



Phase II Outreach Summary and TDP Recommendations

**Capital District Transportation Authority
Transit Development Plan**

September 2024

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Introduction

Phase II of public outreach aims to inform the development of the Transit Development Plan (TDP) and to provide guidance to the Capital District Transportation Authority (CDTA) for prioritizing service changes. Phase II was designed around several tangible planning concepts informed by Phase I results. This phase builds on the foundational insights gained from Phase I, which provided extensive feedback and identified priority areas for improvement as the system undergoes restructuring.

During Phase I, participants highlighted critical areas for enhancement, leading to the identification of strategic areas of focus:

- Building upon the service frequency and span;
- Evaluating deviations to key points of interest;
- Improving on-time performance;
- Optimizing stop spacing;
- Improving wait times and locations for FLEX on-demand service;
- Enhancing high-priority amenities at bus stops; and,
- Exploring fare payment options.

These areas of focus formed the basis of Phase II outreach to evaluate public sentiment on planning concepts and refine service improvement strategies. To ensure an adequate understanding of the service concepts, specific examples of possible CDTA service changes were shown for each of the planning categories listed below:

- Infrastructure improvements on key corridors;
- Frequent network centered around trunk routes;
- Route deviations versus bus vehicle speed;
- Splitting long routes into two separate routes;
- Stop spacing adjustments;
- FLEX On-Demand improvements;
- Stop amenity enhancements; and,
- Fare payment strategies.

Feedback was collected via a public survey, as well as meetings with internal CDTA staff, bus operators, community stakeholders, and the general public. This report summarizes the feedback and key themes identified during Phase II of outreach. Using this feedback, it provides a comprehensive analysis of the results to support decision-making for future service changes. Finally, it concludes with recommendations for moving forward with service changes.

CDTA Inreach

The project team held three meetings with internal CDTA representatives to discuss items of Phase II outreach. Each meeting focused on a core group within the agency, including regional planning, CDTA leadership, and CDTA operations. All meetings consisted of a presentation introducing the guiding principles and service planning concepts, followed by an open discussion to provide feedback and a summary of next steps. The dates and locations of the three meetings are detailed in **Table 1**.

Table 1: CDTA Inreach Meetings Held for Phase II Outreach

Meeting Name	Location	Date and Time	Number of Participants
Regional Planning	CDTA Board Room	May 13, 2024: 9:30 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.	2
CDTA Leadership	CDTA Board Room	May 14, 2024: 2:00 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.	10
CDTA Operations	CDTA Board Room	May 15, 2024: 11:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.	11

CDTA Inreach, Key Takeaways

- **Prioritize Frequent Service:** Attendees agreed that future service should prioritize frequent trunk routes, even if it means transfers will become more prevalent. Fare payments should be adjusted to keep transfers affordable.
- **Improve Connections with FLEX:** FLEX should primarily provide connections to fixed-route service and help fill in gaps where needed, especially where deviations are being removed.
- **Integrate Fare Payments:** CDTA should consolidate fare payments into one payment system across all services to facilitate easier transfers between modes.
- **Provide Clear Service Standards:** In-reach participants stressed the importance of utilizing data and service standards to inform decision making and ensure service changes are benefiting more riders than they are inconveniencing them.

Summary of Findings from Inreach Meetings

Comments received at each inreach meeting are summarized below, grouped by key takeaway.

PRIORITIZE FREQUENT SERVICE

Several participants at the inreach meetings discussed plans to prioritize more frequent service along trunk routes and the associated service impacts. Specifically, attendees at the regional planning meeting noted that transfers will likely become a larger part of CDTA service as the agency begins prioritizing improvements to trunk routes. As such, attendees stressed the importance of adjusting the fare policy in order to keep transfers affordable for riders and mitigate backlash.

One attendee at the regional planning meeting also noted the importance of explaining to riders that a well-coordinated transfer could help lower travel times. For example, waiting for two buses for 15 minutes each versus one bus for 45 minutes. Additionally, CDTA expressed that wait times at transfer areas could become more comfortable for riders due to improved stop amenities. However, one attendee stressed that riders indicated they would rather ride the bus longer than wait outside at the bus stop longer.

Similarly, CDTA operations staff supported the Frequent Network concept, suggesting that well-performing routes should be designated as trunk routes. They agreed that a multi-seat ride could be shorter than a one-seat ride if strategic changes are made. However, several operations staff members also emphasized the need to adjust fare payments to make transfers affordable.

IMPROVE CONNECTIONS WITH FLEX

Inreach participants offered several suggestions on how to improve or adjust FLEX service. A participant at the regional planning meeting suggested looking into origin-destination data to determine whether popular destinations could be served by fixed routes. CDTA staff agreed that this data would be useful in determining if the size of a FLEX zone could be reduced.

At the CDTA leadership meeting, one suggestion was to use FLEX as a tool to help close gaps where deviations are being removed. Other attendees agreed, noting it will be important that decisions have minimal negative impacts on riders. Regarding the potential reduction in size of FLEX zones, attendees suggested a thorough analysis of available data to justify such a decision, explaining that reductions would likely garner negative feedback from the public.

CDTA operations staff agreed that using FLEX to fill in service gaps would be beneficial. Regarding the potential reduction in size of FLEX zones, staff members voiced concerns about the potential need for new fixed routes. Other operations staff members cautioned CDTA leadership that reducing the size of FLEX zones may lead to negative feedback, despite it being a solution to reducing wait times.

INTEGRATE FARE PAYMENTS

Attendees at the regional planning meeting discussed goals for improving fare payment in the Navigator app. Those in attendance agreed that consolidating service payments into one platform would be convenient for riders. CDTA operations staff echoed this suggestion, noting that a “one payment” concept for all CDTA services would create a more user-friendly experience and help riders transfer to different modes with ease.

PROVIDE CLEAR SERVICE STANDARDS

Several participants at inreach meetings discussed the importance of service standards to evaluate service. Specifically, attendees at the regional planning meeting explained that standards should be set that consider service speeds, pedestrian infrastructure, and ridership

characteristics before determining whether to remove a stop. Participants also suggested setting a goal for the percentage of payments received via the Navigator app versus cash. Participants at the CDTA leadership and CDTA operations meetings agreed and noted that the stop spacing standards should be simple for the public to understand so they can provide their feedback.

In response to the planning concepts, CDTA leadership stressed the importance of making data-driven decisions. Specifically, one attendee suggested using ridership data to determine when to remove a deviation. Additionally, CDTA operations staff highlighted the need to investigate access to pedestrian infrastructure before removing a deviation and reminded the team that any changes to deviations should benefit more people than they inconvenience.

OTHER

Participants at the regional planning meeting expressed the importance of engaging with the public on stop amenities that are most important to them. In the long term, participants suggested making it easier for customers to report maintenance issues at bus stops. Additionally, attendees stressed the importance of continued coordination with The Capital Region Transportation Council (CRTC) to ensure that regional projects proposed are accounted for in their ongoing work. They also noted that CDTA should promote their success in leveraging federal funds on the Transportation Improvement Program.

At the CDTA leadership meeting, attendees expressed that CDTA staff will need detailed information on how the agency will internally support the proposed service concepts and infrastructure changes. Additionally, one attendee noted that the current principles exclude the word “efficiency,” which is often used to describe or justify service changes. Other attendees agreed that “efficiency” should be worked into the guiding principles but noted that the distinction between external efficiency for riders and internal efficiency for CDTA processes will be important.

Operations staff expressed mixed opinions about splitting routes. Some attendees noted it would make sense on routes where ridership is lopsided, but others expressed concerns that it could create new unproductive routes and scheduling difficulties.

Furthermore, some attendees expressed concerns about the viability of service concepts and how the proposed changes may impact CDTA’s resources. CDTA operations staff shared this concern, noting that improvements are important for customer satisfaction, but CDTA must also consider risk factors such as maintenance. Attendees reminded the team that CDTA needs to be mindful of resources needed to make a change and how that impacts the agency internally.

Employee Forums

The project team held three forums with CDTA front-line staff to gain feedback on the system’s service from operators, shift leads, and dispatchers. The forums were held in the break rooms at each of the garage locations to allow operators to engage in open dialogue with CDTA planning and scheduling staff as well as the consultant teams. Operators were able to review posters of each of the planning concepts and provide their feedback on potential route changes. The dates and locations of the forums are detailed in **Table 2**.

Table 2: Employee Forums Held for Phase II Outreach

Meeting Name	Location	Date and Time	Number of Participants
Troy Employee Forum	Troy Garage	June 3, 2024: 1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.	Informal
Albany Employee Forum	Albany Garage	June 4, 2024: 8:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.	Informal
Schenectady Employee Forum	Schenectady Garage	June 5, 2024: 1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.	Informal

Figure 1: Operators providing feedback at employee forums



Employee Forums, Key Takeaways

While operators noted challenges specific to the routes they operate, some key themes emerged across the employee forums at each of the garages.

- Reduce Route Deviations:** Operators prefer to remove the deviation into Stuyvesant Plaza and prefer to serve Empire State Plaza along Madison Avenue, but expressed concerns about how this would impact riders. They also supported removing the

deviation from the RPI loop on Route #87 due to its complexity and impact on route speed and suggested a shuttle for RPI students.

- **Prioritize Splitting Long Routes:** Operators were generally in favor of splitting Route #182 and extending to Clifton Park but felt neutral about splitting Route #125.
- **Offer Flexible Fare Payment:** Increased flexibility regarding fare payment is needed, especially to accommodate riders without access to smartphones as well as riders who are transferring.
- **Increase Route Frequency:** Many operators requested increased frequency on routes, specifically noting that the current frequencies on Route #117, Route #351, and Route #353 are inadequate.
- **Increase Layover Times:** Operators requested more layover time on many routes as well as more opportunities for bathroom breaks.
- **Adjust Stop Spacing:** Operators expressed a need for adjusted stops on several routes. Specifically, they noted there are too many stops on Route #286, Route #450, along State Street in Schenectady, and along Pearl Street and Quail Street in Albany. Additionally, they requested more stops on some routes, including a new stop at Empire State Plaza on Route #922/#923.

Summary of Findings from Employee Forums

Comments received at the operator meetings at each garage are summarized below, grouped by key takeaway.

REDUCE ROUTE DEVIATIONS

During the Troy employee forum, several operators supported the proposal to eliminate the Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute (RPI) loop on Route #87, explaining that the loop is challenging to drive and slows down the route. One operator suggested that RPI students could be better served with a shuttle bus. Additionally, operators recommended a deviation to Empire State Plaza on Routes #922/#923, citing frequent rider complaints about the lack of closer access.

In Albany, operators noted that serving Stuyvesant Plaza on Route #10 is important as there are many riders accessing this area in the mid-afternoon. Operators in Schenectady also expressed concerns about removing the Stuyvesant Plaza loop from Route #10, noting that many people get off at the plaza for shopping, work, or other errands. Therefore, operators felt it was important to retain some level of service to Stuyvesant Plaza, but agreed there is an opportunity to decrease the number of trips that deviate into the plaza to reduce delays. One operator also suggested using FLEX as a replacement for the Stuyvesant Plaza loop.

Additionally, many operators in Albany agreed that it would be better to serve Empire State Plaza via Madison Avenue on Route #13 and Route #18 rather than on Lark Street. Operators complained that turning left onto Lark Street is difficult, especially in an articulated bus.

However, operators cautioned that many passengers live on Lark Street or Washington Avenue, so they may not agree with this change.

PRIORITIZE SPLITTING LONG ROUTES

Many operators at the Troy employee forum agreed that splitting Route #182 would be beneficial, with most preferring the second Route #182 scenario, as there are more people in Albany that want access to Clifton Park. Operators also saw potential in splitting Route #289 due to low ridership in the northern part of the route.

At the Albany employee forum, operators were neutral about splitting Route #125, noting that there would need to be a plan for how to turn the bus around at Madison Station. Additionally, the concept of splitting Route #182 was well received, with many operators expressing the importance of extending service to Clifton Park.

OFFER FLEXIBLE FARE PAYMENT

Operators in Albany suggested implementing more flexible fare policies regarding transfers, especially if routes are going to be split. Additionally, operators in Schenectady noted that many riders are still cash-reliant, and that the Navigator app is not accessible to people without phones. Operators also expressed concerns about fare evasion on many routes, specifically noting issues with enforcement and hesitation to create conflict with riders who refuse to pay.

INCREASE ROUTE FREQUENCY

Regarding the frequent network planning concept, operators in Schenectady generally preferred increasing frequency on Route #117, noting that the current frequency is inadequate. Additionally, operators agreed with increasing the frequency on Route #351 and Route #353. However, some operators did not agree there is enough demand for the Schenectady Plan to be successful. Operators also noted that the Northway Express should operate more frequently.

INCREASE LAYOVER TIMES

Operators at all employee forums expressed the need for more running time or layover time. Specifically, operators mentioned that the following routes need additional running time:

- Route 10
- Route 87
- Route 353
- Route 355
- Route 370
- Route 923

Additionally, operators in Schenectady requested more time for bathroom breaks.

ADJUST STOP SPACING

Operators at the Troy employee forum generally agreed with CDTA's stop spacing concepts and offered several recommendations for adding or removing stops. They identified the need for

new stops on Route #922/#923 near Pioneer Bank in Waterford, the Stewart's in Waterford, and Shelter Enterprises in Cohoes. They also supported the removal of stops along Route #286, particularly in locations where there is on-street parking.

Additionally, operators in Albany noted there are too many bus stops along State Street in Schenectady, and Quail Street and Pearl Street in Albany. Furthermore, operators requested brighter lighting at the Bradford and Quail Street bus stops as well as along the Route #806 shuttle.

In Schenectady, operators indicated that Route #450 has too many stops. However, one operator proposed an additional stop on Route #450 after Carousel Village outside of the Stewart's in Ballston Spa.

OTHER

Operators also offered insight into several other issues. In Troy, operators emphasized the need for improved lighting on Troy Schenectady Road, as it becomes difficult to see passengers at night. Operators also raised several common concerns about stops not being listed in copilot and the need for more accurate geo-fencing of stops.

Stakeholder Meetings

In addition to public meetings, CDTA engaged with institutional stakeholders, including representatives from universities and educational institutions, health and social services, major employers, and local government, to gather input on improving transit service in the Capital Region. Each meeting consisted of a presentation introducing the guiding principles and service planning concepts, including specific examples of potential route changes. Following the presentation, attendees were encouraged to ask questions and provide feedback as part of an open discussion. Details of these stakeholder meetings are outlined in **Table 3**.

Table 3: Stakeholder Meetings Held for Phase II Outreach

Meeting Name	Location	Date and Time	Number of Participants
Universities and Educational Stakeholders	Virtual	May 22, 2024: 10:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.	3
Health and Social Services Stakeholders	Virtual	May 22, 2024: 12:30 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.	10
Major Employer Stakeholders	Virtual	May 22, 2024: 3:00 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.	6

Stakeholder Meetings, Key Takeaways

- **Increase Direct Access to Employment and Education:** There is a desire for more direct transit service connecting residential areas in the Capital Region with major employment sites and educational institutions.
- **Utilize FLEX as a First/Last Mile Solution:** Stakeholders expressed interest about using FLEX as a solution to address first-mile and last-mile trips as well as to provide one-seat rides, especially for shift workers.
- **Enhance Key Corridors:** There is support for increasing the frequency of service and promoting transit-oriented development along key corridors that connect core communities in the Capital Region.

Summary of Findings from Stakeholder Meetings

Comments from the stakeholder meetings are summarized below, categorized by key takeaway.

INCREASE DIRECT ACCESS TO EMPLOYMENT AND EDUCATION

Educational stakeholders noted that the expansion of CDTA services has improved access for students traveling from the Capital Region to Fulton-Montgomery Community College. However, one participant explained that expanding service further to eliminate the need for transfers would be even more convenient for students.

UTILIZE FLEX AS A FIRST/LAST MILE SOLUTION

Several stakeholders discussed how FLEX can be used as a mobility solution in the Capital Region. Education stakeholders noted that students coming from the northern regions experience difficulties navigating through the city once they reach Albany. Participants suggested FLEX as a solution for providing first mile or last mile options to connect to a route. Another suggestion was to expand the DRIVE carshare program to Amsterdam to offer students more transportation options.

At the health and social services meeting, stakeholders suggested shift-based FLEX routes for healthcare workers, explaining that it is important that people can get to work safely without having a car to improve workforce development. They stressed the importance of expanding service based on demand to retain staff members and improve their quality of life. Additionally, stakeholders at the major employers meeting suggested using smaller electric vehicles for FLEX service to provide a nimbler option.

ENHANCE KEY CORRIDORS

Stakeholders at the major employers meeting stressed the importance of passenger connectivity to employment centers. One stakeholder expressed support for dedicated bus lanes and encouraged transit-oriented development along key corridors. This group of stakeholders expressed positive sentiment regarding the expansion of BusPlus and its ability to connect core communities, noting the potential for urban development along these corridors. Health and social service stakeholders shared this sentiment. They suggested that the resulting time savings from increased bus route speeds on key corridors could be applied to more frequent service on another route in the system.

Public Meetings

To gather feedback from the public regarding CDTA services, CDTA hosted five public meetings, including four in-person meetings and one virtual meeting.

The in-person meetings featured a 45-minute presentation outlining the proposed guiding principles and planning concepts, including examples of potential service changes. Following the presentation, participants had the opportunity to ask questions and engage in an open discussion. In the second half of each meeting, attendees were encouraged to review detailed planning concepts and examples displayed on posters around the room. Red, yellow, and green sticky notes were provided for participants to indicate their preferences on the various service changes and writing comments on them to display on the posters.

The virtual meeting utilized Zoom and included live survey polling, allowing attendees to provide feedback on each planning concept immediately as it was presented. A live Q&A chat was monitored and addressed in real-time by CDTA staff and the consulting panel throughout the virtual session.

To maximize attendance and participation in the public meetings, CDTA advertised the dates and locations on their website and distributed bilingual business cards (in English and Spanish) featuring QR codes to the survey and CDTA TDP website. Overall, approximately 50 individuals participated in public meetings (**Table 4**).

Table 4: Public Meetings Held for Phase II Outreach

Meeting Name	Location	Date and Time	Number of Participants
Amsterdam Public Workshop	Amsterdam Public Library	June 3, 2024: 5:30 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.	15
Troy/Rensselaer Public Workshop	Oakwood Community Center	June 4, 2024: 6:00 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.	4
Albany Public Workshop	Albany Public Library Main Branch	June 5, 2024: 5:30 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.	10
Schenectady Public Workshop	Schenectady Public Library	June 6, 2024: 5:30 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.	6
Virtual Public Workshop	Virtual Zoom	June 18, 2024: 5:30 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.	15

Figure 2: Attendees at public meetings in Amsterdam and Schenectady



Public Meetings, Key Takeaways

- **Prioritize Frequent Service:** The public generally supports increasing frequency on routes, even if it results in more transfers.
- **Maintain Service to Key Deviations:** There are concerns about the potential removal of service from Stuyvesant Plaza on Route #10 and Lark Street on Route #13 and Route #18.
- **Extend Service to New Locations:** Participants requested new service to several locations and provided positive feedback on the Route #182 extension to Clifton Park.
- **Use FLEX as a Complement:** Participants expressed the view that FLEX service should supplement, rather than replace, fixed-route service.
- **Enhance Bus Stop Amenities:** Meeting attendees requested several improvements to bus stop amenities, including more bus shelters, cooling features, additional lighting, and access to real-time information.

Summary of Findings from Public Meetings

Comments from the meetings are summarized below, categorized by key takeaway.

PRIORITIZE FREQUENT SERVICE

Participants at the Albany public meeting expressed appreciation for the current CDTA service but requested additional service frequency along Routes #117, #125, and #737. Troy attendees also supported the proposal to improve frequency on Route #117 to 60 minutes. However, some participants requested even greater frequency on Routes #117 and #370 between Troy and the Albany International Airport. In addition, attendees expressed strong support for both Troy adjustments in Scenario #1 and Scenario #2.

In Schenectady, participants generally responded positively to the Schenectady plan and approved of the proposed service frequencies. However, attendees raised concerns about Route #117 being too infrequent, making it difficult to access the airport by bus. Additionally, there were suggestions to increase the frequency of Route #370 during the evening hours.

During the virtual meeting, 57 percent of attendees supported the proposed frequent network concepts, whereas 14 percent disagreed. Respondents highlighted a preference for more frequent service over a fixed schedule and specifically noted that increased frequency on Route #117 would be useful so people can transfer from other routes to the airport.

MAINTAIN SERVICE TO KEY DEVIATIONS

Attendees in Albany opposed the potential removal of Routes #13 and #18 from Lark Street, citing the area's major destinations for entertainment and employment. However, there was support for reducing some Route #10 trips to Stuyvesant Plaza, though not for eliminating all trips.

Feedback on the deviations versus speed concepts was mixed among virtual attendees. While 46 percent agreed with the proposed ideas, 23 percent disagreed. Specific feedback indicated that Stuyvesant Plaza should continue to be served on at least some trips. Additionally, the idea to re-route Route #13 and Route #18 along Madison Avenue faced resistance as many riders depend on those routes to access Lark Street.

EXTEND SERVICE TO NEW LOCATIONS

Support was strong among Albany participants for splitting Route #182, especially Scenario 2 which would offer a one-seat ride between Clifton Park and downtown Albany. There were also requests for enhancing regional service to Lake George and Saratoga Springs on the Northway Express.

In Troy, there were several requests for new service connections. Specifically, attendees requested a bus route linking Amsterdam with Albany International Airport, as well as service to the Amsterdam Amtrak Station for transfers to the Gloversville Transit System. Many

participants expressed the need for increased service to the Fulton Montgomery Community College (FMCC) and the Montgomery County Department of Social Services. Additionally, there were requests for earlier service on Route #602 during weekends, as the current schedule poses difficulties getting to work in Albany on time.

Attendees in Schenectady requested more service to Latham, including a new stop along the Northway Express route. Other locations highlighted for new or additional service included Voorheesville, Glens Falls, Altamont, SUNY Adirondack Saratoga, Lake George, and Wilton.

USE FLEX AS A COMPLEMENT

In Amsterdam, participants were skeptical about replacing fixed-route service with a FLEX zone. While many participants viewed FLEX as a beneficial addition to the community, they were concerned about it replacing existing bus routes. One participant noted that fixed-route service is still fairly new to residents in Amsterdam, so adjusting to a new service such as FLEX may be challenging for riders.

There was some confusion among Troy participants about how to use FLEX, with one attendee asking about its potential use for group events. They also requested an expanded span of FLEX service to better accommodate connections with Amtrak trains operating earlier and later in the day. In Schenectady, an attendee mentioned they considered using FLEX for accessing Albany Airport but noted concerns about its reliability.

Feedback on the FLEX concepts was divided during the virtual meeting, with only 23 percent in agreement with the concepts and 39 percent opposed. Specially, one participant emphasized that FLEX should complement, rather than replace, fixed-route services.

IMPROVE BUS STOP AMENITIES

Albany participants requested improvements to bus shelters, including features such as cooling, better lighting, a call system to report suspicious behavior, and curb striping at the UAlbany Purple Line station for riders with poor vision. On Route #737 specifically, participants wanted improved pedestrian infrastructure, including sidewalks and crosswalks. Additionally, Amsterdam attendees requested more bus shelters, cooling features at bus shelters, additional lighting, and access to real-time information.

In Troy, one attendee advocated for the establishment of a mobility hub and additional ridesharing options on Hoosick Street. They noted the current conditions of bus shelters on Hoosick Street are in poor condition and how they feel unsafe crossing the street. Overall, participants expressed a desire for improved walkability, new bike lanes within the city, and real-time arrival information at bus stops.

Furthermore, several attendees in Schenectady expressed a desire for improved bus stop amenities. Bus shelters were requested along Wade Road in Watervliet. Participants noted the importance of ensuring safe access to bus stop locations and maintaining sidewalks in good

condition. Additional requests included more garbage cans at stops, heating for shelters, and real-time arrival information. Virtual attendees expressed a similar sentiment, requesting including additional shade at bus stops, emergency call boxes, and real-time information.

OTHER

Participants in Amsterdam, Schenectady, and at the virtual meeting made requests for an improved payment system, such as payment via credit card or Apple Pay rather than using a Navigator card. In Albany, attendees suggested several improvements to the Navigator app, including notifications of bus delays, compatibility with Lake George trolleys, and easier access to service advisories and the system map.

A few participants also commented on stop spacing concepts. Attendees in Albany supported increasing spacing of stops on Route #100, noting that the majority of riders are younger and able-bodied. However, there were concerns at the virtual meeting about the potential elimination of stops on Lark Street between Washington Avenue and Spring Street.

Lastly, participants with disabilities expressed difficulties with STAR service due to high demand, making it challenging and unreliable for reaching employment and grocery shopping. In Troy, a specific concern was raised by an attendee who reported that their friend's wait times on STAR service between Troy and Western Avenue were excessively long. Due to this inconvenience, the customer stated that they opt to drive their friend instead of relying on STAR service.

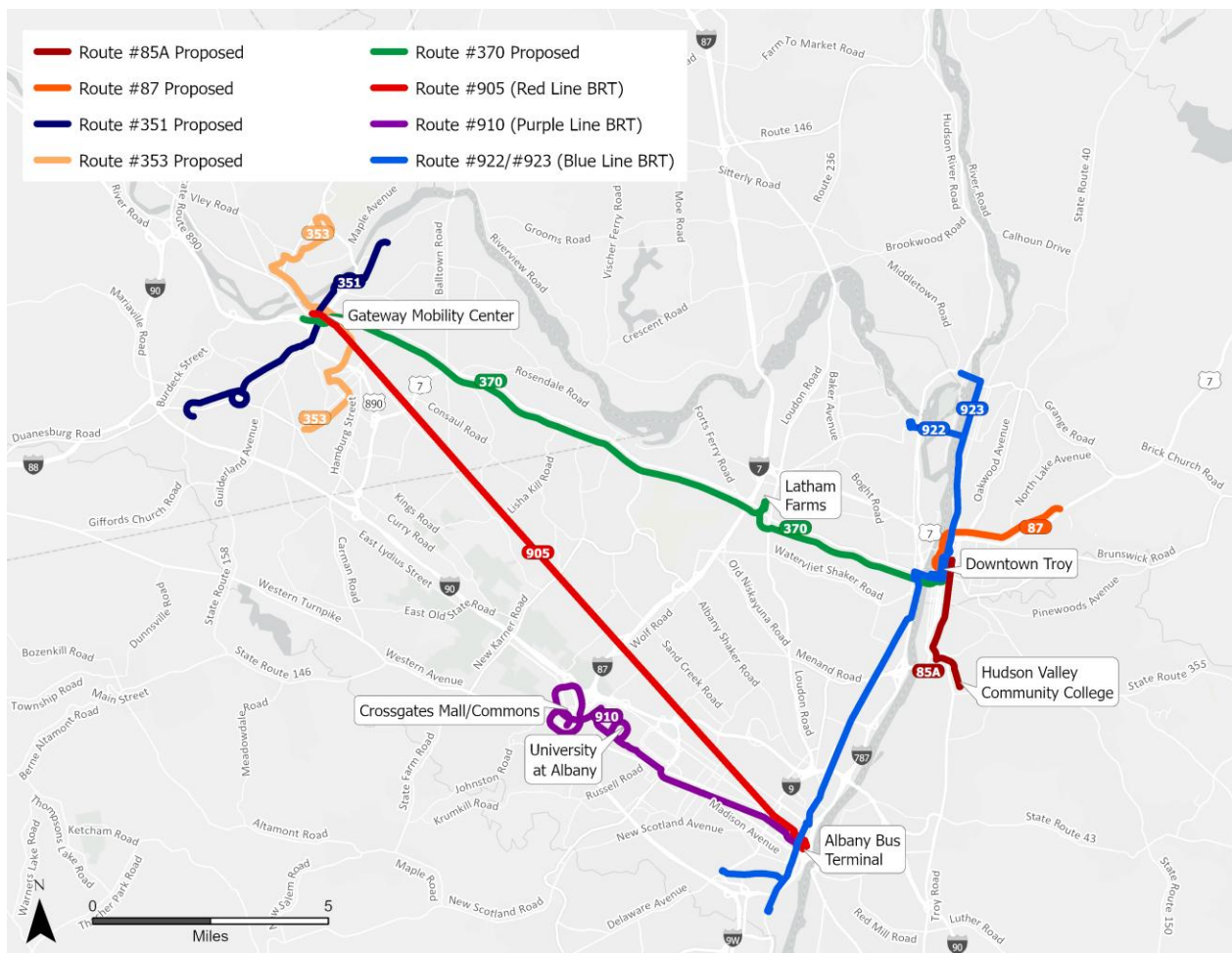
Community Survey

In addition to targeted outreach through stakeholder meetings and public forums, CDTA conducted an online survey to gather feedback on transit service concepts and potential proposals. The survey was available from May 22nd through July 8th, 2024, and received a total of 569 responses. Taking into consideration these responses along with findings from the public meetings, will help shape the next set of unconstrained recommendations.

Infrastructure Improvements

The Infrastructure Improvements proposal (**Figure 3**) would focus short-term speed, reliability, capacity, and station design improvements to eight high-frequency corridors shown above. Three of the corridors are existing routes, one is a proposed route that would split from an existing route, and four are new routes. These corridors connect major cities in the Capital District and go together with the Frequent Network proposals.

Figure 3: Infrastructure Improvements Concept



There was strong support for focusing short-term infrastructure improvements to the corridors above. As shown in **Figure 4**, 67 percent of respondents agreed with the proposed corridors, while just 11 percent disagreed. There was strong support for increased BusPlus service throughout the region. Many riders reported that the current BusPlus service is overcrowded and too slow without more dedicated bus lanes. There was strong support for extending the BusPlus to the Albany-Rensselaer Amtrak station, as well as upgrading Route #370 to a BusPlus line.

The most common concern was that improving these corridors would come at the cost of reduced service on other routes throughout the Capital District, such as crosstown lines and in rural areas. It was noted that these corridors already see very high investment. In addition, multiple employees of the Daughters of Sarah Community for Seniors asked for their bus stop to be relocated from across the street to the campus itself, as well as for increased service on nights, weekends, and holidays.

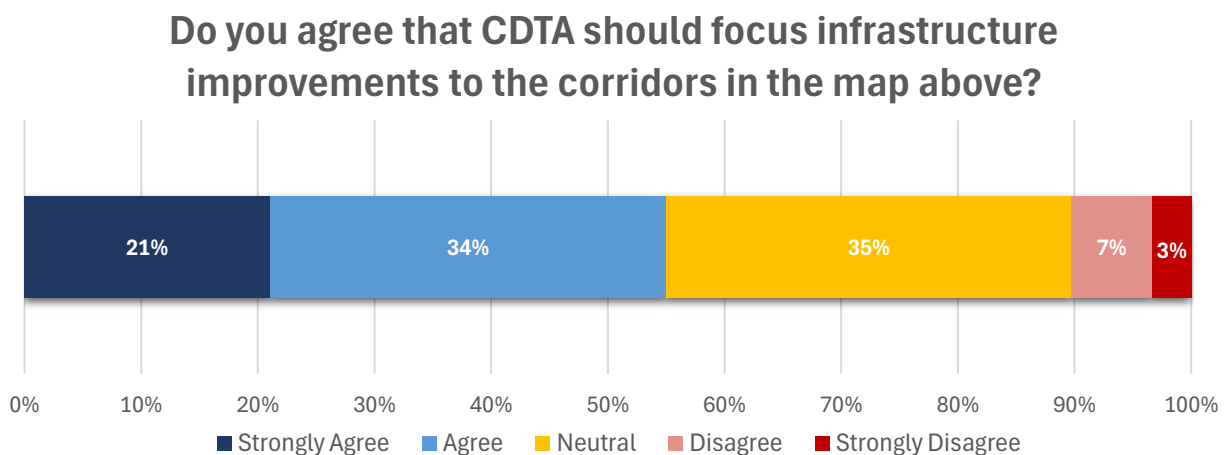
There was strong support for increased service to East Greenbush, Saratoga County, Clifton Park, Rensselaer, UAlbany, Latham, and affordable housing areas, as well as increased north/south service along key throughways such as Wolf Road. In addition, multiple new routes were suggested, including:

- Hudson Valley Community College (HVCC) to Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute (RPI);
- Whitehall/Hackett to Crossgates Mall and Colonie Center;
- South Troy to Aldi and Walmart in East Greenbush; and,
- HVCC to Menands Bridge Road to Broadway.

A few respondents suggested new service to destinations, such as:

- South Bethlehem;
- Selkirk; and,
- Fulton Montgomery Community College.

Figure 4: Infrastructure Improvements Results



INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS, KEY TAKEAWAYS

- **Prioritize Improvements on Key Corridors:** Most respondents agreed that the eight routes highlighted in this section (Route #85, Route #87, Route #351, Route #353, Route #370, Route #905, Route #910, and Route #922/#923) were the most important corridors for infrastructure improvements because they serve a large number of residents and are key to connecting communities across the Capital Region.
- **Improve Connectivity to Local Routes:** Many respondents supported improvements to these corridors but emphasized the need to improve service across the entire region, including crosstown and rural routes. They stressed the importance of improving reliability, frequency, service span, and weekend availability for these local routes.
- **Expand BusPlus service:** There is a demand for increased BusPlus service in the region, particularly to the Albany-Rensselaer Amtrak Station and along the Route #370 corridor.

Frequent Network

CDTA presented a Frequent Network concept, involving shortening neighborhood routes and connecting them to frequent trunk routes. This approach aims to improve crosstown connections for customers, reducing the need for multiple transfers and saving time. It also seeks to increase frequency on currently infrequent neighborhood routes by reallocating saved resources, thus minimizing the chances of having to transfer between two infrequent routes and experiencing long wait times. Additionally, the proposal plans to enhance service on trunk and BusPlus routes by concentrating capital investments on fewer streets.

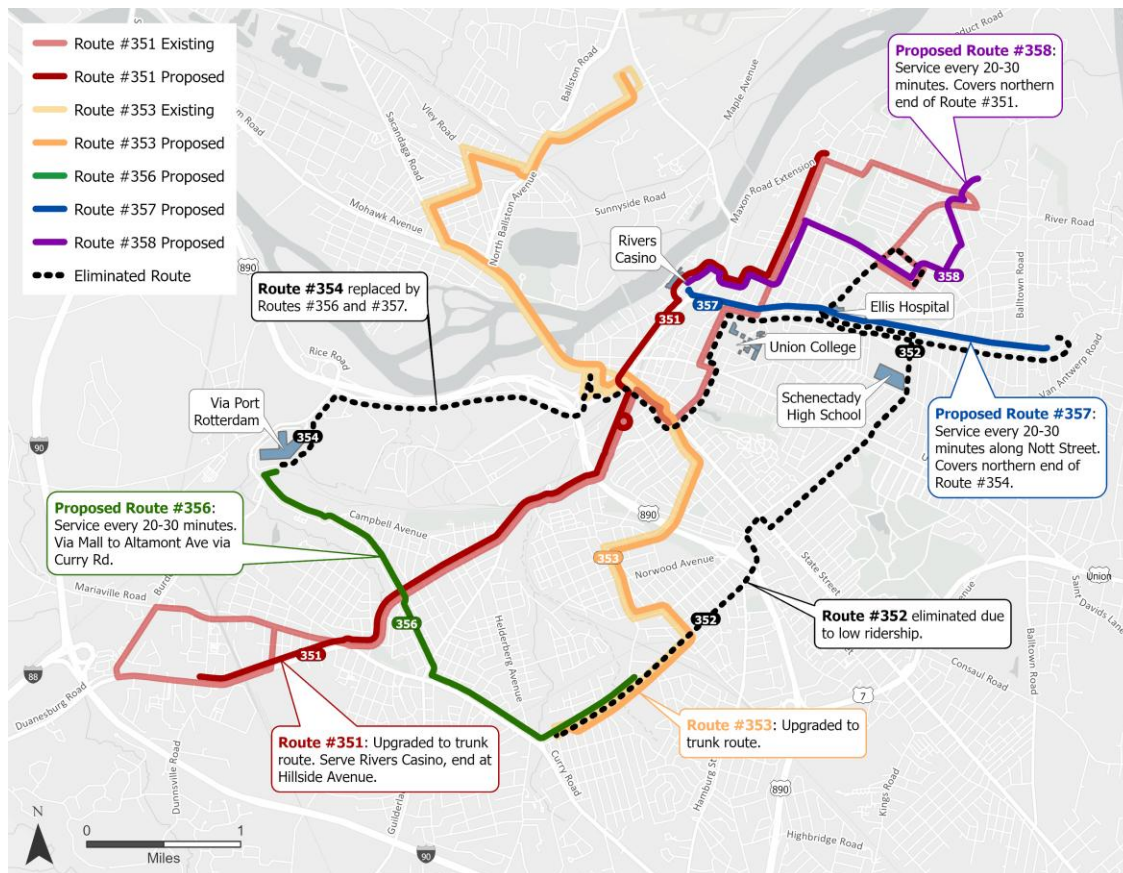
SCHENECTADY PLAN

An example restructuring of the Schenectady network (**Figure 5**) was presented. The example would discontinue Routes #352 and #354 while upgrading Routes #351 and #353 to frequent trunk routes. The proposed Routes #356, #357, and #358, which would also be trunk routes, would provide new service.

The anticipated benefits of this proposal include:

- Increased frequency on Route #351 and #353;
- More frequent, but well-coordinated transfers to redesigned neighborhood routes; and,
- Improved connections in Rotterdam and at Rivers Casino.

Figure 5: Schenectady Plan Concept



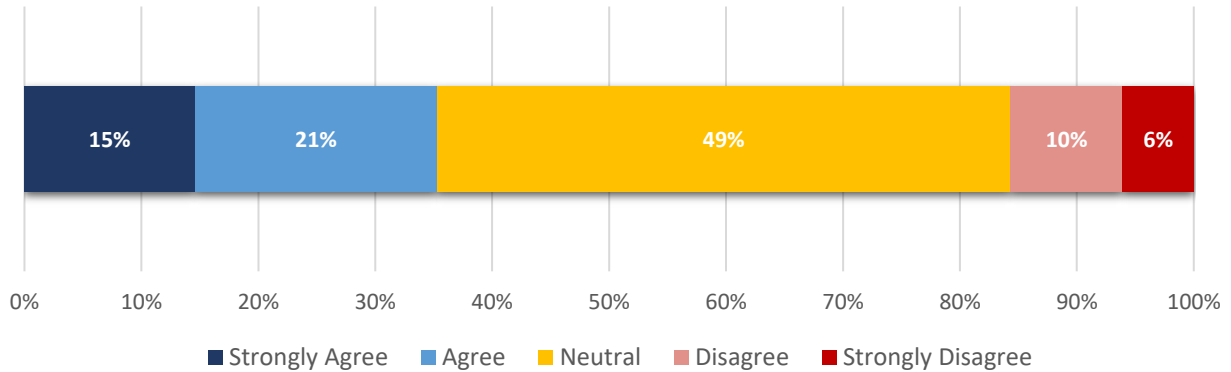
As shown in **Figure 6**, Approximately half of the respondents expressed a neutral stance to the proposed changes. Among those with stronger opinions, 69 percent supported the proposed changes, while 31 percent opposed them. The most contested change was the discontinuation of Route #352, which would create a significant service gap in Schenectady. Notable affected areas include Schenectady High School, Rosa Road, and Upper Union Street. Additionally, two respondents requested enhancing Route #352 to run on Curry Road and Hamburg Street rather than eliminating the route altogether.

Fewer concerns were raised about the proposed elimination of Route #354. It was noted that this proposal no longer maintains a direct route from downtown Schenectady to Ellis Hospital and to Via Port Rotterdam. There were also concerns that the proposed service changes would negatively impact Union College students.

Additionally, some respondents expressed that there were not enough routes serving downtown Schenectady, necessitating more transfers for riders traveling to destinations such as Ellis Hospital and the Rivers Casino. Several riders suggested extending Route #357 to downtown Schenectady, which would allow riders to make quick transfers to the BusPlus system.

Figure 6: Schenectady Plan Results

Do you agree with the Schenectady plan change shown in the map above?



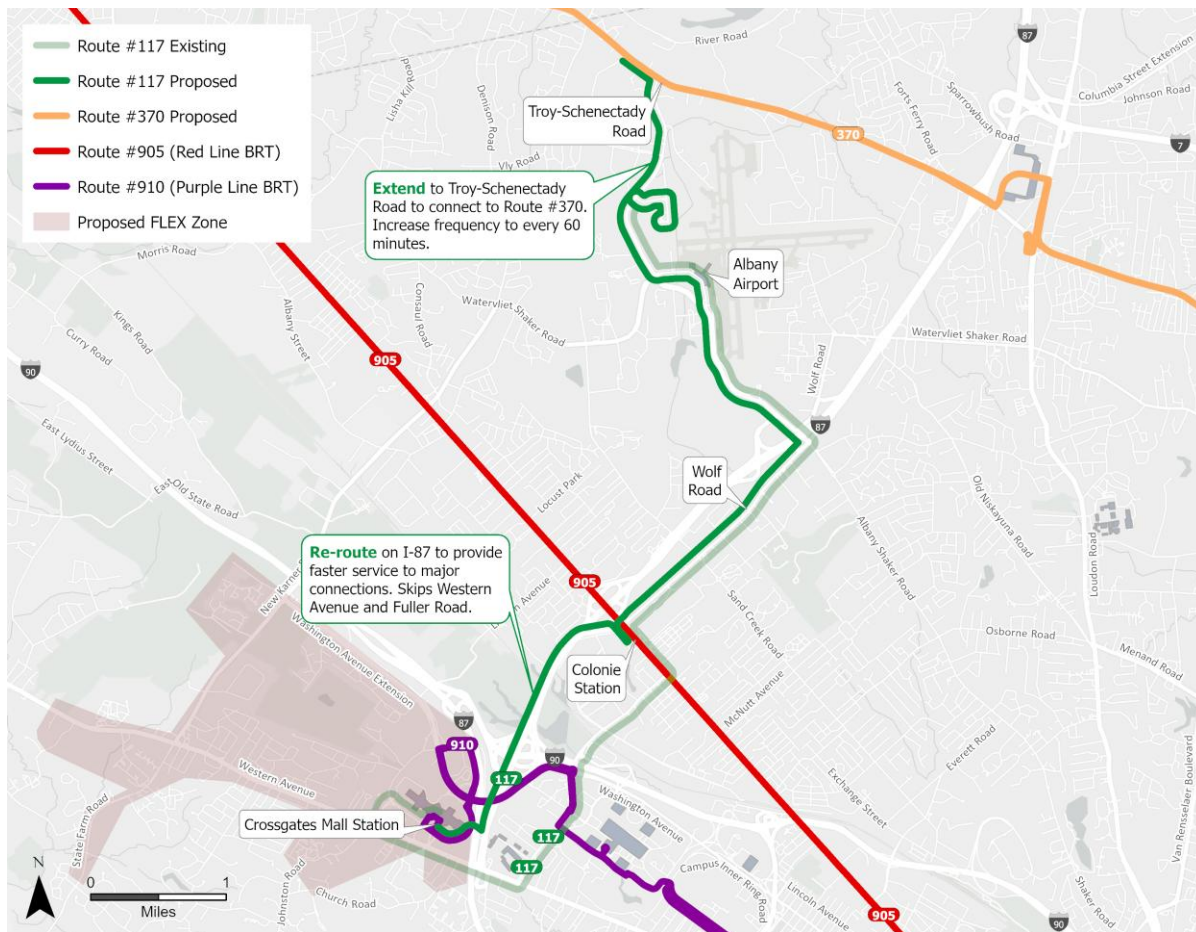
ROUTE #117

The first example involved rerouting Route #117 (**Figure 7**) to I-87 instead of Western Avenue and Fuller Road and extending it northward to Troy-Schenectady Road to connect with the proposed Route #370. Frequency would increase from every 90 minutes to every 60 minutes.

The anticipated benefits of this proposal include:

- Increased frequency on Route #117;
- Shorter travel times for both one-seat rides and transfers;
- Greater access to Albany Airport; and,
- Improved connections with Route #370 at Troy-Schenectady Road.

Figure 7: Route #117 Concept

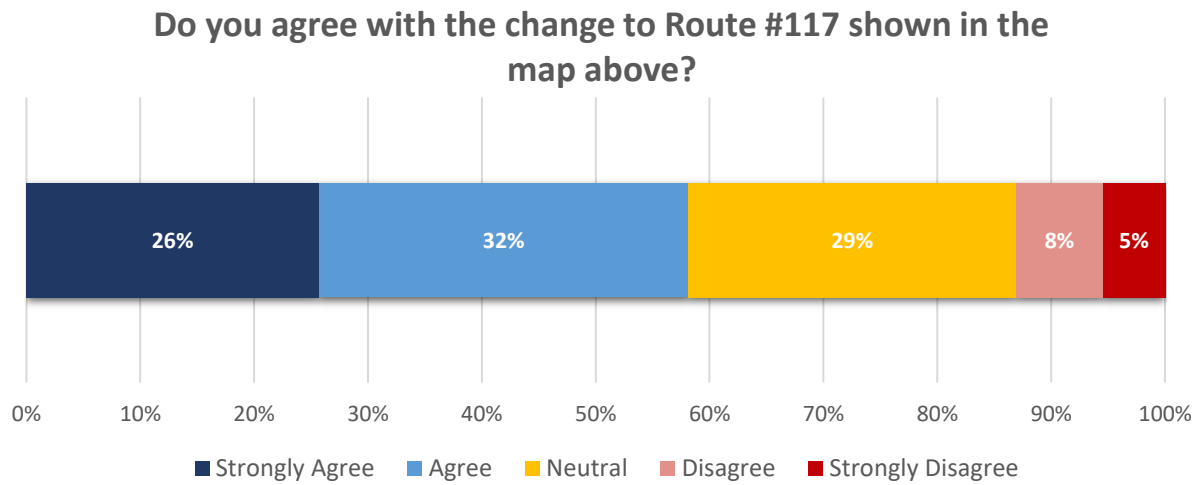


As shown in **Figure 8**, 58 percent of respondents supported the proposed changes for Route #117, whereas 13 percent opposed them. Nearly all respondents supported the potential extension to connect Route #117 to Route #370, as it would provide faster and safer access to Albany International Airport for residents from Troy and other areas. Some respondents expressed interest in a potential extension of Route #117 to downtown Albany, which would allow more residents of Albany to reach the airport without transferring.

However, support for rerouting Route #117 to I-87 was mixed. Those in support of the I-87 alignment cited faster service as their primary reason. Opponents were concerned that eliminating service from Fuller Road would create service gaps, particularly affecting UAlbany students and businesses in the area. If Route #117 were to be rerouted to I-87, respondents indicated that they would like to see increased service on Route #190 to compensate.

A notable concern was that the proposed frequency for Route #117 remains insufficient. Although the proposed changes would reduce headways from 90 minutes to 60 minutes, respondents felt that 60-minute headways were too infrequent to be practical, especially for riders traveling from outside of the local area.

Figure 8: Route #117 Results



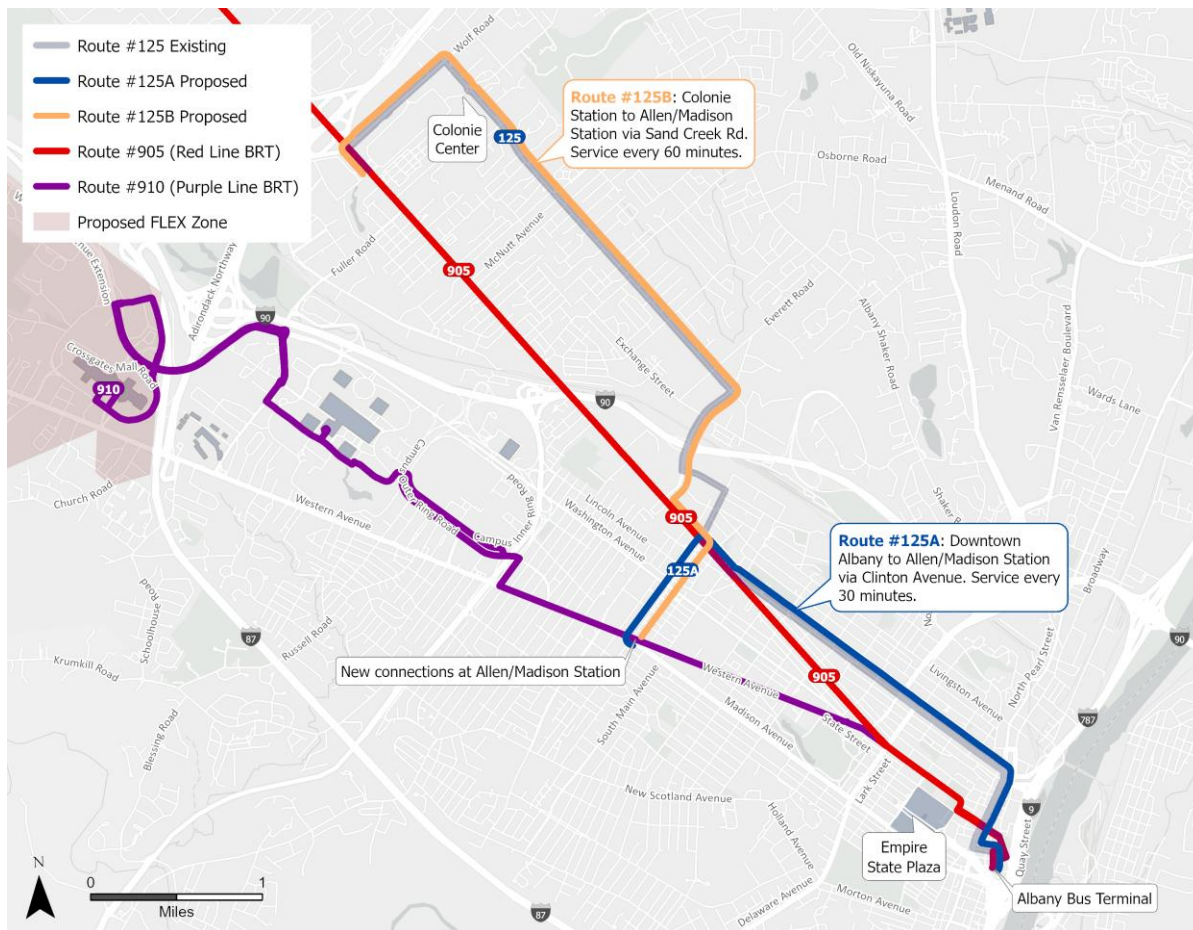
ROUTE #125

The second example involved splitting Route #125 (**Figure 9**) into two new routes: Route #125A and Route #125B. Route #125A would operate between Downtown Albany and Allen/Madison Station via Clinton Avenue, running every 30 minutes. Route #125B would operate between Allen/Madison Station and Colonie Station via Sand Creek Road, with a frequency of 60 minutes—altering the current 45-minute headways of Route #125. Transfers between Routes #125A and #125B would be timed to optimize transfers with main service corridors on Central Avenue, Washington Avenue and Western Avenue.

The anticipated benefits of this proposal include:

- Increased frequency along #125A and to key transfer opportunities;
- Decreased service along Sand Creek Road due to low ridership;
- More frequent, but better coordinated transfers; and,
- Increased connections to BusPlus service at Allen/Madison Station.

Figure 9: Route #125 Concept



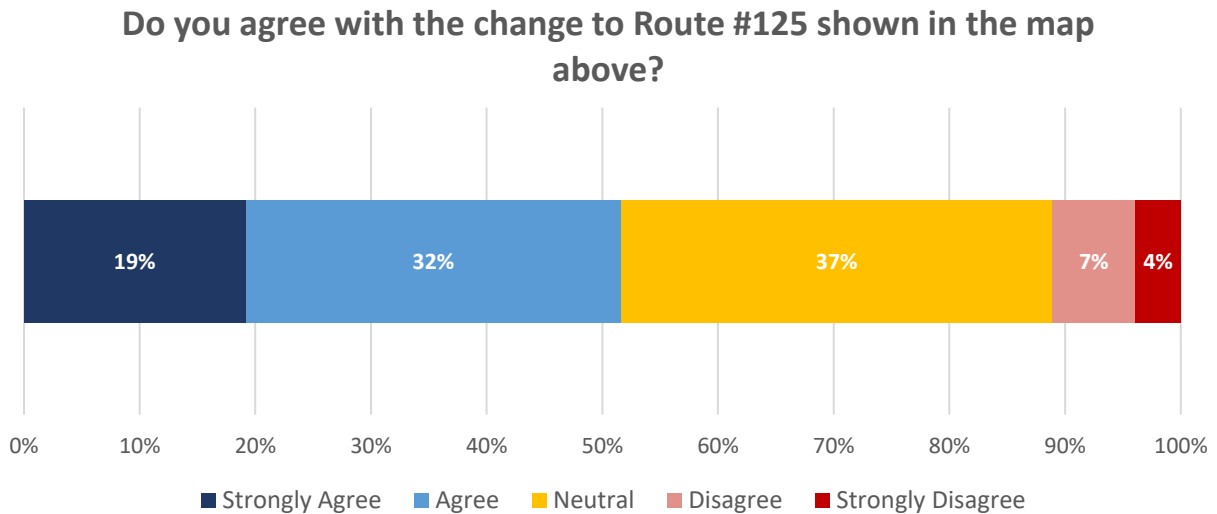
As shown in **Figure 10**, 52 percent of respondents supported the proposed split and the increased service on Clinton Avenue, compared to 11 percent who opposed the changes. Many respondents agreed that splitting Route #125 would improve crosstown service, especially along north-south corridors such as Allen Street. Two respondents suggested Routes #125A/#125B be extend further south from Allen/Madison to New Scotland Avenue to better serve destinations such as St. Peter’s Hospital. Two respondents opposed removing Route #125A from Watervliet Avenue.

The most common concern was the reliability of timed transfers between #125A/#125B. One respondent noted that timed transfers on other CDTA routes have not been dependable in the past and are impractical for daily use. There were also concerns about riders having to pay two fares to transfer between #125A/#125B. Respondents advocated for low-cost/no-cost transfers to reduce barriers for lower-income riders.

Another concern raised was the decreased frequency on Route #125B from 45 minutes to 60 minutes, which some respondents felt might disadvantage certain riders. Some expressed a

desire for service to run every 30 minutes, like Route #125A. In addition, one rider suggested that Route #125A run every 20 minutes instead of 30 minutes.

Figure 10: Route #125 Results



GENERAL CONCLUSIONS

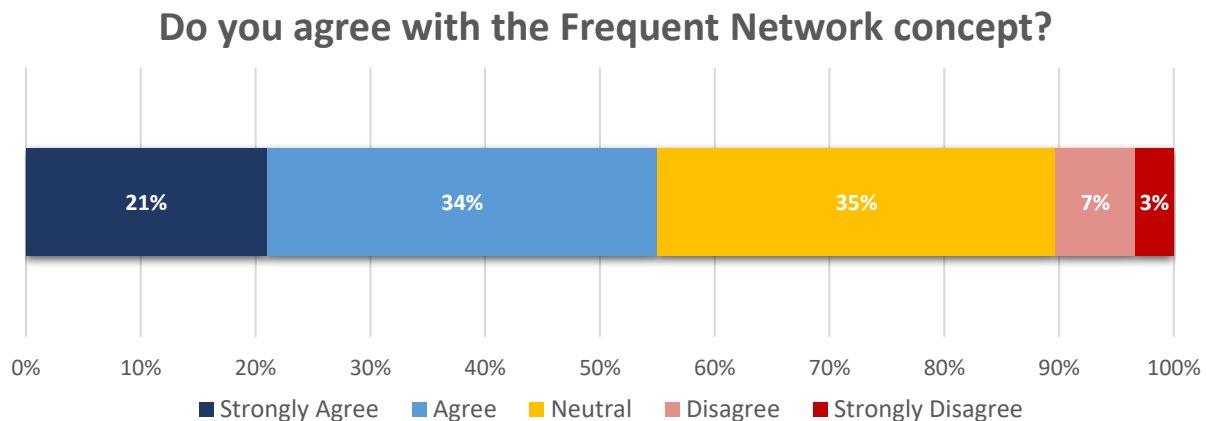
As shown in **Figure 11**, survey responses revealed that 54 percent of respondents expressed support for the Frequent Network concept overall, while ten percent voiced opposition. Nearly all respondents favored increased frequency throughout CDTA network, with some advocating for even more frequent service than proposed.

Respondents supported transfers between routes provided they are quick, reliable, and financially accessible. Concerns were raised regarding excessive transfers slowing down journeys, especially over short distances, and the discomfort during extreme weather conditions. One respondent noted that they usually opt for driving over taking the bus due to prolonged transfer times.

There was apprehension about reducing service levels, which could impact passengers, particularly during inclement weather seasons. One respondent emphasized the need for CDTA to prioritize the needs of individuals with disabilities, the elderly, and families with young children when making service adjustments.

Finally, there was a preference for Routes #111 and #233 to operate more frequently. One respondent noted that Route #233 is particularly crowded with Amazon employees and often has no available seating.

Figure 11: Frequent Network Results



FREQUENT NETWORK, KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Support for the Frequent Network Concept:** The Frequent Network proposals received overall support from respondents, with 54 percent expressing approval. Respondents appreciated the emphasis on increased frequency across the CDTA network but also called for even more frequent service on some routes.
- Support for the Frequent Service Plan in Schenectady:** 36 percent of respondents support, 16 percent oppose, and about half felt neutral about the Schenectady Plan. The discontinuation of Route #352 was the most contested, as it would create significant service gaps in Schenectady, particularly affecting Schenectady High School, and Upper Union Street. Customers also expressed concerns about lowering direct connections to the Red Line.
- Extend Route #117 to Route #370:** 58 percent of respondents supported the proposed changes for Route #117, with strong approval for its extension to Route #370, which would improve access to Albany International Airport. However, concerns were raised about the proposed 60-minute headways, which many felt would be too infrequent to meet riders' needs.
- Conditional Support to Split Route #125:** The proposal to split Route #125 into Routes #125A and #125B received moderate support, with 52 percent of respondents in favor. However, respondents expressed concerns about the reliability of timed transfers between the new routes and the reduced frequency on Route #125B.
- Requests for Increased Frequency on Specific Routes:** There was a particular demand for more frequent service on Routes #111 and #233. Route #233 was highlighted as being particularly crowded, especially with Amazon employees, leading to issues with seating availability.

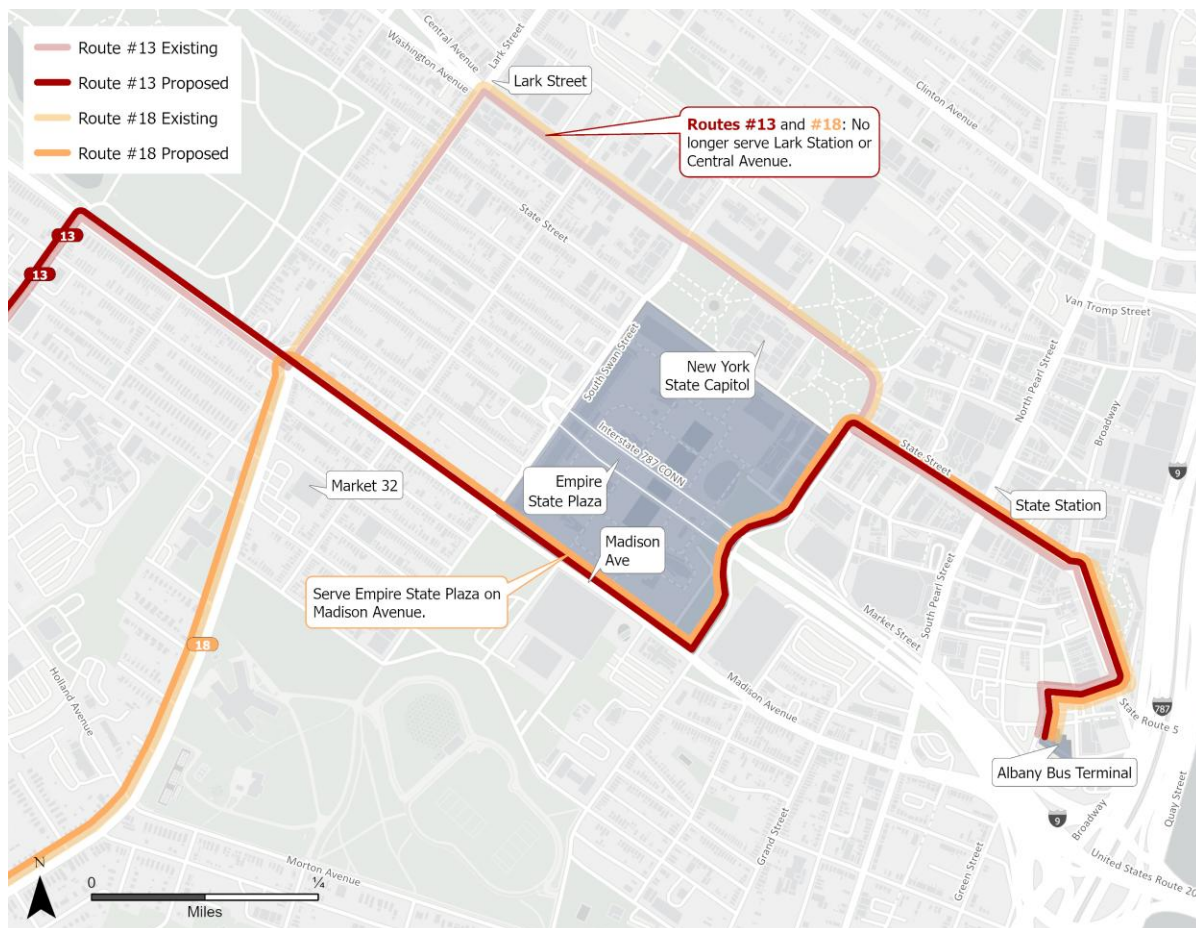
Deviations vs. Speed

CDTA presented a Deviations Vs. Speed concept to balance direct service to major destinations with the overall speed of routes. While deviations shorten the walk to a location, they can inconvenience customers merely passing through, necessitating a possible reduction in the overall frequency of trips on the route. Deviations should be implemented when the ridership demand at that location justifies the inconvenience to riders passing through and the added time required to serve the location.

EMPIRE STATE PLAZA

The first example involved rerouting Routes #13 and #18 (**Figure 12**) from Lark Street and Central Avenue to Madison Avenue and Eagle Street. This adjustment is designed to provide more connections to Madison Avenue and the southside of Empire State Plaza.

Figure 12: Empire State Plaza Concept



A narrow majority of respondents opposed moving Routes #13 and #18 off Lark Street and onto Madison Ave, with 39 percent opposing and 32 percent supporting (**Figure 13**). Opponents were concerned about losing access to key destinations on Lark Street such as restaurants and nightlife. Many noted that Lark Street is a densely populated residential area, where some elderly residents chose to live due to its convenient transit access. Additionally, there were

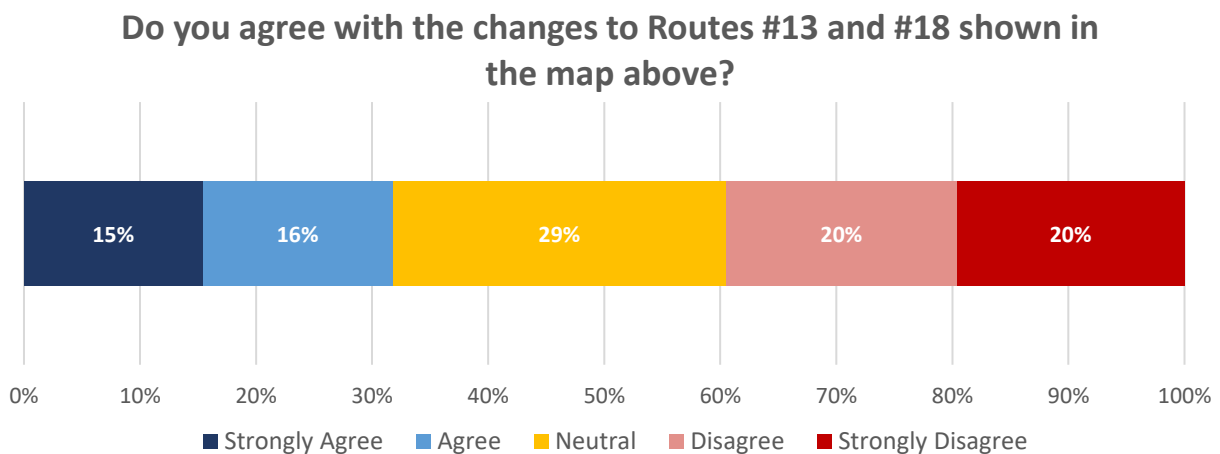
concerns that reducing service would negatively impact small businesses and potentially increase drunk driving by limiting transit options for nightlife.

Respondents, including Central Square residents, opposed removing service from Lark/Library Station, which was described as an important community hub and transfer point to other routes. They prefer to see increased service, as opposed to having service eliminated. Some respondents proposed increasing frequency on Route #114 if service were to be increased on Madison Ave.

There was some support to relocating one route off Lark Street if the other route remains. There was more support for keeping Route #18 on Lark Street and moving Route #13, although it was noted that many interns and employees use the route to commute to the State Capitol.

Supporters of the proposed changes noted removing bus service from Lark Street could enhance pedestrian accessibility and safety as its perceived that buses currently travel too fast along the street. They also noted that riders wishing to access Lark Street destinations could still walk from Madison Ave, and that they would like Empire State Plaza to become a hub where they could transfer to other routes to other cities in the region. However, other respondents noted that elderly riders and those with disabilities may find it challenging to walk to Madison Ave.

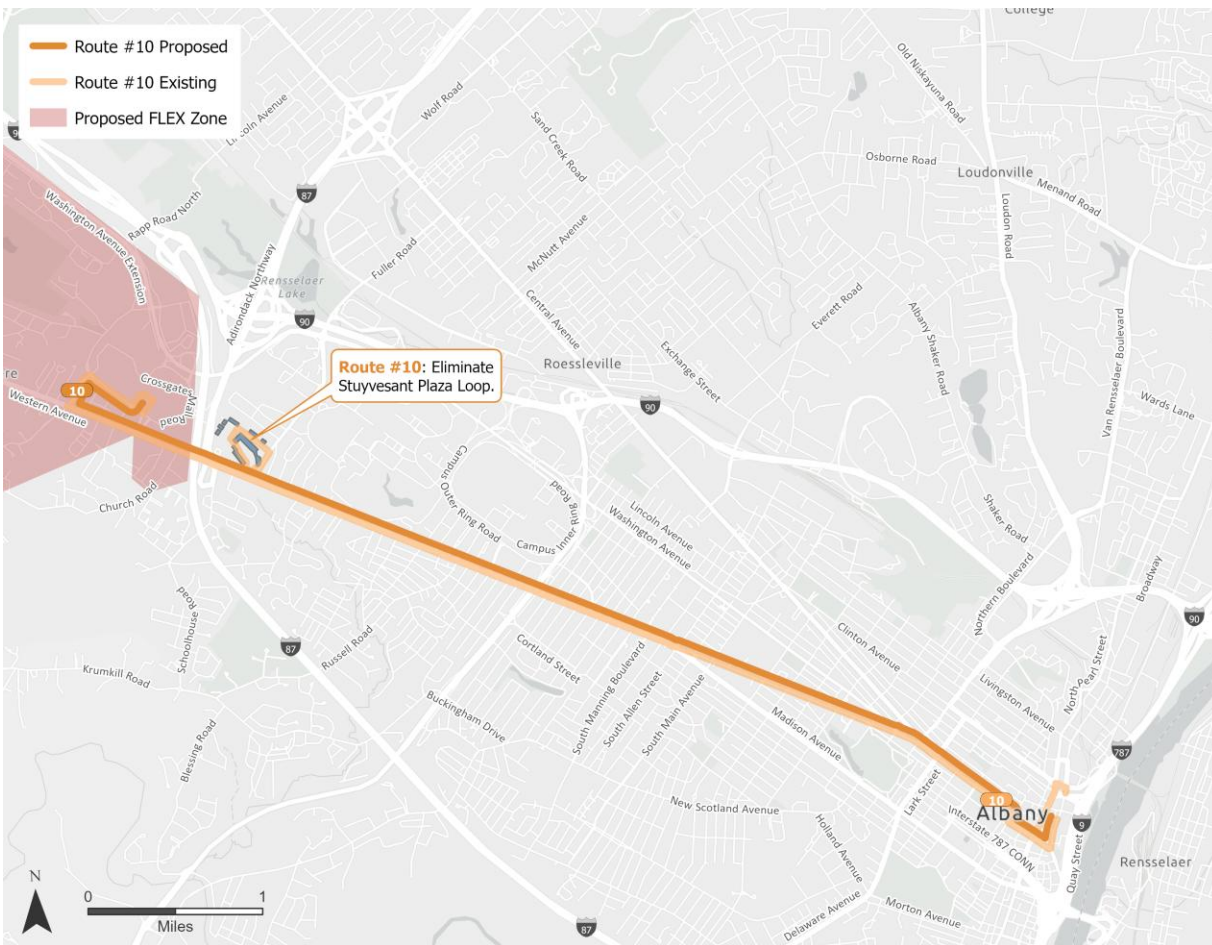
Figure 13: Empire State Plaza Results



STUYVESANT PLAZA

The second example involved the elimination of Route #10s (Figure 14), deviation into Stuyvesant Plaza, with service instead being provided by a stop on Western Avenue.

Figure 14: Stuyvesant Plaza Concept



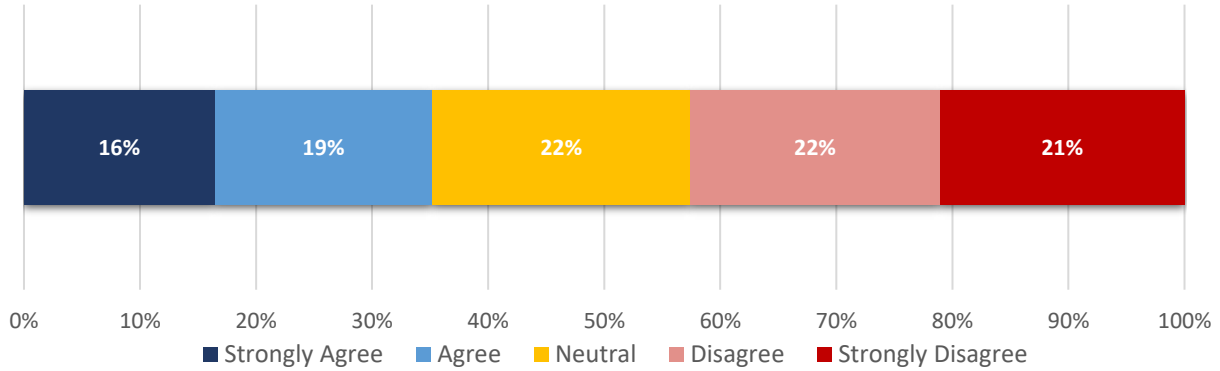
This proposal received support from 35 percent of respondents, while 43 percent opposed it (Figure 15). A major concern is that deviating Route #10 out of Stuyvesant Plaza would create a challenge to elderly riders, riders with limited mobility, and riders with children and that it would shift rides to STAR. Respondents expressed concern that this eliminated deviation could also cause riders to be late for appointments.

On the other hand, many respondents believed that eliminating the loop through Stuyvesant Plaza would save time and make Route #10 more convenient for reaching other destinations. Both supporters and opponents of the change highlighted the need for improved pedestrian infrastructure on Western Ave, noting the danger of crossing the street at Stuyvesant Plaza. It was also noted that the current bus stop on Western Avenue is a patch of grass, lacking a proper shelter.

One respondent proposed that Stuyvesant Plaza should take on the responsibility of improving transit infrastructure. Another rider suggested relocating the Stuyvesant Plaza stop in front of Jacob & Anthony Italian, which is still inside the plaza but closer to Western Ave.

Figure 15: Stuyvesant Plaza Results

Do you agree with the change to Route #10 shown in the map above?



TROY PLAN

Scenario #1 of the Troy Plan proposes replacing the Route #87 loop with an extended Route #22 (**Figure 16**). Route #289 would be extended to Hudson Valley Community College and would feature a shortened loop through the Griswold Heights apartments.

Scenario #2 of the Troy Plan suggests replacing the Route #87 loop with a new Route #288, which would also serve Downtown Troy, Samaritan Hospital, and St. Mary’s Hospital (**Figure 17**). Route #289 would be extended to Hudson Valley Community College, include a shorter loop through the Griswold Heights apartments, and end northbound at Riverfront Station. In this scenario Route #22 would remain unchanged.

Figure 16: Troy Plan: Scenario 1 Concept

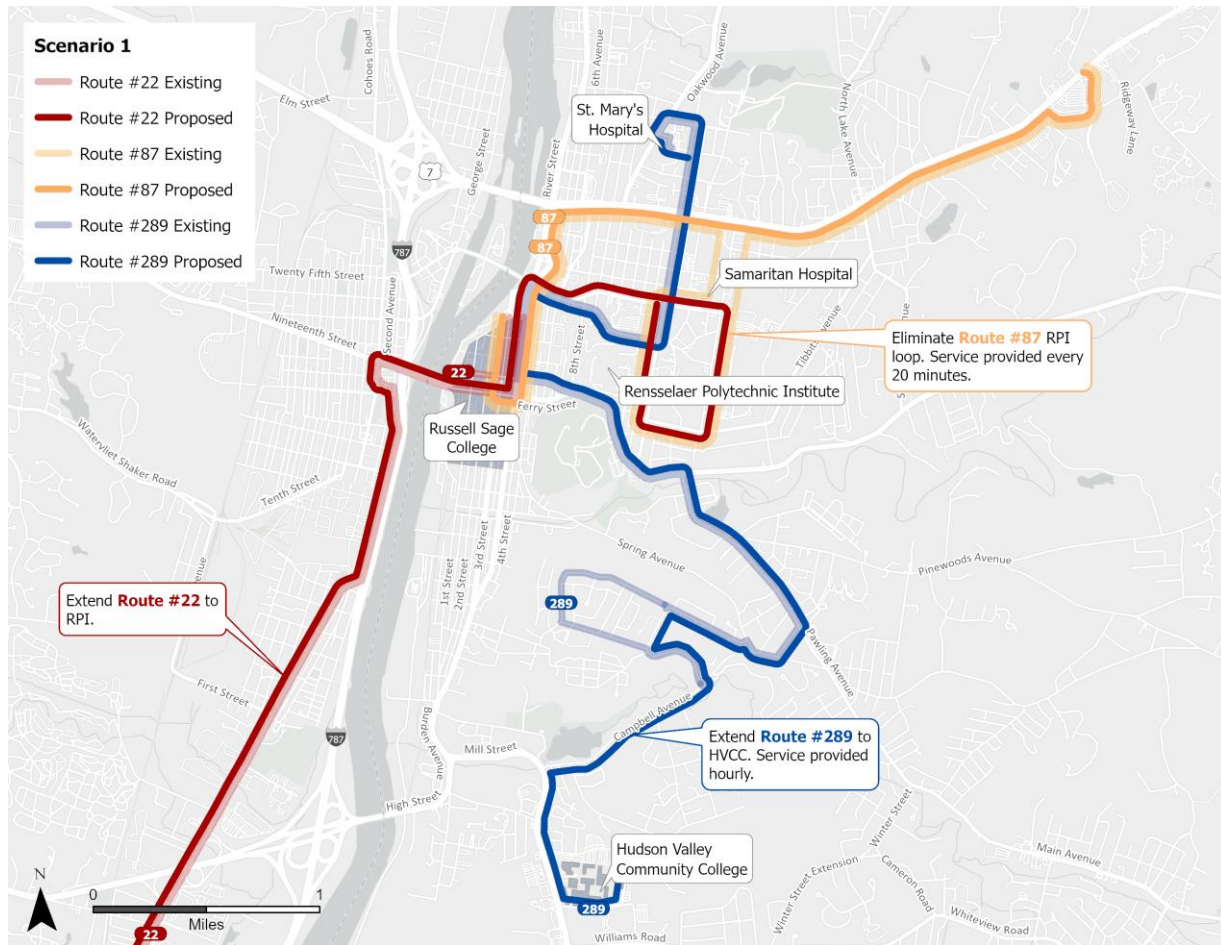


Figure 17: Troy Plan: Scenario 2 Concept

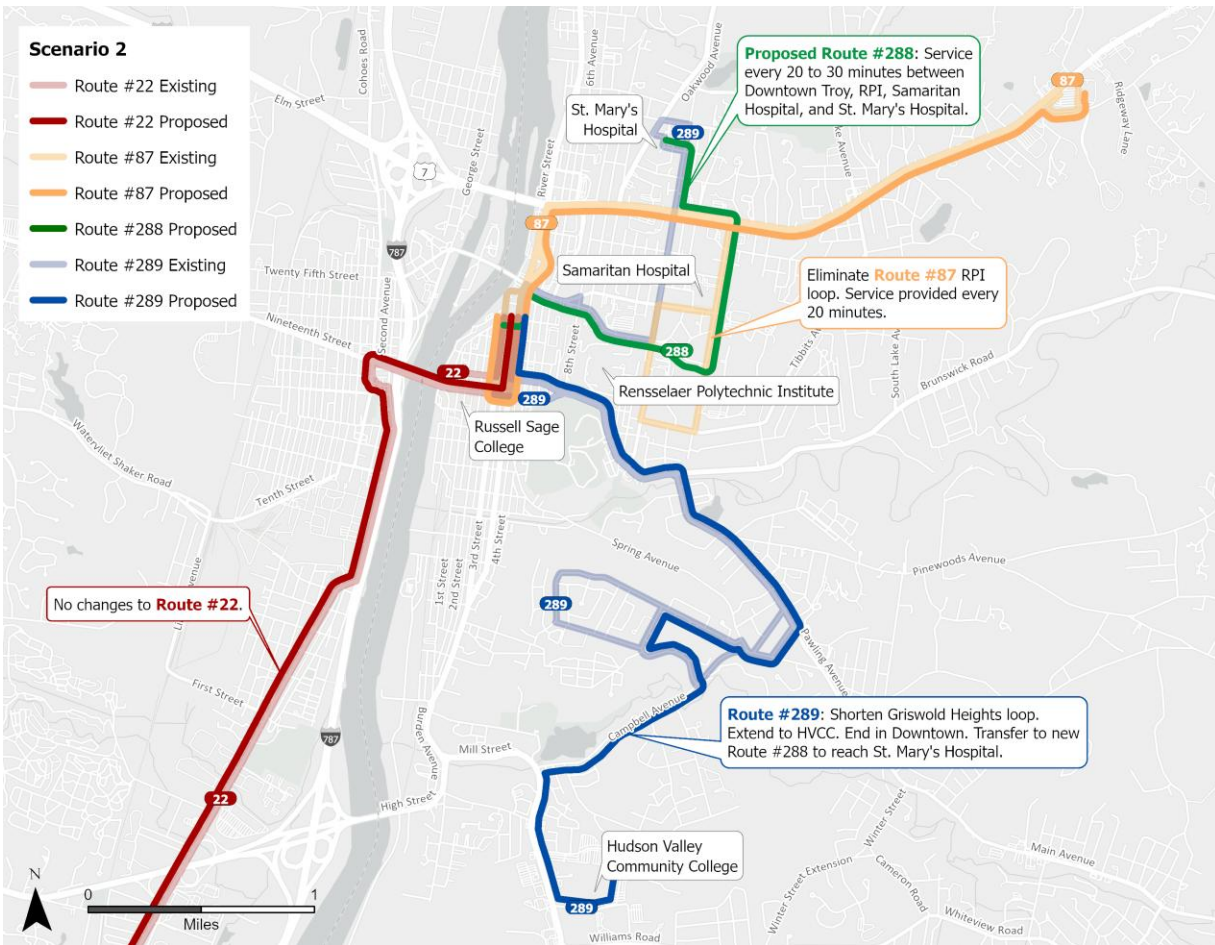
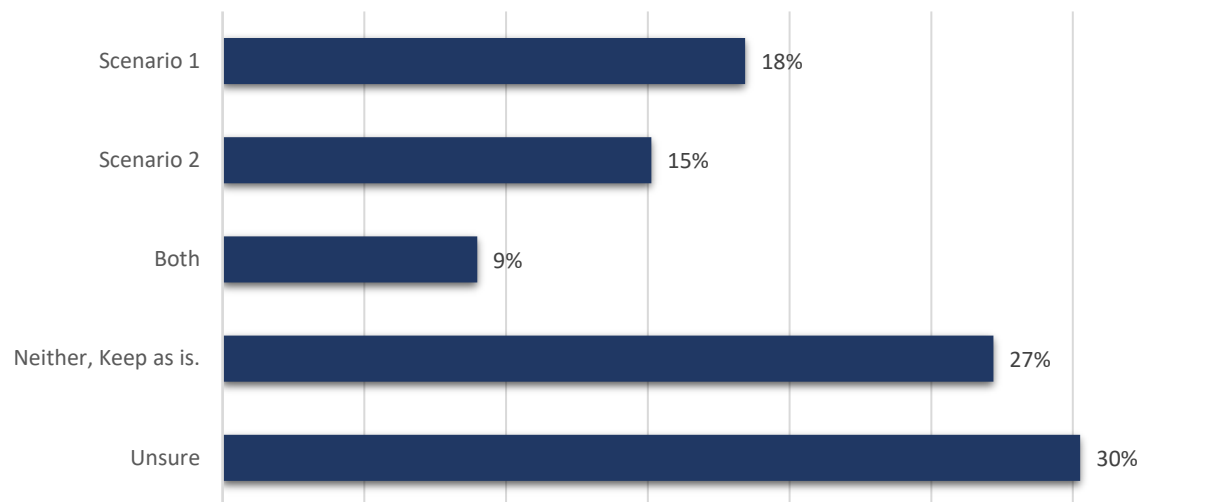


Figure 18: Troy Plan Results

Do you prefer Scenario 1, Scenario 2, or neither (keep service as it is)?



42 percent of those who responded, supported either Scenario #1 or Scenario #2 (Error! Reference source not found.) while 27% preferred to keep things as they are and the final 30% were unsure. Support was higher for Scenario 1 than Scenario 2. There was strong support for extending Route #22 to RPI, as outlined in Scenario 1. Respondents also preferred the proposed Route #288 in Scenario 2, although some suggested it could be an extension of Route #22.

There was significant opposition to shortening Route #289 in the Griswold Heights apartments. Respondents noted that Griswold Heights is a low-income neighborhood whose residents often rely on transit for essential mobility. Some suggested increasing service to the neighborhood, adding that hourly service was insufficient. One respondent proposed a direct route from Griswold Heights to Hannaford, citing past issues with long transfer times that once caused their groceries to spoil. Additionally, a CDTA employee from Griswold Heights reported that her commute to Albany requires three buses and two hours in each direction.

There was some opposition to the proposal of rerouting Route #87 out of RPI. Some respondents mentioned that Route #87 provides an important direct link between RPI and the Walmart on Hoosick Street. One respondent suggested combining Route #87 with Route #85. However, some respondents supported the removal of Route #87 from the RPI campus, noting that it would alleviate travel time on the congested Hoosick Street and acknowledging that RPI operates its own buses.

Respondents supported extending Route #289 to HVCC, with strong approval for establishing a direct connection between HVCC, Griswold Heights, and local hospitals.

GENERAL CONCLUSIONS

Overall, **Figure 19** reveals that 42 percent of respondents supported Deviation vs. Speed proposals while 27 percent were opposed. Supporters of the proposals cited increased speeds and reduced travel times as their primary reasons for backing the proposed changes.

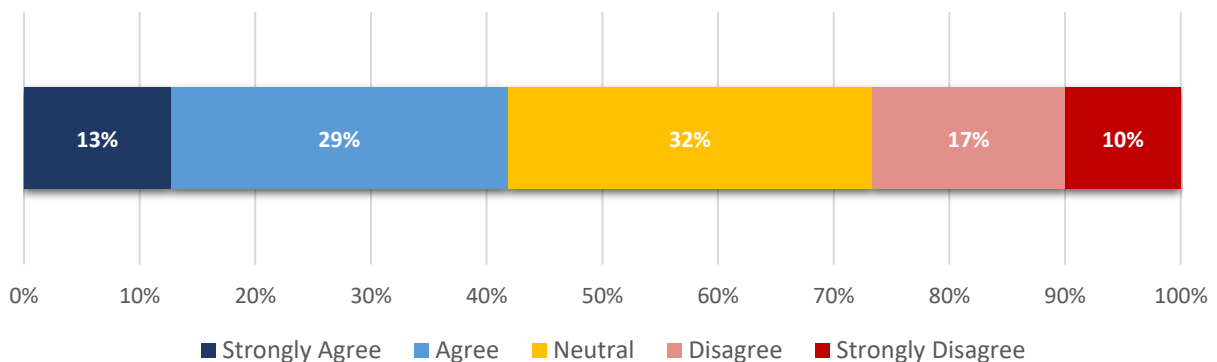
However, most comments opposed the proposed changes. The largest concern was that removing deviations from routes would create unjust barriers to transit access, particularly for disabled and elderly riders. Respondents highlighted the current unreliability of STAR service and expressed opposition to increasing FLEX service at the expense of STAR. Some suggested that infrastructure improvements, such as adding bus lanes and implementing transit signal priority, could enhance speeds without eliminating deviations.

In Troy, most respondents opposed the proposed elimination of Griswold Heights service. Respondents cited that many residents do not drive and might face difficulties accessing grocery stores if the deviation is eliminated. One respondent supported the Route #289 extension to HVCC in tandem with maintaining Griswold Heights service, even if it meant reduced frequency.

Respondents favored the other proposed changes in Troy. One individual noted that Route #87 faces significant issues with the traffic light at Oakwood Ave heading east and with congestion on upper Hoosick Road, neither of which are addressed in Scenarios #1 or #2. CDTA could consider a third scenario, swapping the lower Hoosick Street and RPI routings of Routes #288 and #87. This would allow Route #87 to avoid the traffic of lower Hoosick and give RPI students a direct ride to Walmart while maintaining coverage of lower Hoosick.

Figure 19: Deviations vs. Speed Results

Do you agree with the overall proposed approach to balancing deviations and speed?



DEVIATIONS VS. SPEED, KEY TAKEAWAYS

- **Routes #13 and #18 to Remain on Lark Street:** A narrow majority of respondents opposed rerouting Routes #13 and #18 from Lark Street to Madison Avenue, expressing concerns about losing access to key destinations, including the Albany Public Library and small businesses. Opponents highlighted the potential negative impact on elderly residents, those with disabilities, and nightlife safety, suggesting that CDTA should consult with local businesses before making changes. While some supported the idea for improved pedestrian safety, others noted the challenges it could pose for those who find it difficult to walk the additional distance.
- **Keep Limited Route #10 Service in Stuyvesant Plaza:** Respondents had mixed reaction to removing Route #10 from entering Stuyvesant Plaza, due to accessibility concerns for elderly riders, those with limited mobility, and families with children. Supporters, however, saw time savings and improved convenience but emphasized the need for better pedestrian infrastructure and a proper shelter at the Western Avenue stop. If deviations are eliminated, eliminating them on the westbound direction has the advantage that customers walking into Stuyvesant don't have to cross Western Avenue, which may partially address concerns about safety on Western Avenue.
- **Keep Elements from Both Troy Scenarios:** 61 percent of respondents supported either Scenario #1 or Scenario #2, with a preference for extending Route #22 to RPI as in Scenario #1, and for the proposed new Route #288 in Scenario #2. There was strong opposition to shortening Route #289's loop through Griswold Heights, as residents of this low-income neighborhood rely heavily on transit, and many requested more frequent service. While some opposed rerouting Route #87 out of RPI, others supported it, citing reduced congestion on Hoosick Street and the availability of RPI's own shuttle service.
- **Concerns of Overburdening STAR by Removing Direct Access to Key Destinations:** There are concerns that STAR, which already experiences long wait times, cannot reliably cover service gaps created by removing fixed-route deviations.

Splitting Routes

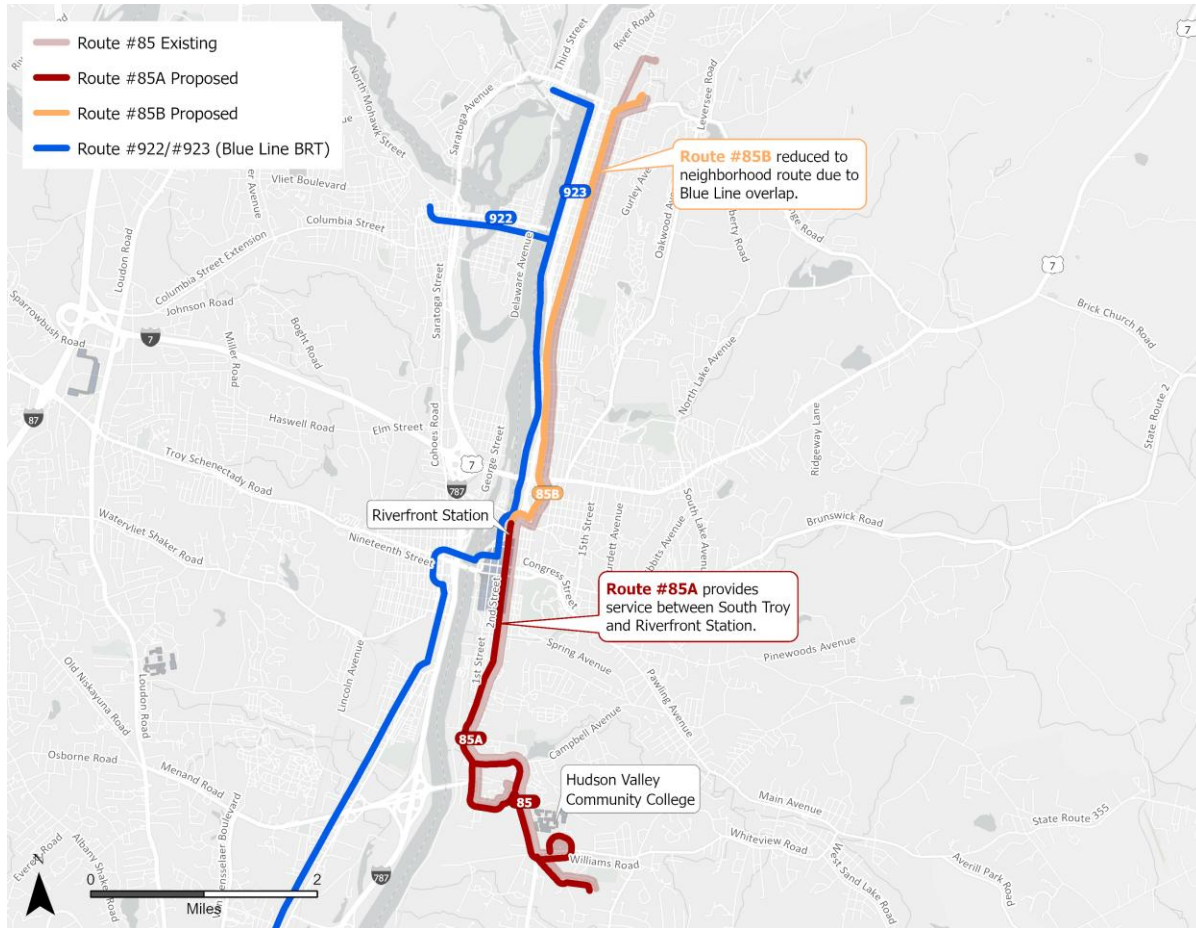
CDTA presented a planning concept to enhance service across the network by splitting long routes. This concept aims to improve connectivity, increase on-time performance, and tailor service levels more precisely. By doing so, higher-demand neighborhoods will receive the service they need without creating insufficiencies in other neighborhoods. Below are the considerations given and the possible proposals presented to the public.

Expected consequences of this service concept include improved on-time performance due to shorter, more focused routes, more opportunities to redeploy resources which could increase frequency or extend service coverage to new areas, and a greater need to coordinate transfers.

ROUTE #85

The first example involved splitting Route #85 into Routes #85A, connecting HVCC and Downtown Troy, and #85B, connecting Downtown Troy and Lansingburgh (**Figure 20**). Due to its proximity to the Blue Line, Route #85B would operate less frequent than Route #85A.

Figure 20: Route #85 Concept



As shown in **Figure 21**, 49 percent of respondents supported the split, while 16 percent opposed it. Many respondents would like to see timed transfers between Routes #85A and #85B, as well as with Route #22. Respondents also advocated for reducing or eliminating the transfer fare between the two new routes.

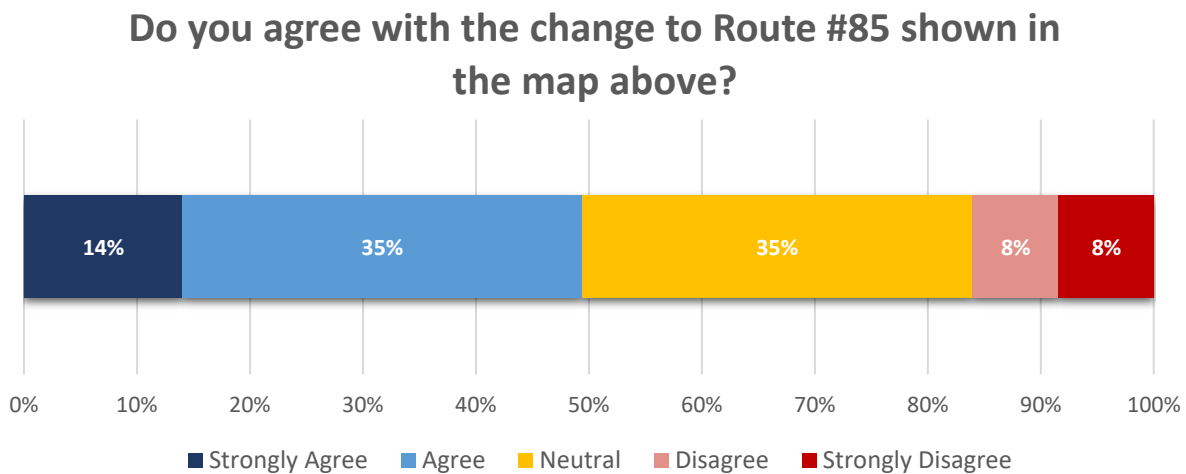
There is some support for new service between South Troy and the Route #378 station in Menands, either by extending Route #85A across the Menands Bridge, or by rerouting Route #922 or #923 through South Troy to Albany. Additionally, there was a request for Route #85A to serve the Van Rensselaer Manor nursing home more frequently than twice a day (7:00 AM and 3:00 PM).

Respondents requested Route #85B to provide direct access to supermarkets such as Hannaford. A respondent opposed the extension of Route #85B to Oakwood Ave, citing that populations with reduced mobility in the area cannot always rely on STAR. They asked for new ADA-compliant sidewalks along Northern Drive between Leverage Road to Corliss Park.

Opponents of splitting Route #85 were concerned about the split increasing their commute times, particularly along Route #85B, where service would be reduced. Some respondents noted that 5th Ave is not very walkable and suggested that expanded FLEX service in the area could fill in service gaps created by the frequency change.

Additionally, there were some concerns that numbering both routes as #85 might confuse riders. One rider proposed naming the new routes #85 and #86.

Figure 21: Route #85 Results



ROUTE #182

The second example involved splitting Route #182 into two routes, Routes #182A and #182B. The example stated that the expected benefits were enabling CDTA to better tailor service levels, addressing on-time performance issues, and providing new service to Clifton Park. There were two proposed scenarios:

Scenario #1: (Figure 22)

- Route #182 would split in Cohoes;
- Route #182A would serve Downtown Albany, Siena College, and Latham Farms; and,
- Route #182B would connect downtown Troy and Clifton Park via US-9.

Scenario #2: (Figure 23)

- Route #182 would split in Latham Farms;
- Route #182B would connect downtown Albany with Clifton Park, partly via I-87; and,

- Route #182A would connect Latham Farms, Cohoes, Watervliet, and downtown Troy.

Figure 22: Route #182: Scenario 1 Concept

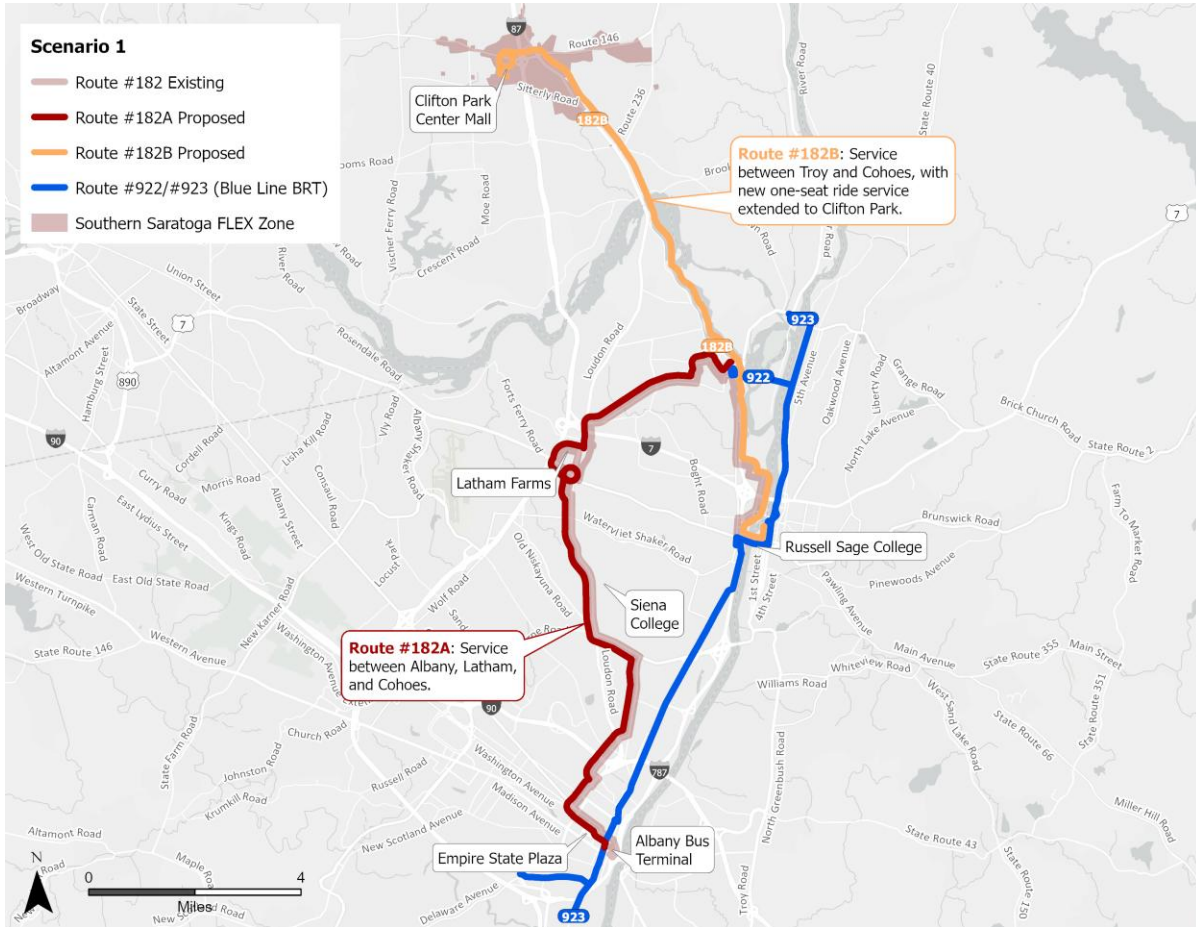
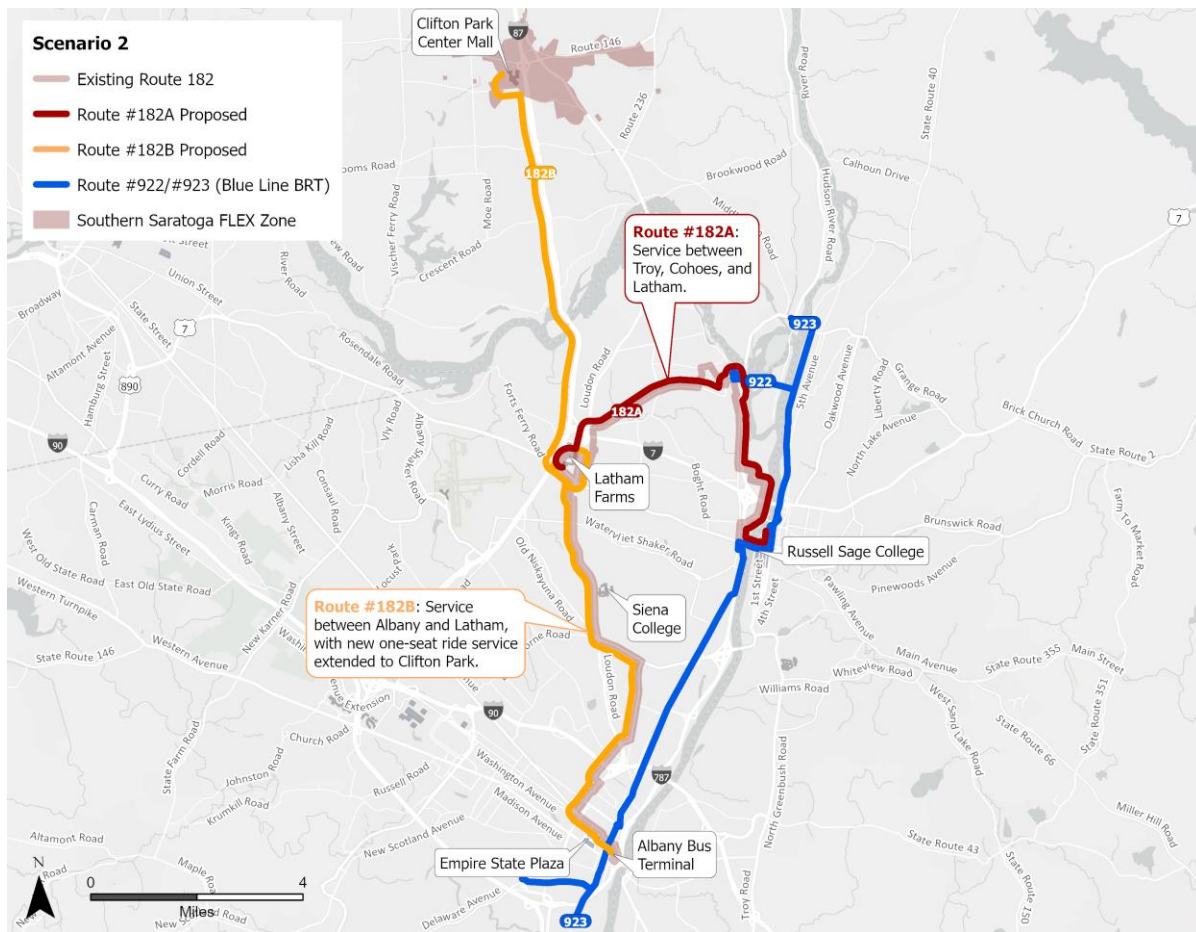


Figure 23: Route #182: Scenario 2 Concept



As shown in **Figure 24**, 60 percent of respondents supported either of the two scenarios, and 14 percent supported neither. Among respondents supporting either scenario, 58 percent supported Scenario #1, and 68 percent supported Scenario #2. Respondents supported low-cost transfers, as well as timed transfers with Routes #190, #370, and between #182A/#182B.

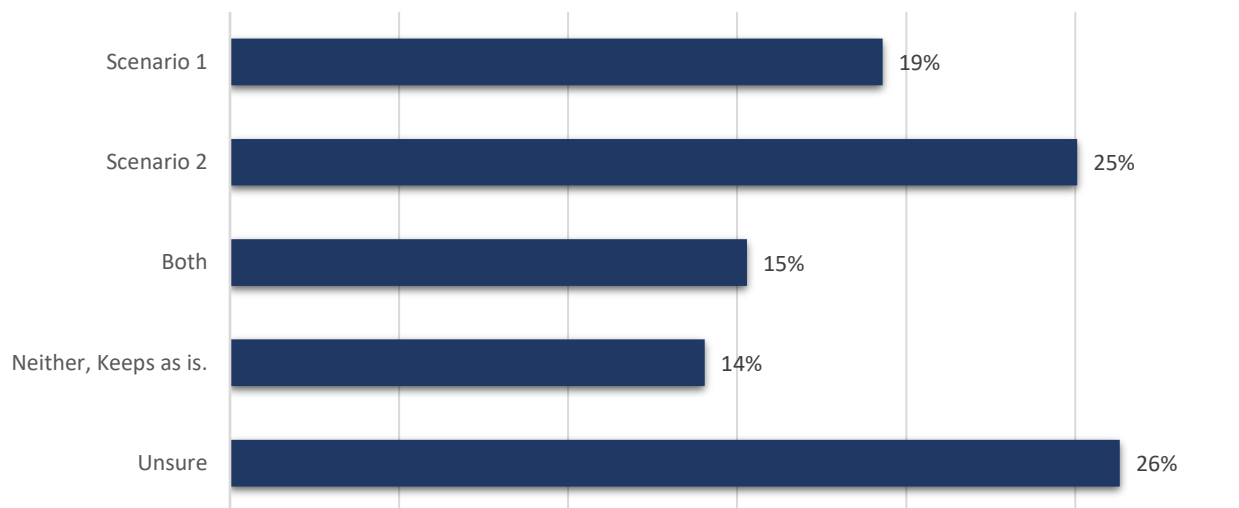
Supporters of Scenario #2 suggested that Albany residents would use the route to reach Clifton Park without transferring. Supporters of Scenario #1 reacted positively to both Routes #182A and #182B connecting to the Blue Line and suggested that more riders would travel to Clifton Park from Troy than from Albany. They also appreciated the proposed ability to access businesses along US-9. However, there was one concern that US-9 lacks safe pedestrian infrastructure and recommends new crosswalks by Bella Napoli.

There was an overall positive reaction regarding potential new service to Clifton Park, as well as a direct link between Albany and Siena College. Some respondents suggested increasing service to Clifton Park, proposing connections to both Albany and Saratoga Springs. They recommended turning the Northway Express into an all-day route to enhance these connections.

Concerns that emerged included residents from Clifton Park seldom using the new bus because the town lacks good pedestrian infrastructure, and noting most residents own private vehicles. It was also mentioned that shifting some service away from the current Route #182 alignment in Scenario #2 could decrease ridership.

Figure 24: Route #182 Results

Do you prefer Scenario 1, Scenario 2, or neither (keep service as it is)?



GENERAL CONCLUSIONS

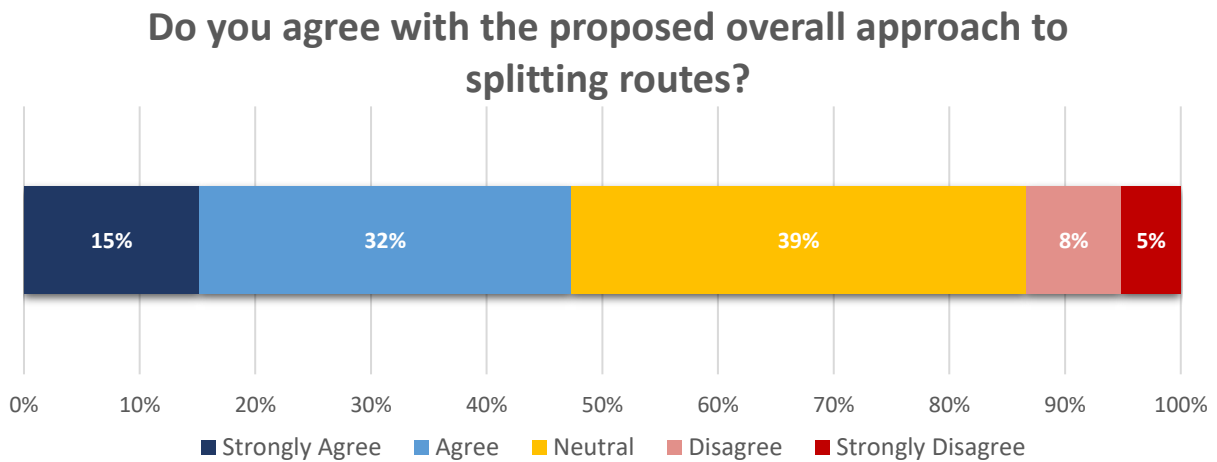
Overall, 47 percent of respondents agreed with the proposed changes, and 13 percent opposed (Figure 25). Many respondents thought that splitting routes would increase bus reliability and appreciated the proposed service to Clifton Park. There were many recommendations for timed and free transfers between routes.

Many respondents noted that calling split routes by similar names may confuse riders. Some respondents suggested calling routes by adjacent numbers (i.e., Routes #85 and #86) rather than using different letters with the same number (i.e., Routes #85A and #85B). Some riders were also worried about buses missing timed transfers.

In addition to new service to Clifton Park, a few respondents requested several new routes:

- Albany to Saratoga Springs, making a stopping near exit 8 on I-87;
- Albany to Glens Falls and Lake George; and,
- Watervliet to Albany International Airport via SR 155.

Figure 25: Splitting Routes Results



SPLITTING ROUTES, KEY TAKEAWAYS

- **Make transfers timed and low-cost:** A majority of respondents supported splitting Routes #85 and #182 to improve service reliability and efficiency. Support for splitting routes was conditioned, so long as timed transfers are followed consistently and transferring between buses is low-cost or no-cost.
- **Route #85 Proposal Supported:** A majority of respondents supported splitting Route #85, as well as for new service to Hannaford and from South Troy to Menands. It was noted that some riders may get confused by similarly numbered routes, such as Routes #85A and #85B.
- **Route #182 to Clifton Park popular:** There is support on splitting Route #182, specifically slightly favoring Scenario #2 (Albany to Clifton Park service) over Scenario #1 (Troy to Clifton Park). Extending regular service to Clifton Park and even farther north to Saratoga Springs, Lake George, and Glens Falls was supported.

Stop Spacing

CDTA presented an approach to stop spacing focused on balancing speed of service with convenience and safety for customers. CDTA proposed to use the following checklist when considering a stop removal:

- The stop significantly overlaps with another, alternative stop;
- The number of customers on board significantly outweighs the number of customers using the stop;
- Alternative stops are normally served on the same trip;
- The walk to the alternative stop is safe, including sidewalks and safe street crossings; and,
- The operating speed is high, so stopping costs significant time.

PEARL STREET

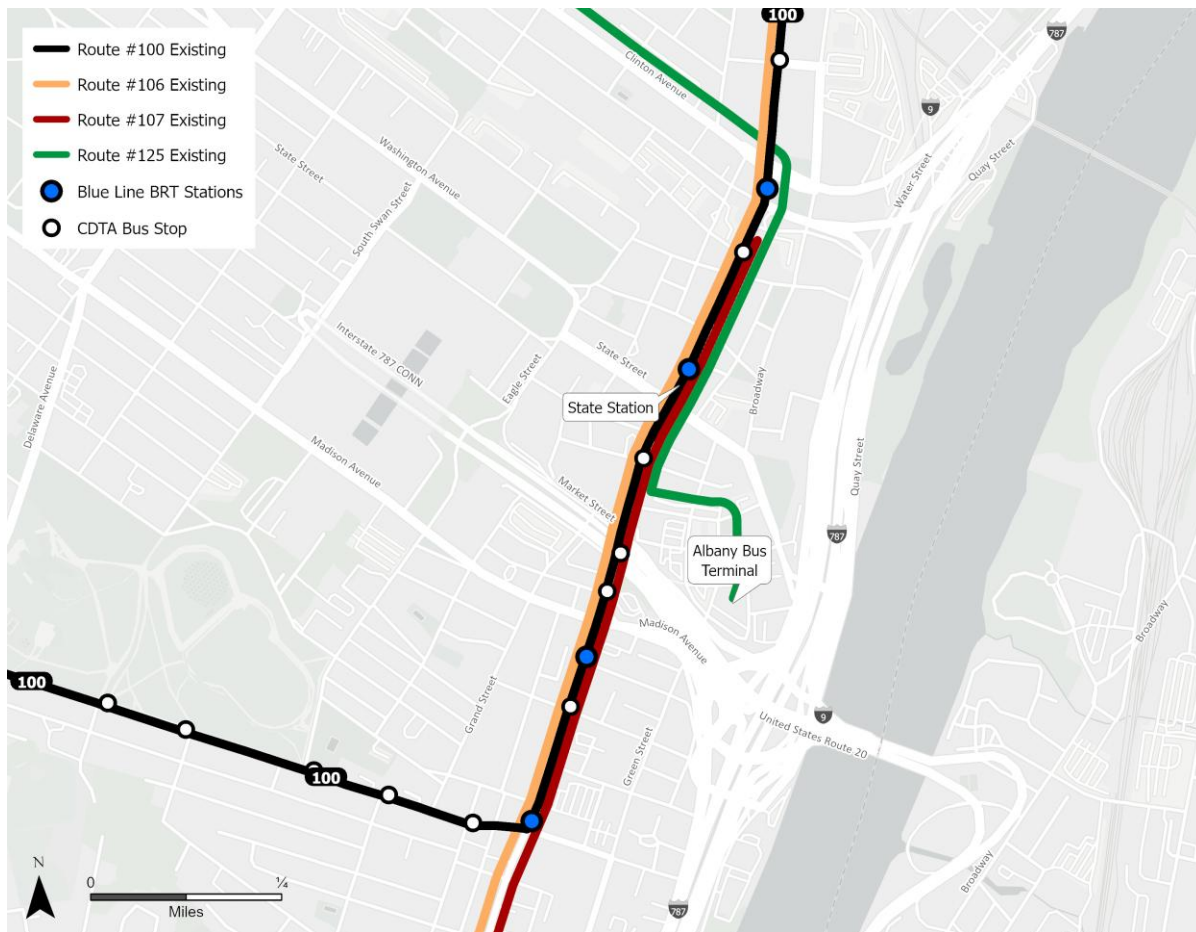
CDTA presented a section of Pearl Street in Albany as potential for elimination of approximately every other stop, as shown in **Figure 26**.

The justification for stop elimination is as follows:

- Stops are less than 600 feet apart on average;
- Good pedestrian infrastructure (sidewalks, short blocks, crosswalks);
- Frequent stopping at one stop after another, and

High passenger loads compared to the amount of people using each stop Arguments against stop elimination include low potential speed gain due to closely spaced intersections and a low speed limit.

Figure 26: Pearl Street Concept

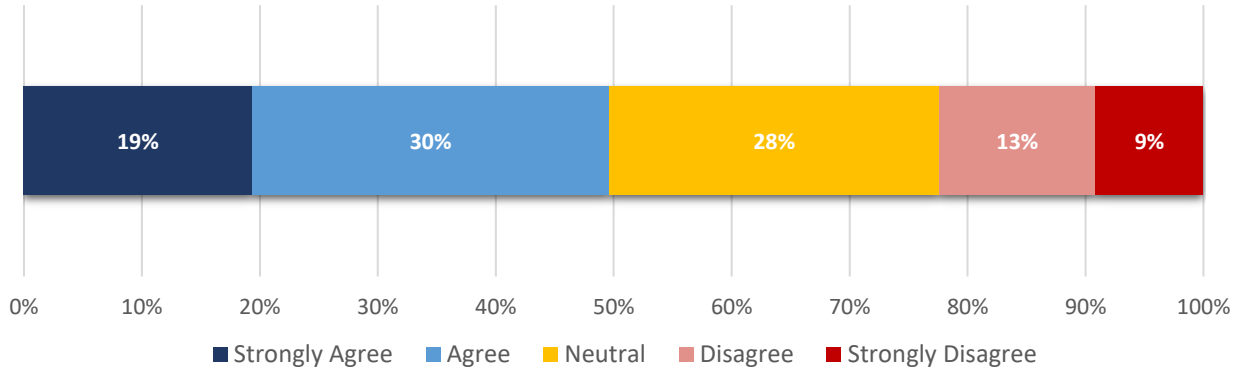


As shown in **Figure 27**, 50 percent of respondents supported this stop elimination proposal, whereas 22 percent were opposed. Proponents of the plan were optimistic about higher frequency and reduced travel times. Supporters noted that the area is walkable for those who are able-bodied and considered a five-to-ten-minute walk to the nearest stop to be reasonable. One respondent even hoped that the reduction in stops might discourage disruptive behavior on the buses.

Opponents were concerned that removing stops may unfairly increase walking distances for seniors and individuals with disabilities. They highlighted that Pearl Street is densely populated, which increases walking times to stops. Some respondents noted that buses already skip stops that are not requested and pointed out that the Blue Line already serves as a limited-stop alternative to Routes #100, #106, and #107 along Pearl Street.

Figure 27: Pearl Street Results

Do you agree with the stop spacing on Pearl Street shown in the map above?



PAWLING AVENUE

The second example involved several closely spaced stops along Pawling Avenue in Troy (**Figure 28**).

The justification for this stop elimination is as follows:

- These stops are less than 500 feet apart on average;
- Good pedestrian infrastructure;
- Periodic stopping at one stop after another, and
- Relatively high passenger load compared to those using each stop, and high potential speed

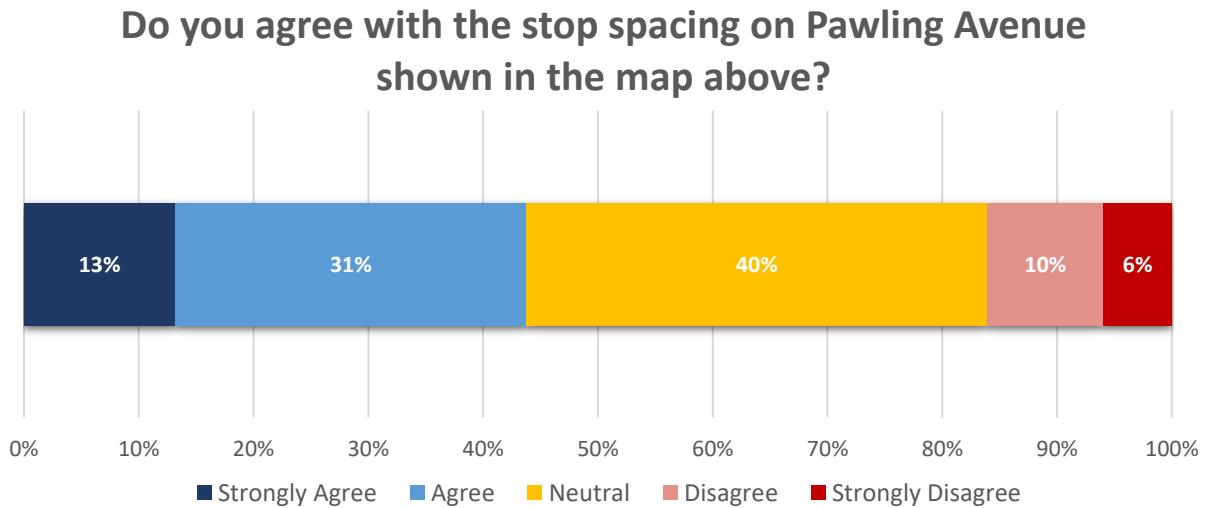
Figure 28: Pawling Avenue Concept



As shown in **Figure 29**, 44 percent of respondents supported this proposal, whereas 16 percent opposed it. Supporters felt that some stops on Pawling Avenue are too close together, making it inefficient to maintain stops with low ridership. Some respondents requested improvements to walkability along Pawling Avenue to facilitate easier access to remaining stops.

Many opponents noted that Route #286 already skips many non-requested stops, and that requested stops vary from trip to trip. Some respondents believed that maintaining all current stops would keep this neighborhood transit friendly. There were also concerns that removing stops would create additional barriers for riders with reduced mobility. One person suggested expanding FLEX service in exchange for removing stops along Pawling Avenue.

Figure 29: Pawling Avenue Results



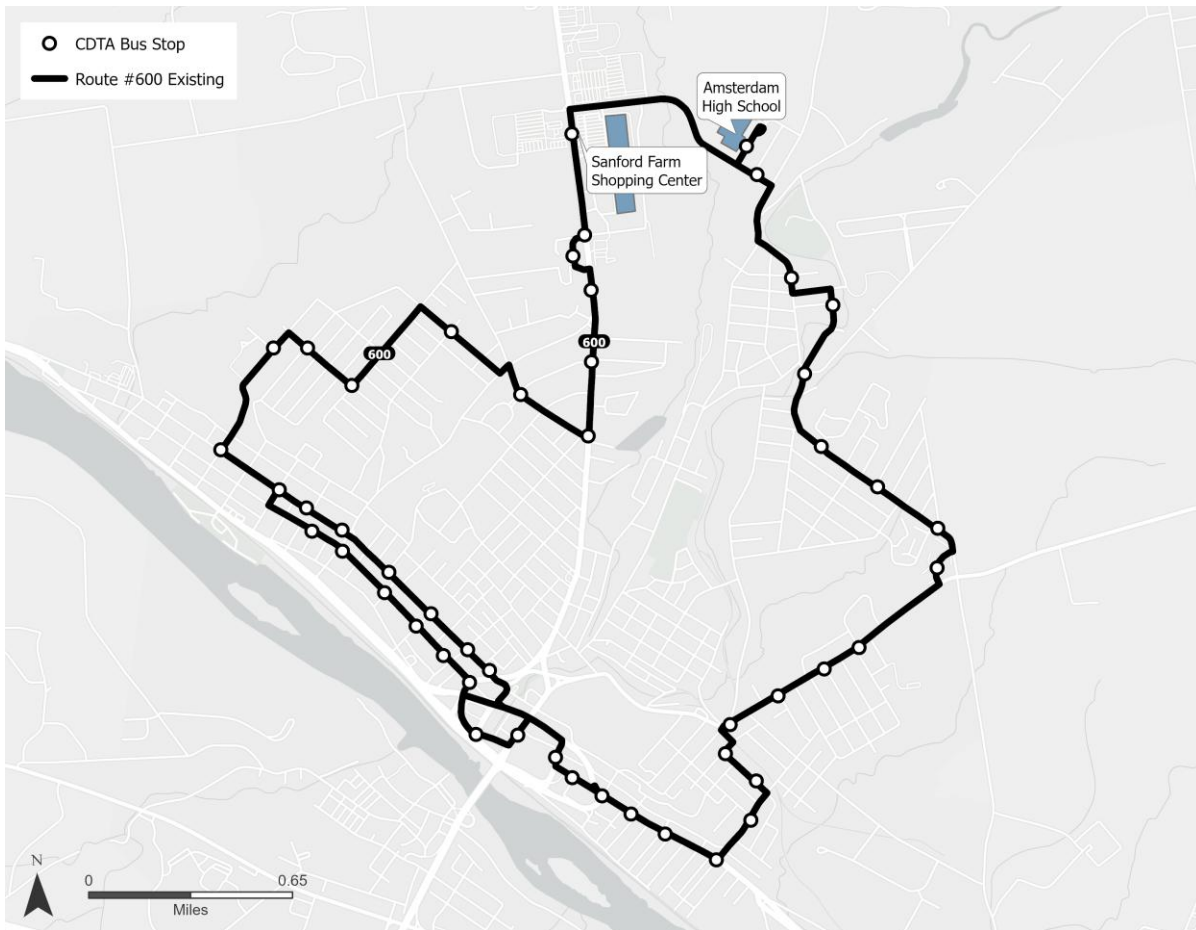
ROUTE #600

Under this proposal, stops along Route #600 in Amsterdam would remain unchanged (**Figure 30**). This example was included to demonstrate what ideal stop spacing looks like.

The reasons for maintaining all Route #600 stops are as follows:

- Route #600 stops are over 1,000 feet apart on average;
- There is only partial sidewalk coverage along the route, making it difficult to walk between stops;
- Alternative stops are not normally served on the same trip;
- There are not significantly more passengers on board buses than board at each stop; and,
- Route #600 enjoys high operating speeds.

Figure 30: Route #600 Concept

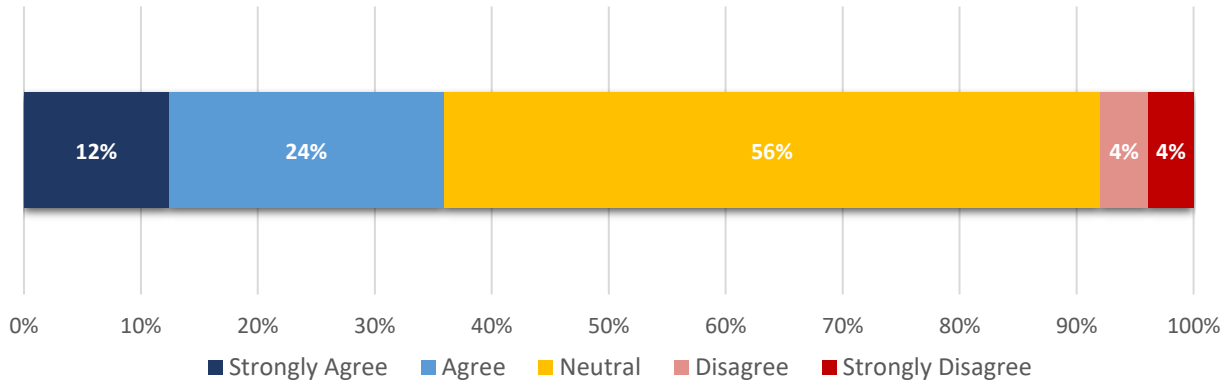


As shown in **Figure 31**, 36 percent of respondents supported maintaining all current stops along Route #600, while eight percent supported either adding or removing some stops. 56 percent of respondents had no opinion, with many stating that they either are not familiar with Amsterdam or have never ridden Route #600.

Supporters of maintaining all stops on Route #600 requested enhanced safety measures at bus stops, including new curbs, bus pull-offs, shelters, and parking restrictions. One respondent advocated for adding a stop on Routes #600 and #602 directly in front of the Office for Aging on Guy Park Ave. Conversely, another person asked to remove the Clizbe Ave & Stella Ln stop, complaining that Clizbe Ave is too rural to support multiple bus stops and that late-night bus service is unnecessary in the neighborhood.

Figure 31: Route #600 Results

Do you agree with the stop spacing on Route #600 shown in the map above?



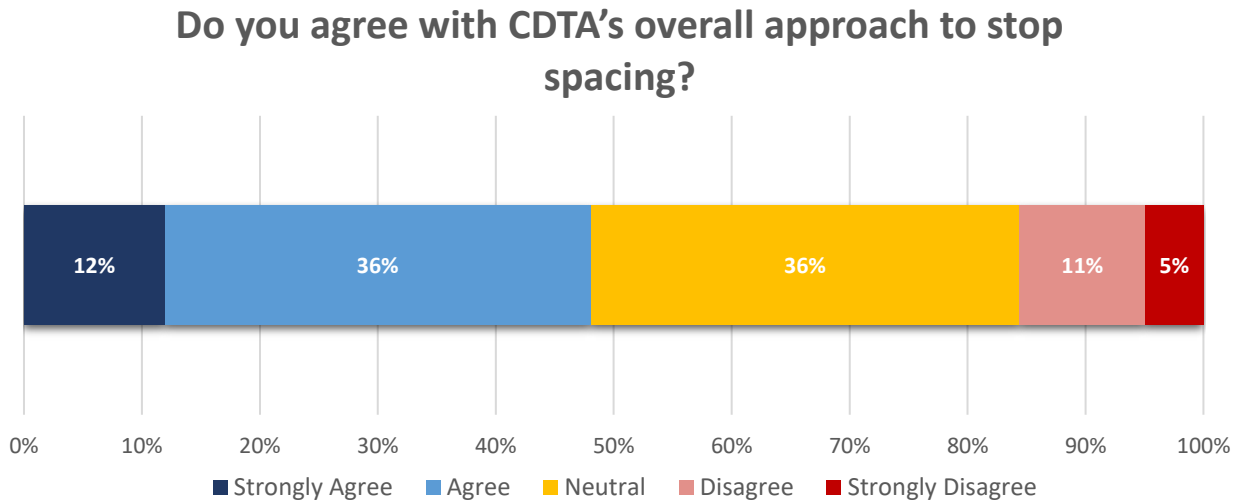
General Conclusions

Figure 32 shows that 48 percent of survey respondents agreed with CDTA’s general approach to stop spacing, and 16 percent opposed. Supporters of the plan believed that reducing the number of closely stops would increase speed, efficiency, and ridership.

Opponents were concerned that passengers with reduced mobility, with children, and with shopping bags would need to walk farther, sometimes through dangerous areas. Respondents emphasized improvements to pedestrian infrastructure throughout the Capital District.

Respondents also requested more frequent stops in urban areas to be maintained, such as along Pearl Street. Another person asked for additional stops on Route 4 south of HVCC.

Figure 32: Stop Spacing Results



STOP SPACING, KEY TAKEAWAYS

- **Support to Reduce Stops from Pearl Street:** Most respondents supported removing stops from Pearl Street, citing benefits like higher frequency and reduced travel times. It was noted that the Blue Line already serves as a limited stop bus route in this corridor. There were some concerns that this could adversely impact riders that are elderly, with mobility impairments, with children, or carrying shopping bags.
- **Support to Reduce Stops on Pawling Avenue:** Most respondents also supported removing closely spaced stops along Pawling Avenue to increase speed. There were some requests to improve the walkability along Pawling Avenue or to expand FLEX service to cover gaps.
- **Maintain Route #600 stops:** The majority of respondents agreed that the stop spacing is adequate on Route #600. There was a specific request to stop directly in front of the Office for Aging on Guy Park Ave, while conversely, another would like fewer stops along Clizbe Ave.
- **Implement Proposed Stop Spacing Guidance:** Moving forward, most respondents agree that CDTA should remove a stop if it meets the proposed criteria for distance to the next stop, access to pedestrian infrastructure, passenger boardings, and route operating speeds.

FLEX

FLEX is CDTA's microtransit service, providing on-demand service in areas where transit is needed but fixed-route service is not viable. In addition to transporting riders to fixed-route bus stops, it is expected that service quality should be better using microtransit than fixed route in certain low density areas, such as lower wait times or shorter travel times. FLEX sees high demand, which at times results in low availability and long wait times for customers.

To make FLEX available to more people and increase its overall usefulness to the public, CDTA proposed to take the following approach to FLEX:

- Where connections to frequent trunk service are available, use FLEX to promote transfers to the frequent trunk network instead of duplicating fixed-route service;
- Keep FLEX zones small—no more than 10 square miles;
- Redraw FLEX zones so customers meet the vehicle on a main road or at a common location; and,
- Create FLEX zones to replace infrequent, unproductive fixed-route service which does not require the capacity of a 40-foot bus.

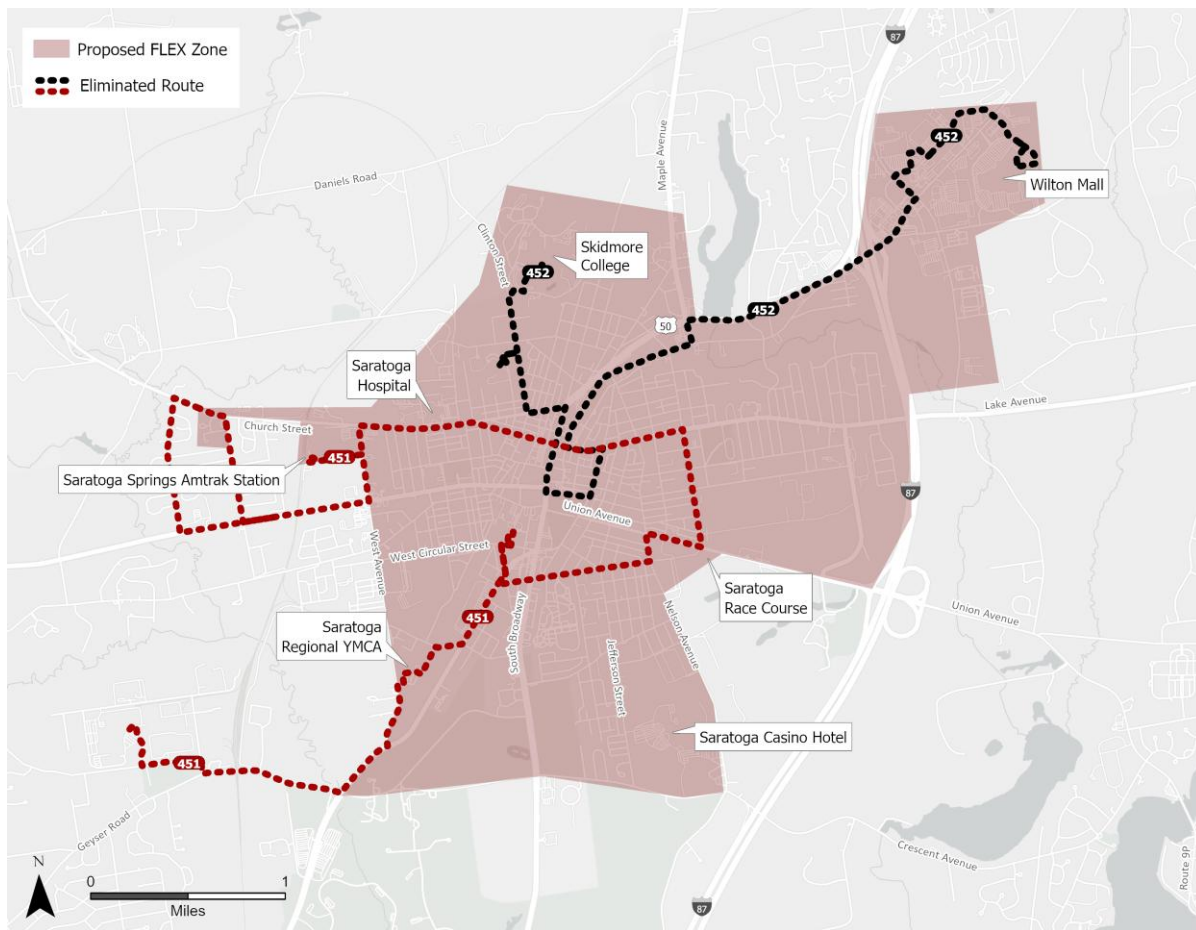
CDTA also shared for public feedback the following examples of changing service between FLEX and fixed route:

- Eliminating Routes #451 and #452 (except during peak load times on Route #452) and establishing a new FLEX zone in Saratoga Springs;
- Eliminating Routes #600 and #601 (except during peak load times for students at Amsterdam High School) and establishing a new FLEX zone in Amsterdam;
- Converting much of FLEX Colonie to fixed route service; and,
- Shortening Routes #13, #18, and #519, and establishing a new FLEX zone in Bethlehem.

SARATOGA SPRINGS FLEX

The Saratoga Springs example eliminates the low-ridership Routes #451 and #452, except during peak times on Route #452 (**Figure 33**). Currently Route #451 serves an average of 3.2 passengers per hour, while Route #452 sees an average of 4.4 passengers per hour. To better serve the community and optimize resources, this example creates a new FLEX zone that would cover most of the same areas served by these routes in Saratoga Springs.

Figure 33: Saratoga Springs FLEX Concept

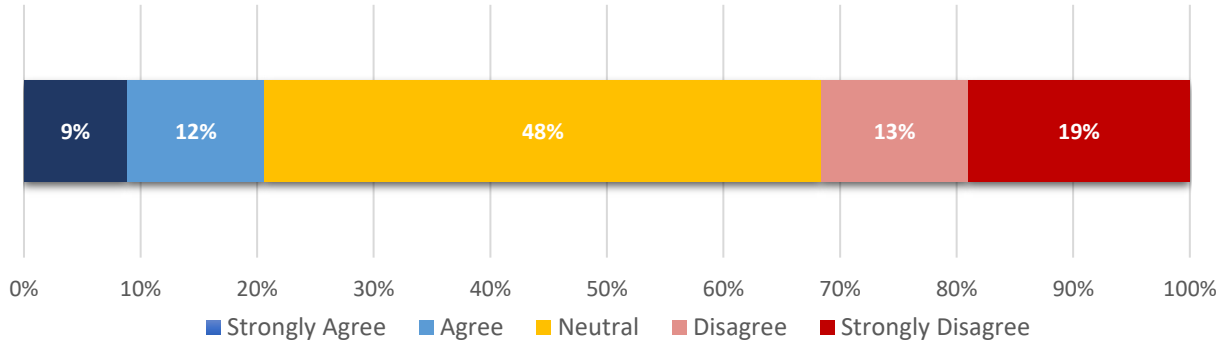


As shown in **Figure 34**, 32 percent of respondents opposed this change, while 21 percent supported it. 48 percent were neutral, suggesting a need for further public engagement. Concerns were raised about FLEX’s reliability and accessibility. Respondents noted that FLEX is challenging for those without phones, and that FLEX needs more vehicle availability to address excessive wait times. There was also concern that expanding FLEX should not come at the expense of STAR resources, as STAR is crucial for disabled individuals who cannot use fixed-route buses, while FLEX is perceived as more of a “luxury.”

Some respondents suggested restructuring existing routes in Saratoga Springs to improve efficiency. For instance, one rider proposed eliminating Route #452, which has a similar alignment as Route #450 between Downtown Saratoga Springs and the Wilton Mall and instead extending Route #452 north to SUNY Adirondack in Glens Falls along US-9. Others recommended maintaining fixed-route service during the initial FLEX implementation phase and adjusting based on actual ridership. Additionally, there was a suggestion to modify Route #540 to cover new areas in Saratoga Springs.

Figure 34: Saratoga Springs FLEX Results

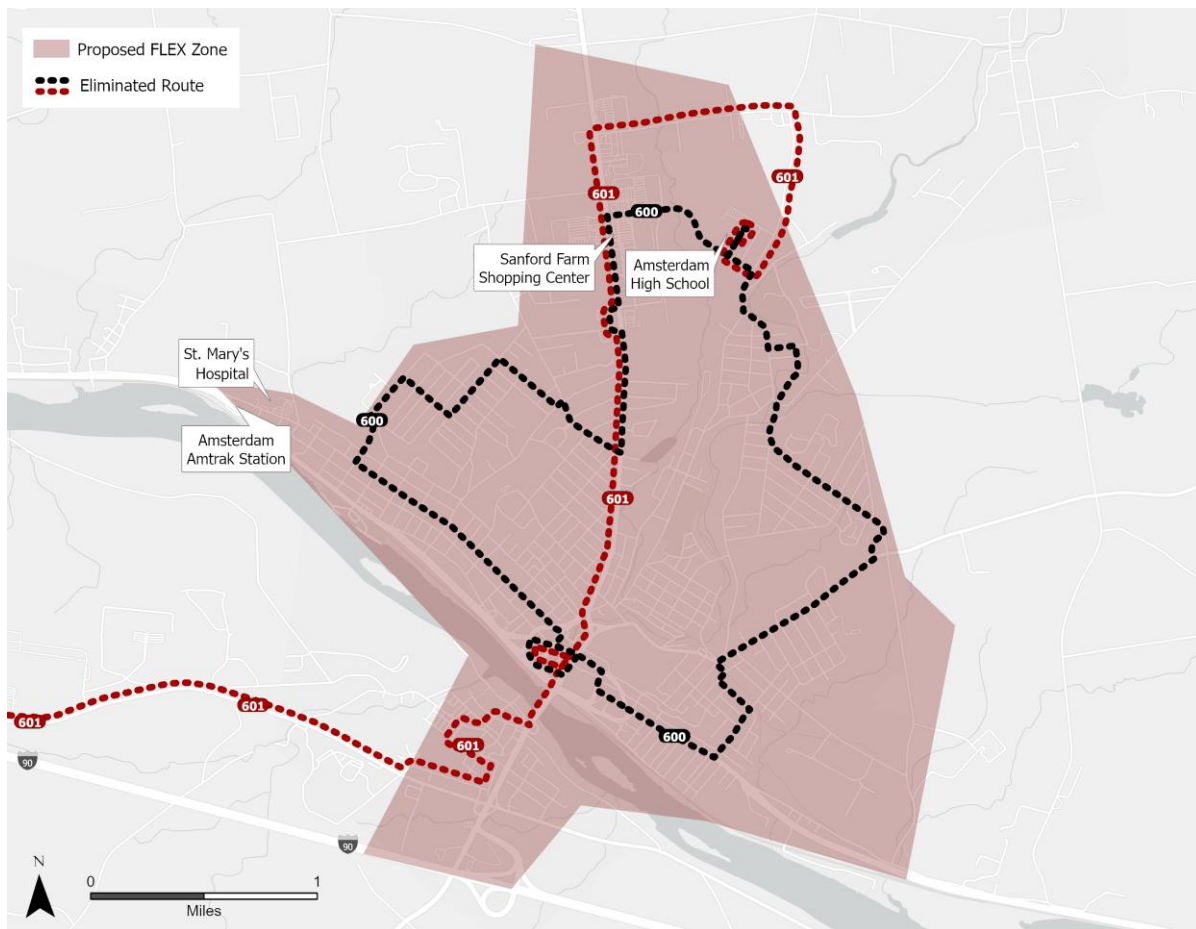
Do you agree with the Saratoga Springs FLEX concept shown in the map above?



AMSTERDAM FLEX

The Amsterdam Flex proposal recommends eliminating Routes #600 and #601, except for peak services for Amsterdam High School students (**Figure 35**). Route #600 averages 11.8 passengers per hour, while Route #601 averages 10.4 passengers per hour. The proposed Flex zone would replace fixed-route service to provide a greater flexibility for riders, allowing them to request rides anywhere in the zone shown below.

Figure 35: Amsterdam FLEX Concept



As shown in **Figure 36**, 17 percent of respondents supported the proposed plan, while 32 percent opposed it. 51 percent were neutral. Respondents expressed concerns regarding the inaccessibility due to long wait times for FLEX service. A respondent mentioned that many Amsterdam residents are not fluent in English and may encounter challenges when booking rides. There was also concern expressed that eliminating fixed-route service would disadvantage riders without cell phones.

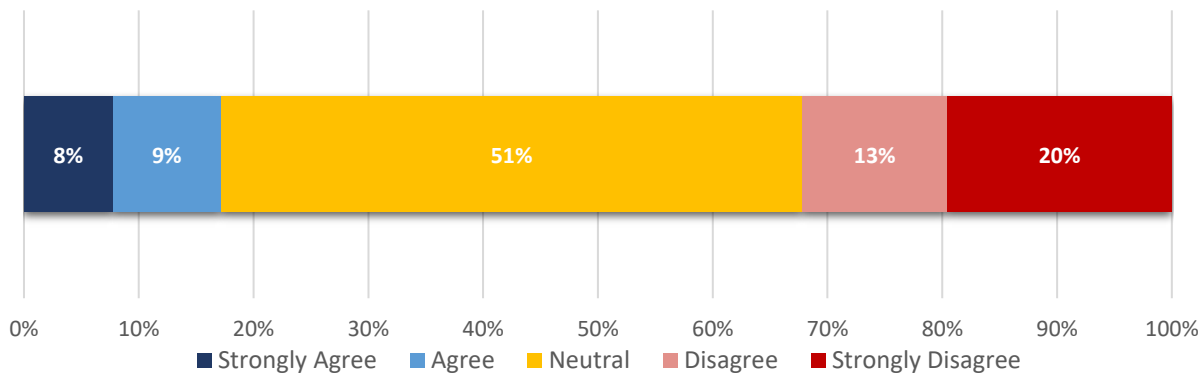
Several respondents noted that fixed-route CDTA service in Amsterdam is relatively new, and ridership may require time to build. Some requested new destinations for Route #601, including Little Falls and the Our Lady of Martyrs Shrine (May through October only). Additionally, one

rider advocated for keeping fixed-route service to shopping destinations along Route #30 and stated they would switch to taking Gloversville Transit if CDTA fixed-route service were discontinued.

Supporters of the proposed plan believed that microtransit would benefit workers, students, and the elderly. They proposed additional FLEX drivers to reduce wait times without negatively affecting STAR service. Additionally, respondents requested the proposed FLEX zone to include Fulton Montgomery Community College.

Figure 36: Amsterdam FLEX Results

Do you agree with the Amsterdam FLEX concept shown in the map above?

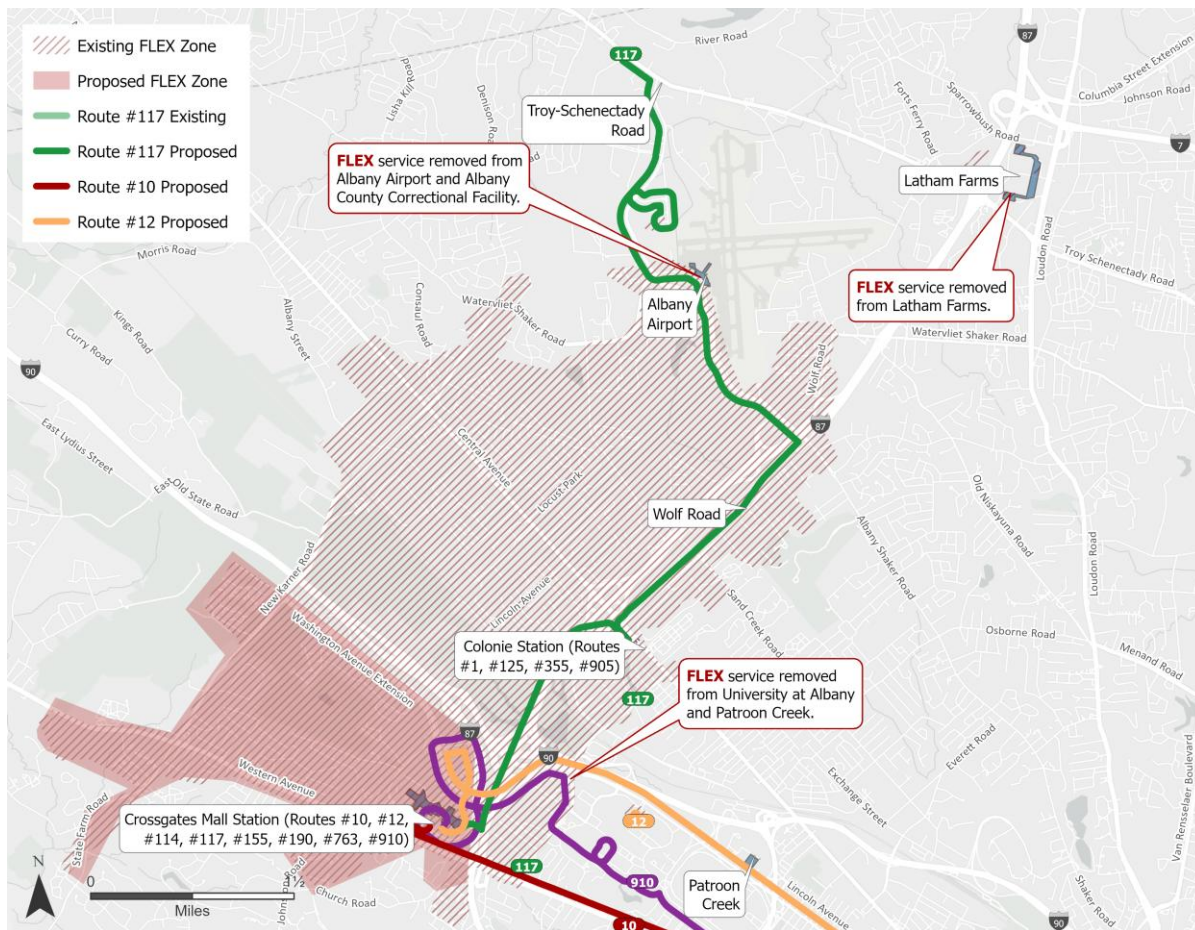


COLONIE FLEX

The Colonie FLEX example aimed to improve service speed and efficiency by significantly reducing the size of the current zone and adapting FLEX (Figure 37). Key elements of the proposal include:

- **Fixed-Route Transfer Points:** Customers would be dropped off at designated transfer points along fixed routes, streamlining connections to other services.
- **Strategic Pick-Ups:** The proposal includes targeted pick-up locations on main streets and at common, high-demand destinations such as Crossgates Mall and Crossgates Commons.
- **Route 117 Enhancements:** To support the northern section of the current FLEX zone, the proposal suggests increasing the speed and frequency of Route 117, ensuring better and more reliable connections for riders.
- **Manageable Zone Size:** By shrinking the Colonie FLEX zone, CDTA anticipates shorter wait times and increased availability.

Figure 37: Colonie FLEX Concept



As shown in **Figure 38**, 38 percent of respondents supported the example and 26 percent opposed it. Supporters were optimistic that changes would lead to shorter wait times and more frequent service on Flex, facilitating easier transfers to fixed route services. One respondent highlighted the need for improvement, stating they once waited four hours for FLEX service. Respondents also said decreasing the size of the Colonie FLEX zone could free up resources for increased STAR service.

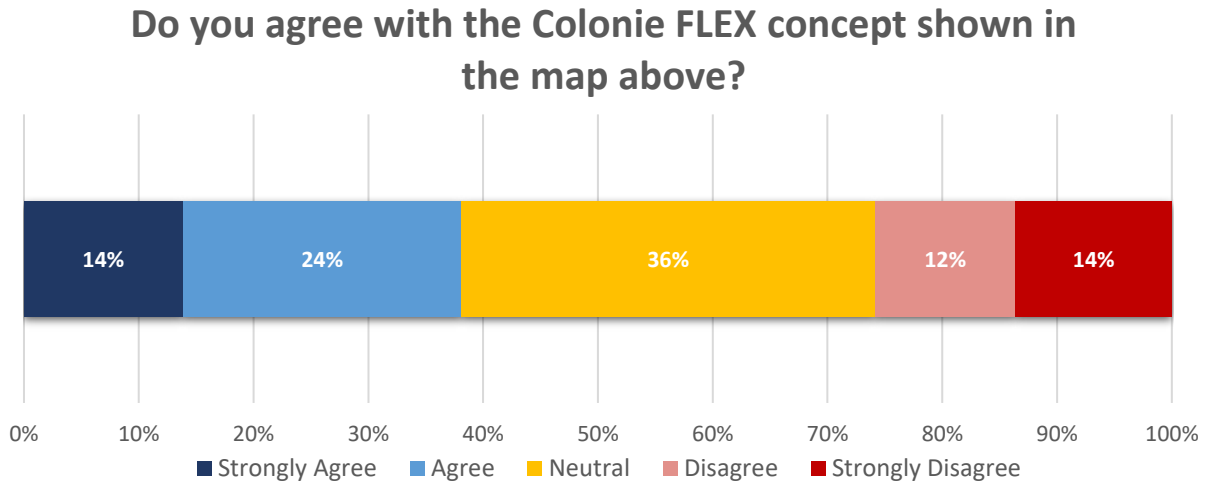
Retention of Key Areas: Opponents of the proposed smaller Colonie FLEX zone wanted to keep FLEX service in the following areas:

- **Albany International Airport** (11 votes);
- **Shopping centers**, like Crossgates Mall and Stuyvesant Plaza (6 votes);
- **Wolf Road**, including Colonie Center (4 votes); and,
- **William K. Sanford Town Library** (2 votes).

Opponents also indicated that some respondents did not know how to use FLEX service and suggested to increase advertising.

Finally, a few respondents stated their support for the proposed smaller FLEX zone would depend on increasing service frequency and span on Routes #117 and #190, including weekend service.

Figure 38: Colonie FLEX Results



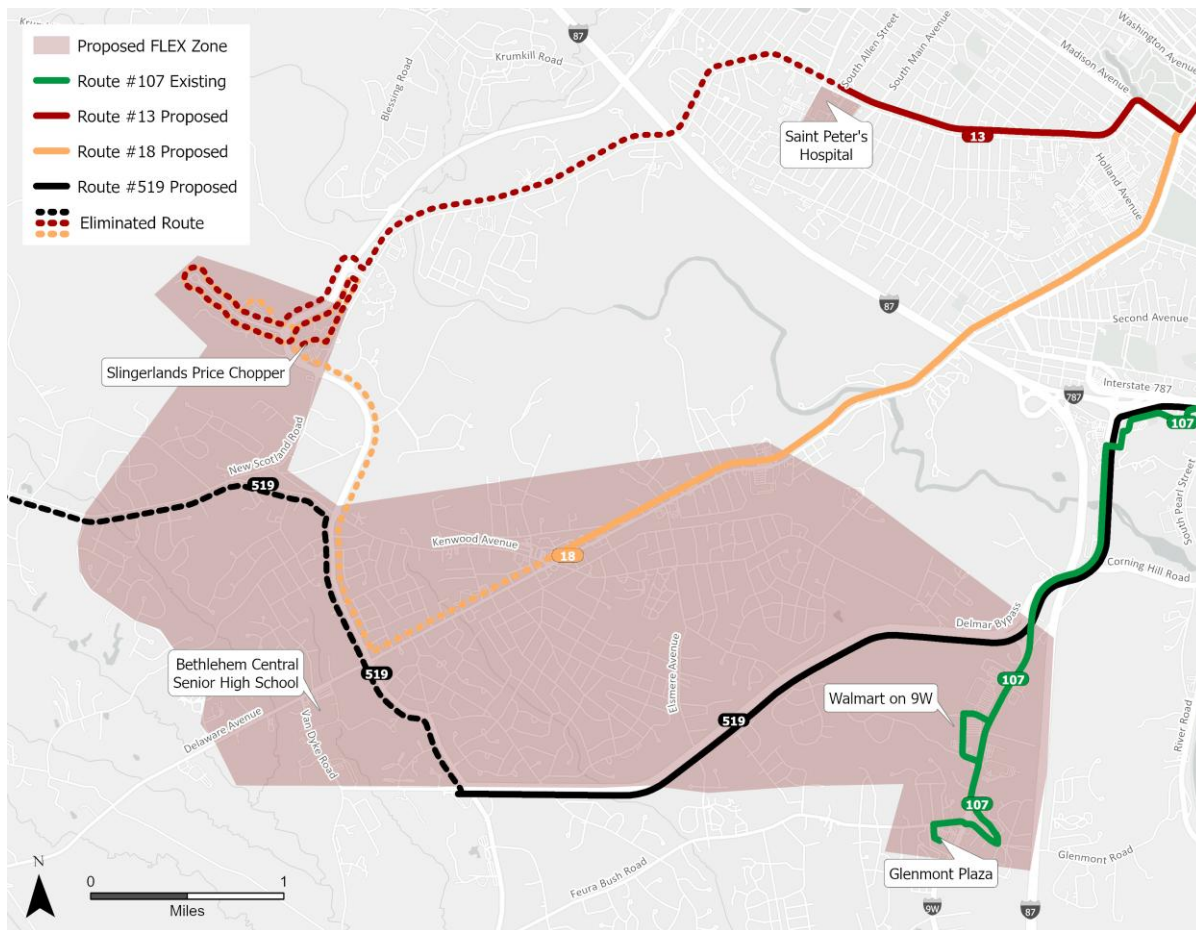
BETHLEHEM FLEX

The Bethlehem Flex zone example (**Figure 39**) included truncating the following routes in Bethlehem and replacing fixed-route service in this area with a new FLEX zone in Bethlehem:

- Route #13 would no longer serve west of Saint Peter’s Hospital;
- Route #18 would no longer serve south of Delaware Ave & Kenwood Ave; and,
- Route #519 would no longer serve west of the Elm Ave Park & Ride.

Route #13 currently averages 15.8 passengers per hour, Route #18 averages 18.1 passengers per hour, and Route #519 averages 5.3 passengers per hour.

Figure 39: Bethlehem FLEX Concept



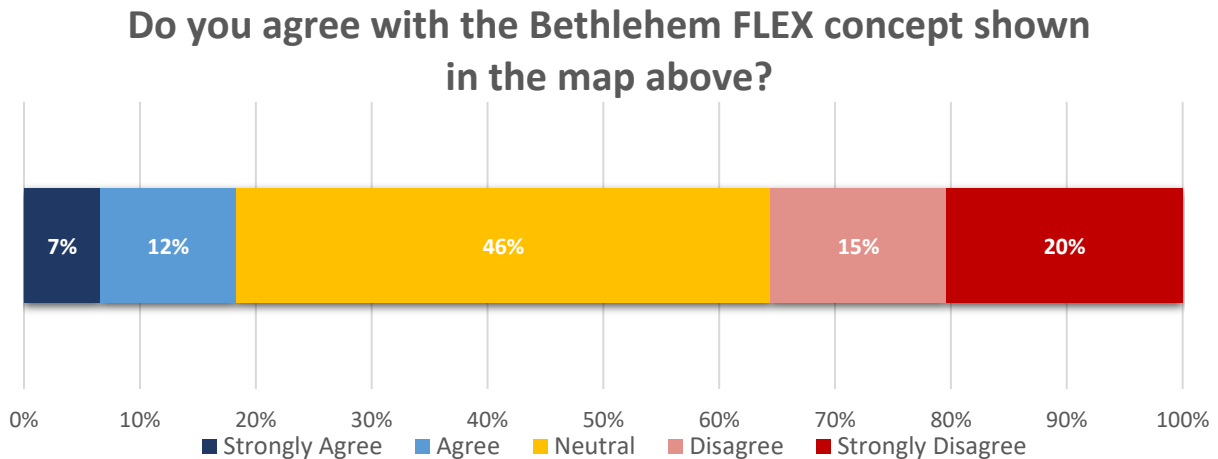
Respondents opposed this example by a 2-to-1 margin, with 18 percent in favor and 36 percent against it (**Figure 40**). Concerns were raised about the possibility that too much service would be cut to important destinations like the Slingerlands Price Chopper and New Scotland Avenue in Albany. Concern was expressed that the FLEX service would be slow and unreliable, potentially forcing area residents to rely on more expensive taxi or rideshare services instead.

Respondents were concerned that many Route #13 riders would lose service to grocery stores, parks, pools, and golf courses inside of Albany city limits. There was also dissatisfaction that the proposed FLEX zone does not include most discontinued sections of Route #13, leading many to prefer keeping Route #13 in its current routing over expanding FLEX service.

One respondent suggested truncating Route #18 at the Bethlehem Public Library, west of the proposed terminus at Delaware Ave & Kenwood Ave, to maintain fixed-route access to the library and Bethlehem Town Hall. Another respondent, who identified themselves as blind, relies on Route #18 to reach doctor's appointments at Community Care in Delmar.

There were fewer comments about Route #519, but most opposed its truncation. Two respondents noted that they would prefer using Route #519 to reach Voorheesville, including on deadheading runs. One respondent expressed cautious optimism about the proposed shortening of Route #519.

Figure 40: Bethlehem FLEX Concept



GENERAL CONCLUSIONS

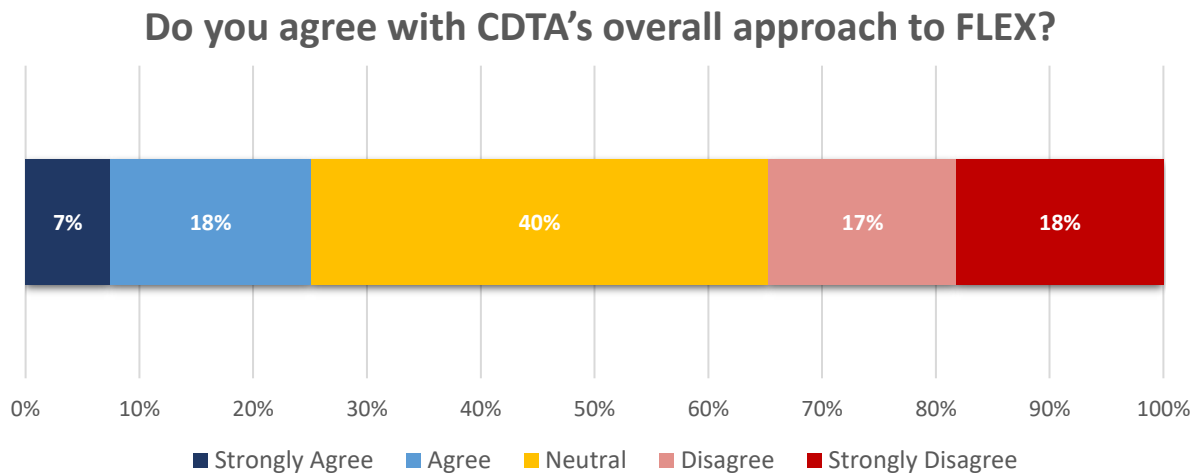
Respondents generally disagreed with CDTA’s overall approach to implementing FLEX changes, with 25 percent in favor and 35 percent opposed (**Figure 41**). The most frequent criticism was that current FLEX wait times are too long, making the service an impractical alternative to fixed-route transit. Some respondents reported routinely waiting for over 90 minutes for their FLEX shuttle to arrive, and that even infrequent fixed-route bus service would be more convenient. One eldercare worker called losing fixed-route service “devastating.”

Concerns were raised that replacing fixed routes with FLEX would disadvantage the elderly, disabled people, and riders without cell phones. There was anxiety that wheelchair users would lose access to transit if fixed-route service were replaced with FLEX vans, some of which are not accessible. There were also concerns about STAR drivers switching to FLEX, increasing strain on paratransit. Some opposed did not know how to use FLEX and suggested that CDTA educate the public about microtransit, including elderly riders who might be less familiar with technology.

Supporters of CDTA’s approach to FLEX suggested flexible service in low-ridership areas was more efficient than running empty buses along long routes. They also suggested that FLEX should complement, not replace, fixed-route service in areas such as Bethlehem. Finally, respondents proposed several new FLEX zones, including:

- Galway;
- Troy;
- Rotterdam; and,
- Route 4 between HVCC and I-90, to the Amtrak station in Renssalaer.

Figure 41: FLEX Results



FLEX, KEY TAKEAWAYS

- **Support for New FLEX Zones was Low:** support was lower than opposition for new FLEX zones. Neutrality was the highest, however, suggesting a need for more information. Customers were concerned that new FLEX zones would create longer wait times and worse service than existing fixed route.
- **Support for Shrinking the Colonie FLEX Zone:** Supporters anticipated shorter wait times, better transfer opportunities, and increased reliability, both for FLEX and for fixed routes. Customers seemed willing to transfer from FLEX to fixed route and vice versa, suggesting CDTA should ensure such transfers are convenient and quick.
- **Shorten FLEX Wait Times:** Riders are frustrated with long wait times for FLEX, leading some to consider more expensive rideshare options. Reducing wait times is crucial to making FLEX a viable alternative.
- **Improve Accessibility for All Riders:** ADA accessibility and ease of use for people who don’t own a phone is important for FLEX to succeed as a replacement for fixed route.
- **Increase public understanding of FLEX:** Many riders, even those with access to smartphones, don’t know how to use FLEX. Increased advertising and outreach are necessary to educate the community about its service and its benefits.

Stop Amenities

CDTA asked the public to weigh the importance of many stop and station amenities. As shown in **Figure 42**, 77 percent of respondents emphasized the importance of walkability to bus stops. Many suggested that enhancements to sidewalks and crosswalks, as well as additional curb extensions could improve safety by slowing down passing vehicles and reduce noise. Respondents also recommended measures for winter, such as snow removal from bus stops and shelters, to ensure riders can safely wait without having to stand in the street or on private driveways. Requests also included additional shelters that block wind and provide shade.

Suggested areas for improvement included:

- Latham;
- Siena College;
- Fuller Road by the SUNY College of Nanotechnology, Science, and Engineering; and,
- The 1st & Broadway stop in Watervliet.

Approximately 73 percent of respondents regarded the addition of real-time bus arrival prediction information as highly important. This feature would especially benefit riders without smartphones. Additional suggestions included posting schedules and maps to bus stops for the benefit of visitors and non-frequent riders and implementing audio announcements for the benefit of riders with low vision.

About 57 percent of respondents considered adding new bus shelters “very important.”

Requested stops included:

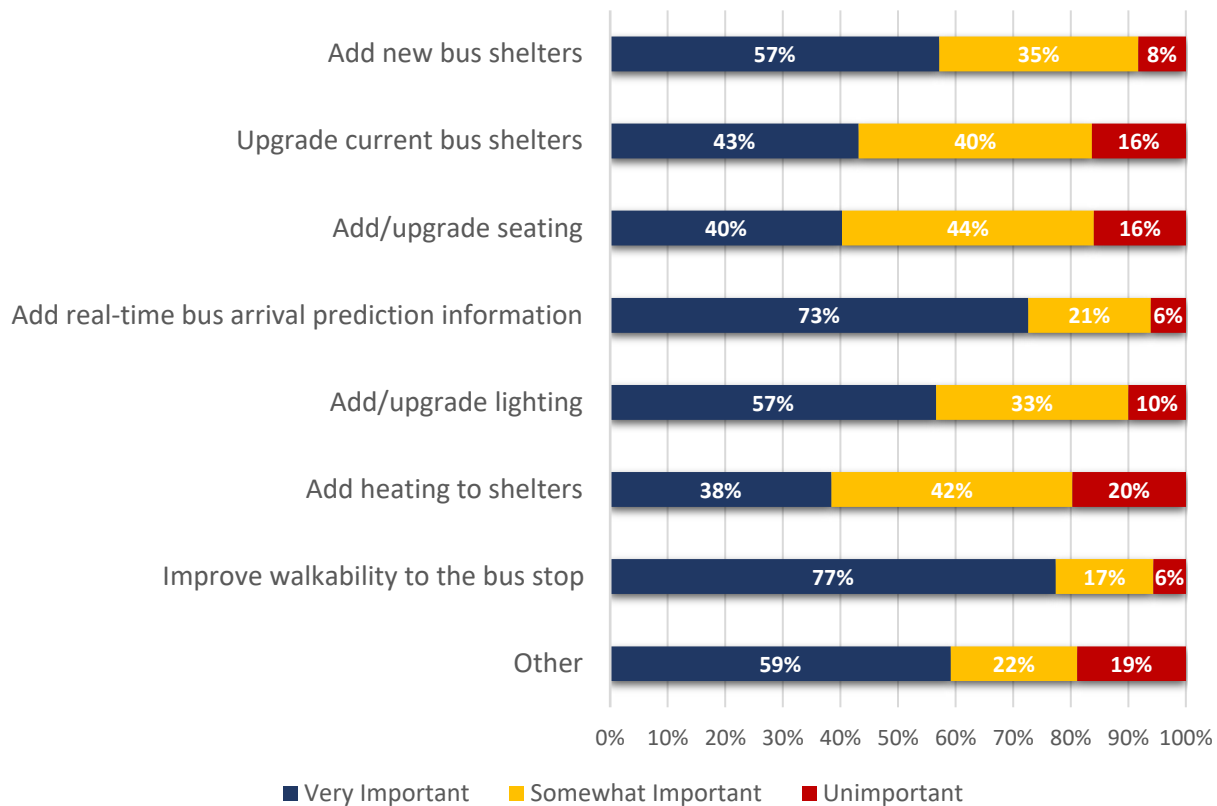
- Mill St opposite Erie St;
- Stops near the Phelan Ct apartments in Troy;
- Market 32 on Hoosick Rd in Troy;
- Stops with many children and elderly riders, such as near schools, daycares, and libraries; and,
- Stops with less frequent service, where wait times may be longer.

Improving stop cleanliness emerged as a prominent concern. Respondents especially criticized the condition of many shelters in Albany. Suggestions included posting QR codes that riders could scan when a stop needs maintenance. There were also significant concerns about non-riders using shelters to smoke, drink, panhandle, and loiter. Some respondents asked for increased safety improvements such as improved lighting, surveillance cameras with audio, and call boxes.

While adding or upgrading seating and heating to shelters were considered less important, there were still strong opinions on these improvements. Some requested seating at bus stops where shelters are not feasible, adding cooling options in the summer, and focusing heating improvements on stops with less frequent service. Other miscellaneous requests included bike parking, phone chargers, more varied architecture, and trash cans.

Figure 42: Stop Amenities Results

Desire for Stop Amenities



STOP AMENITIES, KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Enhancing Walkability and Accessibility:** Respondents strongly favored improvements to walkability around bus stops, with suggestions including better sidewalks and crosswalks, installation of curb extensions, and removing snow in the winter.
- Implementing Real-Time Arrival Information:** There was significant support for adding real-time bus arrival information at bus stop locations, which would be especially beneficial for riders without cell phones. Additionally, respondents requested the inclusion of physical schedules and maps at bus stops to aid all riders, including visitors and infrequent riders. This demand for more information at shelters likely suggests a desire for more information elsewhere, such as on board CDTA buses.
- Expanding and Upgrading Shelters:** The demand for increased bus shelters throughout the network is high, especially at bus stops serving children, the elderly, and those with less frequent service. Some respondents requested enclosed waiting rooms and more shade.

- **Improving Safety and Cleanliness:** Safety and cleanliness emerged as top priorities, with calls for enhanced lighting, security systems, and mechanisms for reporting issues, such as call boxes and QR codes. Addressing concerns about non-riders misusing stops and maintaining a cleaner environment were also highlighted.
- **Seating and Climate Control:** Seating, heating, and improvements to existing shelters were the least important to respondents. Some respondents suggested improved cooling systems for summer and noted that while seating was less critical, it remains a desired feature where shelters are not feasible.

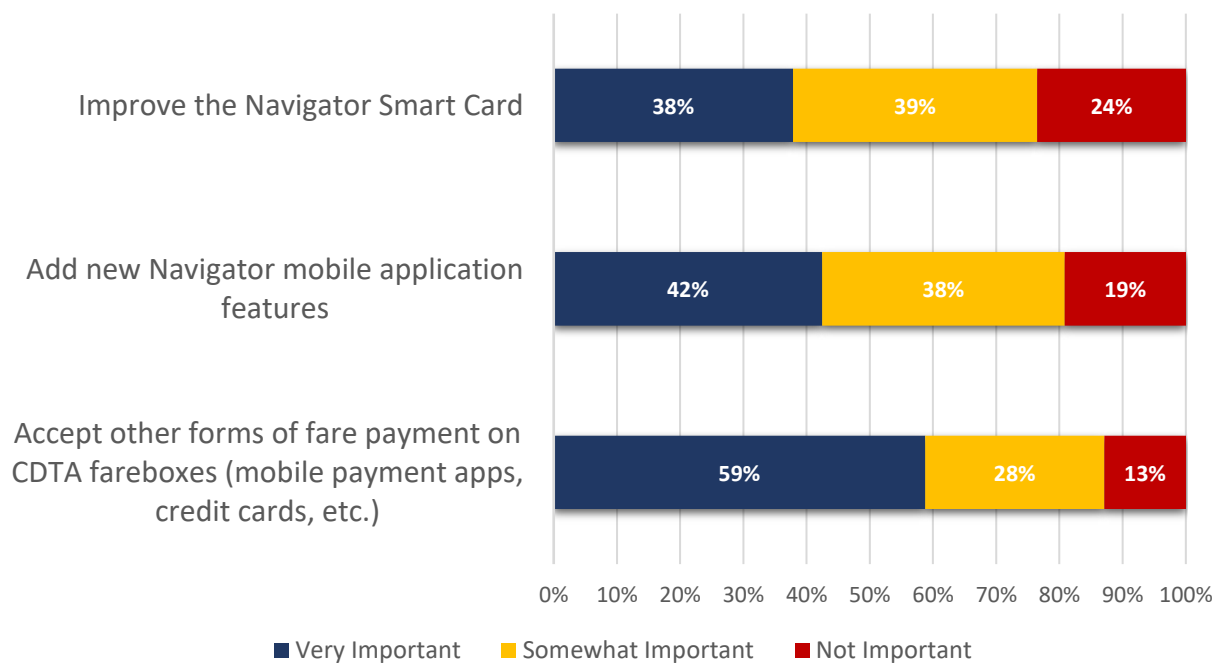
Fare Payment

Respondents were asked to rate the importance of the following fare payment proposals:

- Improving the Navigator Smart Card;
- Adding new features to the Navigator mobile application; and,
- Accepting additional forms of fare payment on CDTA fareboxes, such as mobile payment apps and credit cards.

Figure 43: Fare Payment Results

Desire for Improved Fare Payment



As shown in Error! Reference source not found., the most favored proposal among respondents was the addition of new fare payment methods to CDTA fareboxes, with 59 percent marking it as “Very Important.” Respondents highlighted that adding tap-to-pay options would reduce barriers for occasional riders such as visitors, and potentially boost ridership across CDTA

system. There was enthusiasm for contactless payment like the One Metro New York (OMNY) system used in New York City, with strong enthusiasm for credit and debit card payments, followed closely by mobile payment options such as Apple Pay, Google Pay, and Samsung Pay using smartphones and smart watches. One respondent noted that some riders attempt to pay with Apple Pay and bus operators will just let them on without payment.

Other suggestions included:

- installing new fare machines on buses capable of making change, which would help riders without exact change
- enable the purchase of the Summer Fun Pass for youth online rather, which would be easier than buying in person at the two in-person locations
- making the entire CDTA system fare-free to improve travel times and reduce barriers to transit.

The second most popular proposal was adding new features to the Navigator mobile application, with 42 percent of respondents ranking it “Very Important.”

The three most requested app features were:

- Integrating Physical Navigator Cards into the App (11 requests);
- Improving Live Tracking (7 requests); and,
- Expanding the App to STAR Users (5 requests).

Respondents also noted several bugs and issues with the current app. These included:

- QR codes not scanning or generating properly;
- Errors caused by accidentally swiping backwards on the QR code or paying too quickly causes the fare to be lost;
- Inability to link bank account on a Google Pixel phone; and,
- Add Funds and Activate buttons being too close together.

Other miscellaneous suggestions for the app included:

- Viewing tap history and personal statistics;
- Routing suggestions that include both buses and bikes;
- Personalized requests for FLEX riders, like notifying drivers about visual impairments;
- Making card balances visible;
- Adding Apple/Google Pay as payment options;
- Extending fare activation period beyond ten minutes;
- Saving credit/debit card information and automatic card refills;
- Maps indicating which stops have shelters and seating;
- Allowing less than \$10 to be added to Navigator cards at a time;
- Providing virtual Navigator cards, like mobile transit cards on the Washington Metro;
- Alerting drivers in advance when a rider is waiting at a stop; and,

- Integrating Half Fare cards in the app.

The proposal to improve the Navigator Smart Card was rated as “Very Important” by only 38 percent of respondents. Many felt the current Navigator card is adequate. Requests for improvement included extending its use to non-fixed-route services such as STAR, FLEX, DRIVE, and CDPHP Cycle!, with STAR being the most frequently mentioned. Additional suggestions included reducing the processing times for adding funds to their Navigator cards, which can take up to three days, offering free transfers, increasing recharge locations, and integrating virtual Navigator cards on smart devices.

FARE PAYMENTS, KEY TAKEAWAYS

- **Adding New Payment Methods:** The highest demand relating to Navigator and fare payment was for additional contactless and mobile payment options, such as Apple Pay, Google Pay, Samsung Pay, and credit cards. Respondents believed these options could attract more riders, particularly infrequent users or visitors.
- **New Features and Addressing Issues to the Navigator App:** The second most important request was to add new features and improvements to the app such as the ability to integrate physical cards with the app, improving live tracking, and the ability to review payment history. Several technical issues should also be addressed such as QR code scanning and bank linking difficulties.
- **Expanding Navigator to Non-Fixed Route Services:** Requests also included the ability to incorporate other non-fixed route services into the Navigator app and the Navigator card, such as STAR and FLEX.
- **Improving Accessibility:** Respondents suggested several enhancements to make transit more accessible, including enabling online purchases for passes, installing additional ticket vending machines that can make change, and exploring options for making parts of the CDTA system or the entire system fare-free. Respondents also asked for a shorter processing time when reloading Navigator cards, allowing riders to access their added funds more quickly.

Unconstrained TDP Recommendations and Next Steps

Phase II of the outreach process presented eight planning concepts, developed from the results of Phase I outreach to the public along with associated scenarios, which helped shape the final set of recommendations. The data and feedback received from this Phase II online survey and outreach meetings, Phase I outreach, and the study of existing conditions and market analysis was critical in shaping this set of unconstrained service recommendations. These recommendations will serve as a roadmap to prioritize future changes.

The recommendations outlined below are categorized by planning concepts, as in the Phase II online survey, and provide a non-cost constrained guide for prioritizing short-, medium-, and long-term service recommendations.

Two key priorities must be addressed to ensure the recommendations can be successfully implemented: improving on-time performance and education campaigns on how to use CDTA's different service modes.

- **On-time performance improvements** are crucial to ensure that service is reliable and meets rider expectations. Without consistent on-time performance, service changes may struggle to attract and retain riders, especially if their trips will require timed transfers.
- **New education campaigns** are essential to help the public understand how to navigate and pay for the system. Clearly understanding how to use the system, will enable a passenger to fully utilize the services and benefit from planned improvements.

All changes should be assessed to ensure that service remains safe, equitable, reliable, and affordable.

INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS

Infrastructure station design improvements along key corridors in the frequent network had a high level of support and should be prioritized moving forward. Based on feedback received during outreach, it is recommended to move forward on areas with high frequency and ridership.

Infrastructure improvements will be prioritized along the following routes:

- 85
- 87
- 351
- 370
- 905
- 910
- 922/923

Focusing on these high-ridership corridors will deliver the greatest impact by enhancing service speed, improving reliability, increasing efficiency, and addressing growing demand with designs that align with the needs of high-demand corridors.

FREQUENT SERVICE NETWORK

Given the strong support for more frequent service, CDTA will prioritize shortening neighborhood routes and connecting them to frequent trunk routes, improving crosstown connections and reducing multiple transfers for customers.

CDTA will prioritize advancing the Schenectady plan, which includes potential upgrades of Routes #351 and #353 to frequent trunk routes and replacing the less productive Routes #352 and #354 with simplified trunk routes to enhance system connectivity. CDTA also aims to increase service frequency on Route #117 and explore a new transfer opportunity to Route #370 on Troy-Schenectady Road. Additionally, splitting Route #125 to boost frequency along Clinton Avenue and create new BusPlus connections will be a priority. All changes will be evaluated for affordability and equity before any final decisions are made.

DEVIATIONS VS. SPEED

In response to deviations versus speed concepts, CDTA will generally maintain deviations to key destinations and educational facilities. Removing deviations should not be prioritized unless passengers can safely make it to their final destination from the main roadway, the distance from the bus stop is short, and time savings significantly benefit onboard passengers. Alternatives, such as reducing the number of trips to the deviation or relocating stops to safer locations, should be explored.

Due to concerns about potential negative impacts on local businesses along Lark Street, as well as the concerns mentioned above, CDTA will not prioritize deviations directly to Empire State Plaza on Route #13 and Route #18 at this time. Additionally, CDTA will maintain service to Stuyvesant Plaza on Route #10, as it is an important destination for many riders. However, CDTA will explore options to reduce the time required to turn around inside the plaza. CDTA plans to proceed with Scenario 1 of the Troy plan, which includes maintaining service to RPI on Route #22 and incorporating public feedback to retain service through Griswold Heights on Route #289. Further study will be required before implementing any additional changes.

SPLITTING ROUTES

CDTA will prioritize splitting long routes in the system to improve service reliability, allow for targeted improvements along route segments, and reduce circuitous routes. When implementing new split routes, it is crucial to ensure transfers are affordable and on-time performance issues are addressed to provide seamless transfer opportunities.

Specifically, CDTA will explore moving forward with splitting Route #85, to enhance reliable service between downtown Troy and HVCC. Additionally, CDTA will prioritize splitting Route #182 at Latham Farms and possibly extending service from Albany to Clifton Park.

STOP SPACING

CDTA will maintain its current stop spacing policy. To meet this standard, stops along Pearl Street and Pawling Avenue will be analyzed and reduced while preserving the current stop spacing on Route #600. Before removing any stop, CDTA will assess factors such as stop overlap, low usage compared to onboard customers, the availability of alternative stops, and the safety of walking conditions to nearby stops. For more detailed guidelines, refer to the Stop Spacing Standards in the Transit Development Plan (TDP).

STOP AMENITIES

As CDTA looks to improve stop amenities, the agency will work with regional partners to prioritize and fund active transportation improvements for bus stops. Additionally, CDTA will prioritize implementing real-time information at bus stops, expanding and upgrading shelters, and improving safety and cleanliness. These items had the highest response rate and would ensure safer conditions at stops. The availability of stop amenities is determined by the number of daily boardings. Improvements will therefore be prioritized based on daily boardings, with specific stops receiving upgrades due to unique needs. For more detailed guidelines, refer to the Standards section of the Transit Development Plan (TDP).

FARE PAYMENT

CDTA will explore the addition of new payment methods, including contactless options, mobile payments, and credit cards, to enhance accessibility. The agency will also collaborate on enhancements to the Navigator app, including features such as live tracking and payment history. To further streamline the user experience, CDTA aims to integrate non-fixed route services like STAR, FLEX, Drive, and CDPHP Cycle! into a unified fare payment application.

FLEX

In order to build confidence in the current FLEX network in the short term, CDTA will prioritize improving existing FLEX zones, such as the Colonie zone. Specifically, CDTA will explore reducing the size of the Colonie zone to enhance wait times and reliability, which may necessitate passengers walking short distances to designated pickup zones instead of being picked up at their front door.

As mentioned above, for the expansion of FLEX microtransit service to new areas like Saratoga Springs, Amsterdam, and Bethlehem, CDTA will follow these guidelines:

- Where connections to frequent trunk service are available, use FLEX to promote transfers to the frequent trunk network instead of duplicating fixed-route service;
- Keep FLEX zones small—no more than 10 square miles;
- Redraw FLEX zones so customers meet the vehicle on a main road or at a common location; and,
- Create FLEX zones to replace infrequent, unproductive fixed-route service which does not require the capacity of a 40-foot bus.

In Amsterdam, CDTA will allow the new fixed routes to develop and mature before introducing FLEX service. Overlap with fixed route service will continue until FLEX becomes more established. Additionally, since FLEX is a relatively new mode of transit, a public education campaign will be crucial in helping passengers feel confident using the system.

CDPHP CYCLE! AND DRIVE

Given the positive feedback and alignment with agency goals, CDTA will continue analyzing utilization data and expand CDPHP Cycle! and DRIVE services to strategic locations that enhance first-mile/last-mile options for transit riders. Additionally, public education campaigns will be essential in building confidence and support for these non-fixed modes of transportation.