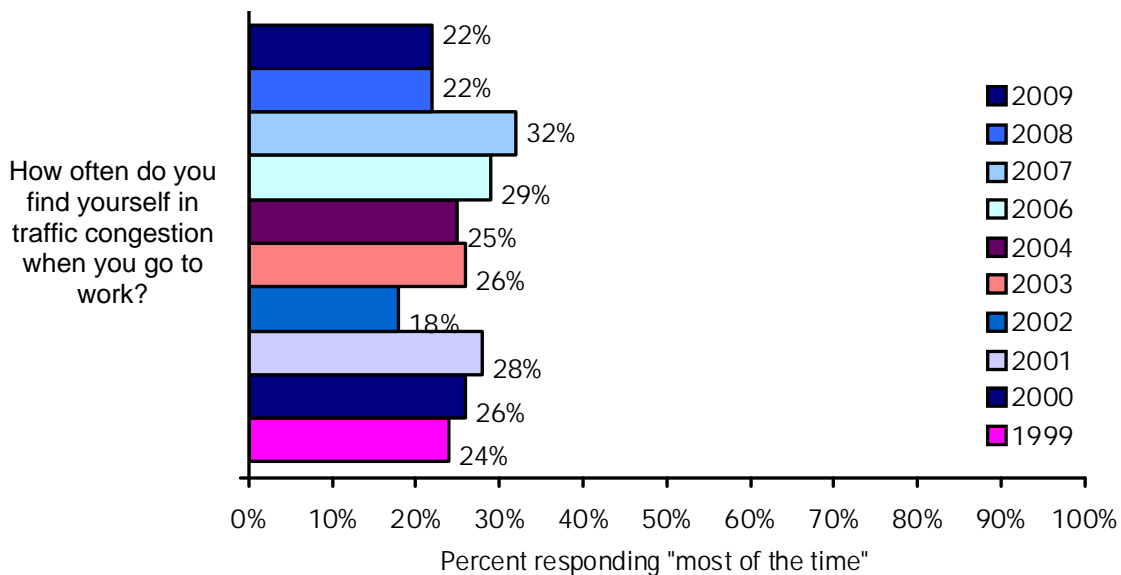
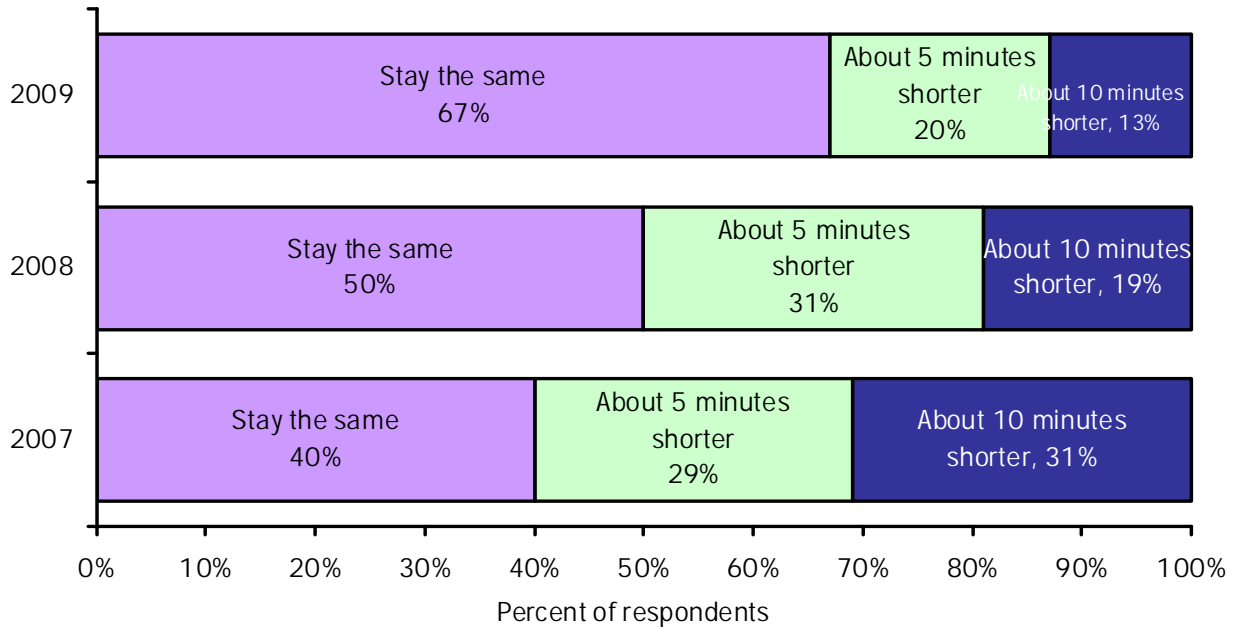


Figure 5: Perceived Change in Commute without Traffic Congestion by Year



Residents' Mode Choice

In general, Cecil County residents feel they do not have a lot of transportation options; in 2009, 79% of respondents reported they have “few” options. However, this represents a decrease compared to 2008 and 2007, although this percentage is higher than what was observed in 2006 (see Figure 6). Respondents’ assessment of how well the government is doing in improving accessibility to alternative modes of transportation was rather low; about 8 in 10 respondents felt government agencies were doing a “fair” or “poor” job, similar to ratings given in 2007 and 2008. (see Figure 7).

Figure 6: Perceptions of Availability of Transportation Options by Year

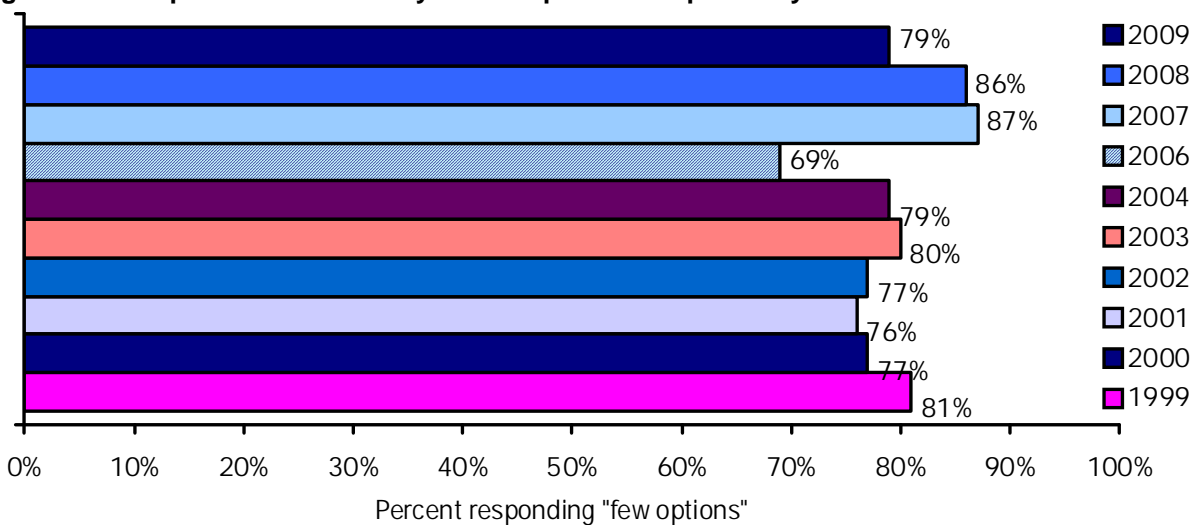
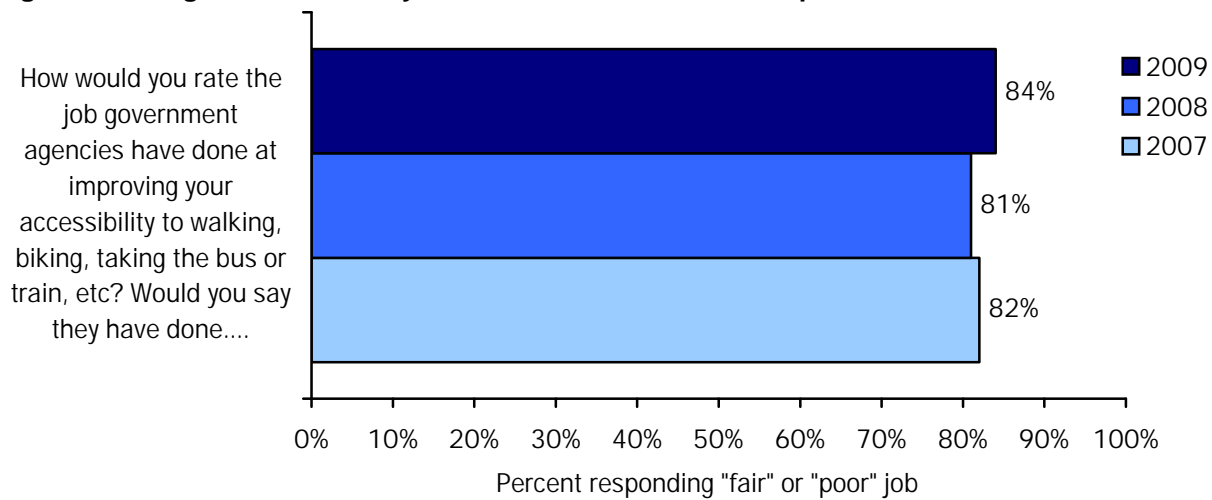
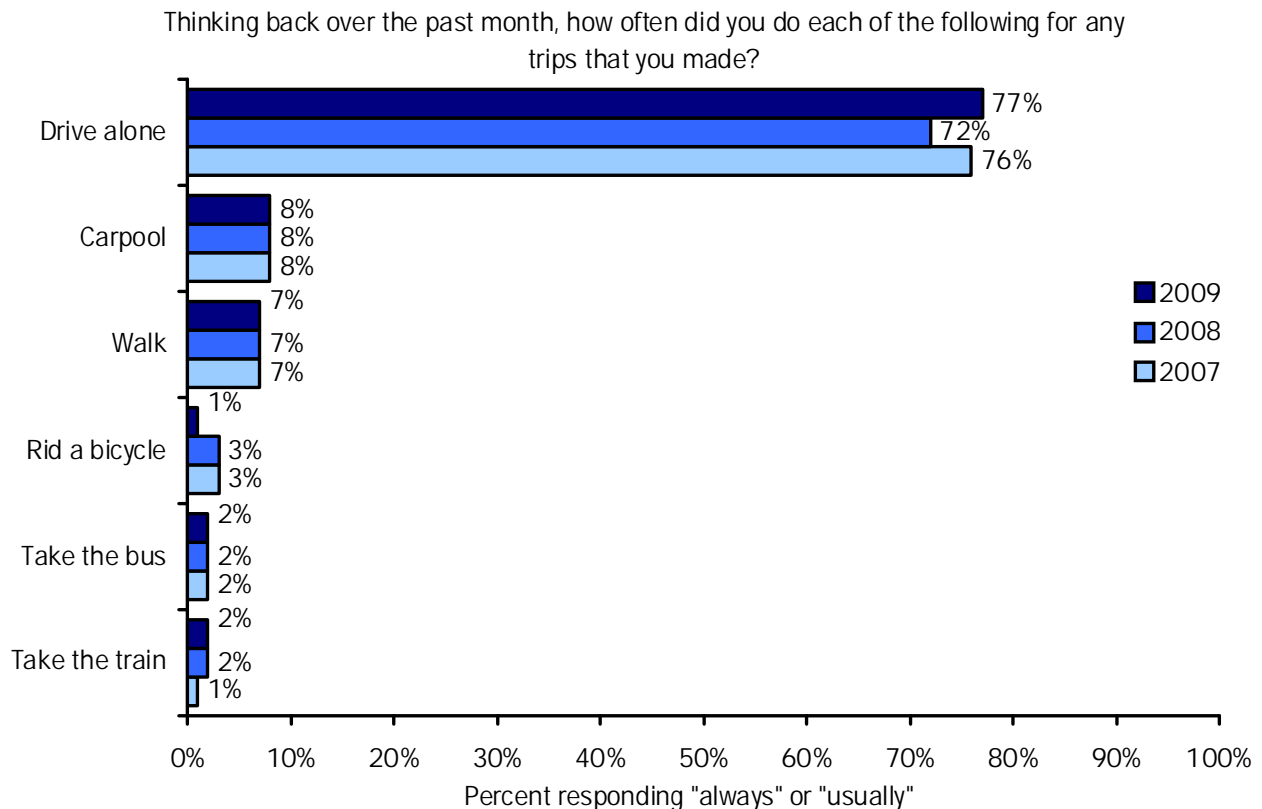


Figure 7: Ratings of Accessibility of Alternative Modes of Transportation



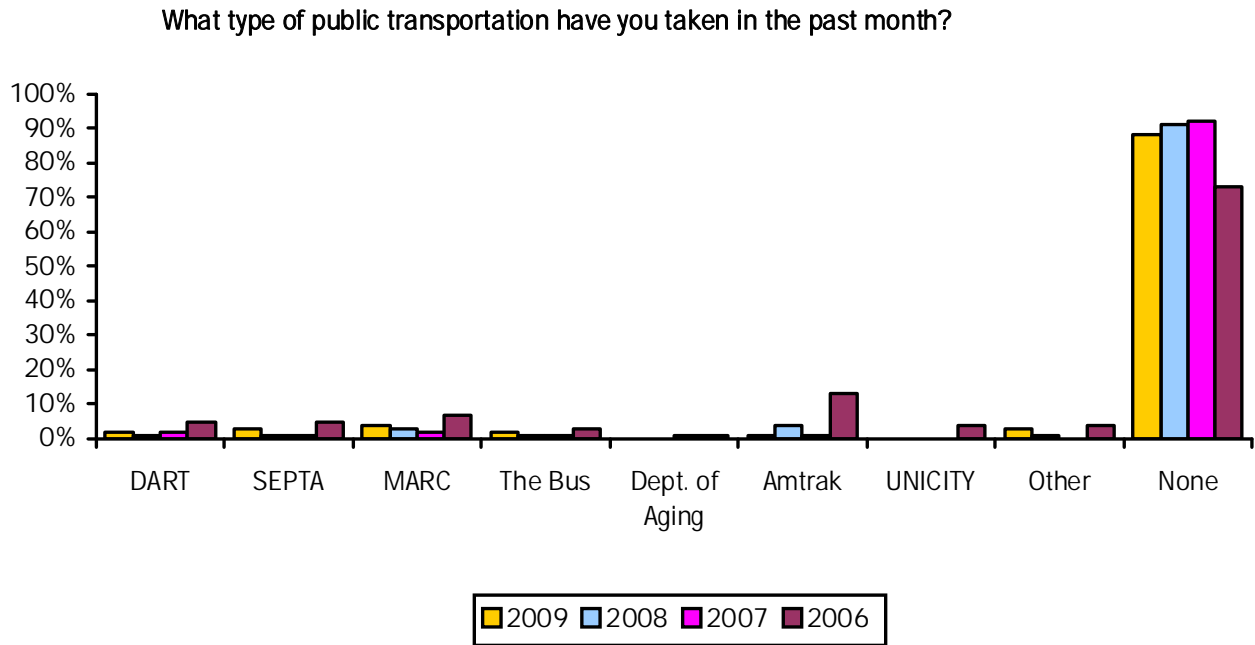
For most respondents, the vast majority of trips they made were made by driving alone (see Figure 8). Among employed respondents, 89% reported that they usually drove alone for the work commute, similar to the proportions observed in 2008 and 2007. Employed respondents were asked whether their type of employment permitted them to work out of their home. Compared to 2007, fewer respondents reported being able to do so (28% versus 38% in 2007). Of those, 64% were able to telecommute from work and 21% were in a home-based business.

Figure 8: Respondents' Mode Use by Year



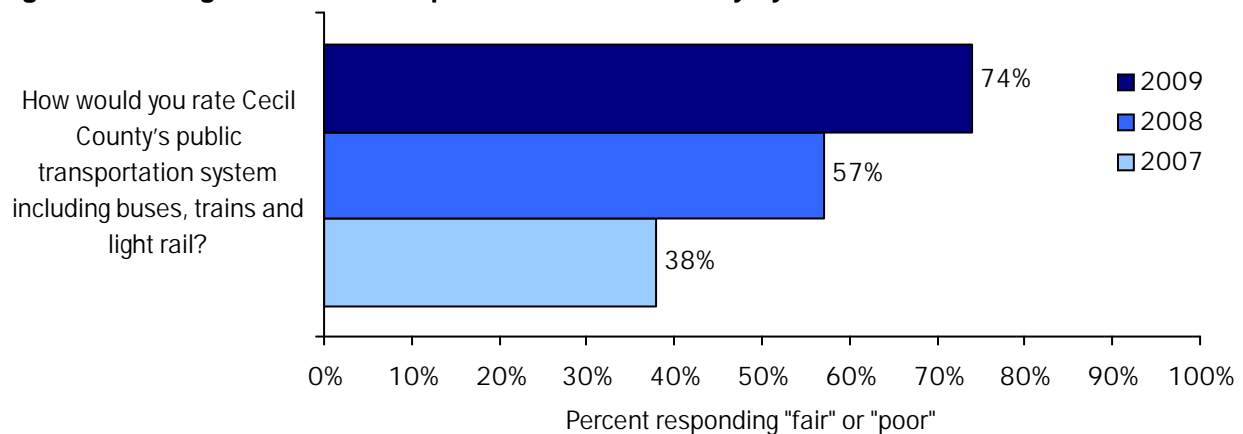
Respondents were asked whether they had used any public transportation in the last month. Similar to 2007 and 2008, close to 9 in 10 respondents said they had not used any mass transit in the last month; any particular bus or train had been used by only 1% to 3% of respondents in 2007, 2008 and 2009. In 2006, however, 13% of respondents reported having used Amtrak (see Figure 9).

Figure 9: Respondents' public transportation mode choice



When asked to rate the public transportation system in Cecil County, ratings have improved from 2007. While still rated rather low, only 66% of respondents rated the public transportation system as “fair” or “poor” in 2009 compared to 75% in 2008 and 83% in 2007 (see Figure 10). Additionally, when asked whether the mass transit system had gotten better, gotten worse or stayed about the same over the past few years, the proportion of respondents that thought it had deteriorated decreased from 15% in 2007 to 2% in 2008 and 3% in 2009.

Figure 10: Ratings of Public Transportation in Cecil County by Year



Familiarity with WILMAPCO

Only about 3 in 20 survey participants said they were familiar with WILMAPCO (see Figure 11). When asked how they would rate their opportunities to participate in transportation planning, most respondents (80%) considered their opportunities to be just “fair” or “poor” (see Figure 12). There was no clear consensus on the preferred way to communicate with planners. About a third of respondents stated they preferred using a Web site. The favorability of public meetings dropped somewhat since 2007, when it was the preferred mode of 30% of respondents, compared to 25% in 2009 (see Figure 13). Although the ratings of opportunities to participate in transportation planning were low, about one-third of those completing the survey said they were interested in receiving free newsletters or public meeting announcements from WILMAPCO regarding future transportation plans in their area.

Figure 11: Familiarity with WILMAPCO

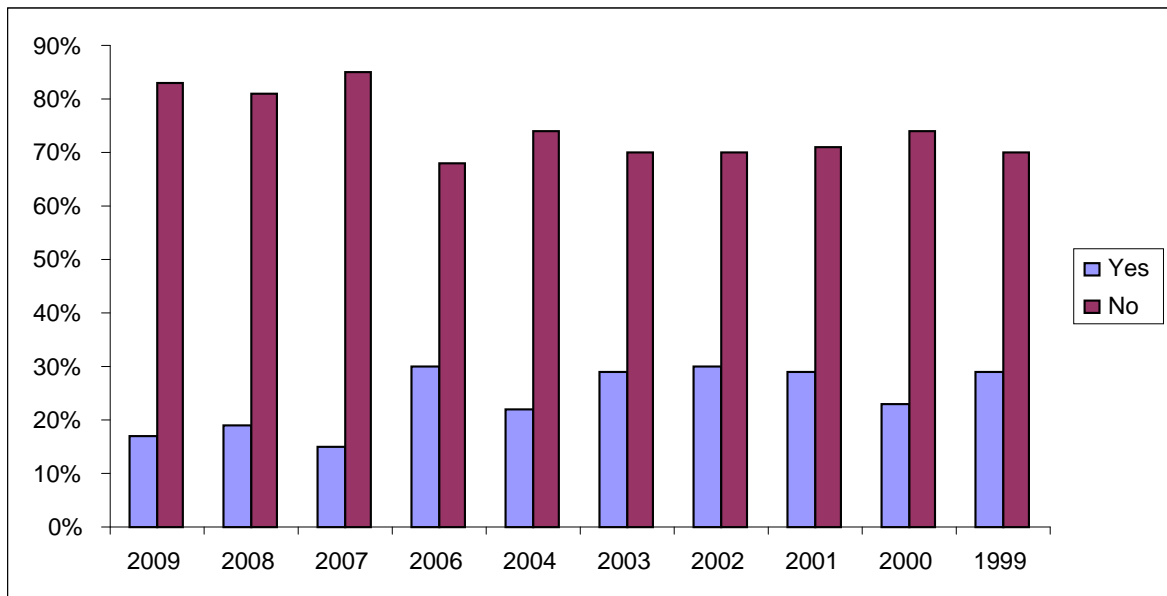


Figure 12: Ratings of Opportunities to Participate in Transportation Planning by Year

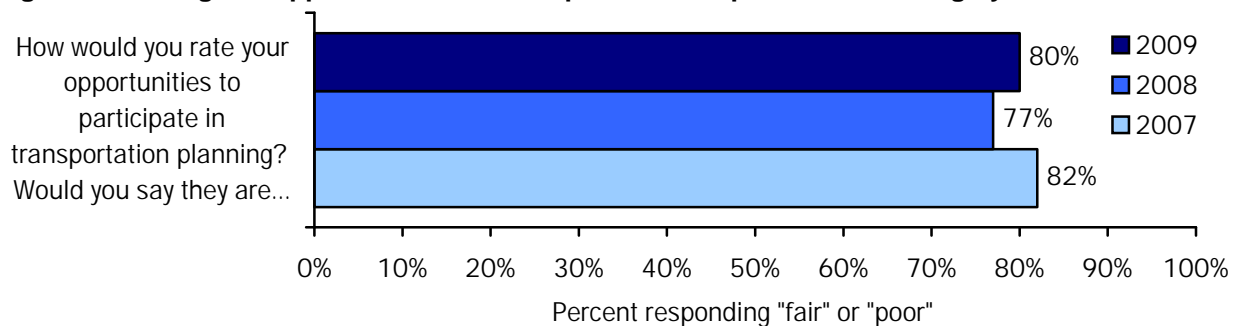
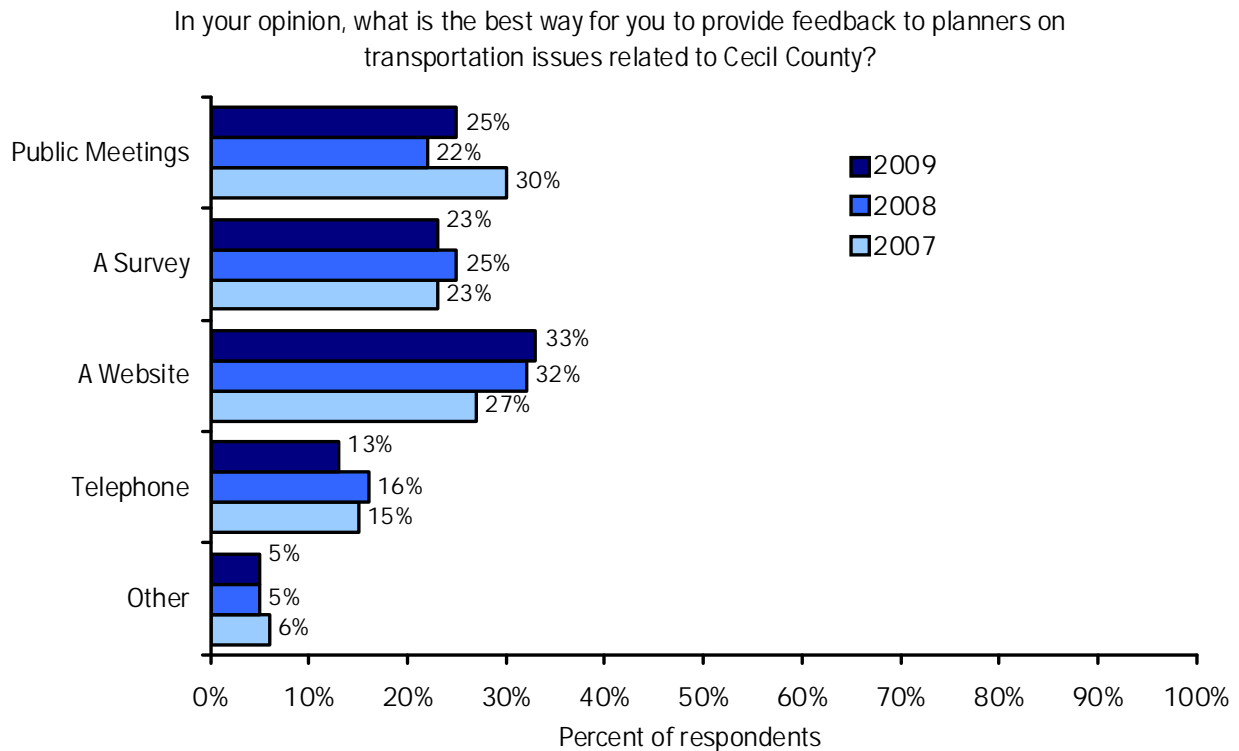


Figure 13: Respondents' Preferred Method for Providing Feedback to Planners by Year



Who we surveyed

DEMOGRAPHICS

This survey group consisted of 48% male and 52% female participants, the majority of whom identify themselves as white (91%). Fifty-eight percent of respondents reported their highest level of education as high school graduate or some college. Overall, the majority of respondents (40%) were between the ages of 30 and 49. Forty-five percent of respondents stated that their income is over \$80,000 per year. Nearly half of respondents have lived in Cecil County for more than 20 years or all of their life (48%), and approximately one third (36%) have two motor vehicles in their household.