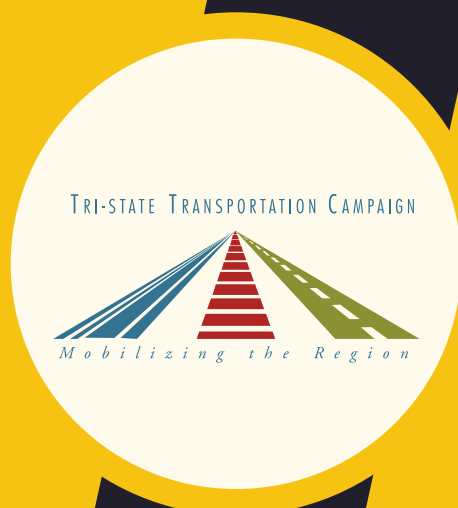


# ***The Buzz*** ***on the*** ***Bee-Line***

*A Collection of Rider Stories for a #BetterBeeLine*



Acknowledgments:

Jaqi Cohen - Author, Reviewer  
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Thank you to TransitCenter and Westchester Community Foundation for supporting our work.

We want to thank all the riders who shared their stories with us. Your efforts to improve the bee line system are greatly appreciate and we are excited about the work to come!

Tri-State Transportation Camapign is a 501(c)(3) non-profit policy and advocacy organization fighting for sustainable mobility in New York, New Jersey, and Connecticut.

TRI-STATE TRANSPORTATION CAMPAIGN



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# ***PART I: QUESTIONNAIRE RESULTS***

## **INTRODUCTION**

In October 2021, our team at Tri-State Transportation Campaign (TSTC) launched the #BetterBeeLine campaign with a Westchester Bus rider questionnaire, asking riders questions about their experience commuting on Bee-Line. We wanted to learn more about why riders use Bee-Line and listen to their concerns with the current system. This information is particularly useful as Westchester County conducts a bus network redesign for the Bee-Line system.

Our campaign organizer interviewed bus riders at stops in Yonkers, New Rochelle, Mount Vernon, and we also shared our #BetterBeeLine questionnaire for riders to fill out online. We received over 140 responses to our questionnaire and spoke directly with many of these riders individually to learn more about their personal experiences. Our findings paint a picture of what issues riders face every day: unreliable service, inaccessibility, service not matching the needs of customers, etc. While each story is unique, any person who has ridden Bee-Line may be able to resonate because they have likely encountered similar situations themselves.

# WHO'S ON BOARD?

In order to fully understand why and how Westchester County residents ride Bee-Line, it is vital to first understand who is on board Bee-Line each day. In the fall of 2021, 142 Bee-Line bus riders filled out Tri-State Transportation Campaign’s questionnaire detailing their riding experience and their stories. While this was a small sample of Westchester County’s overall bus ridership, which consists of almost 100,000 riders each week,<sup>1</sup> the stories and experiences of these riders are nevertheless important voices and points of feedback vital to improving the Bee-Line. This report reflects characteristics of respondents and may not be a representative sample of all travelers.

The makeup of Bee-Line bus riders differs significantly from that of Westchester County residents as a whole. According to census data for the county,<sup>2</sup> the racial breakdown of Westchester residents is as follows:

- 73.2% of Westchester County residents identify as white;
- 16.7% of Westchester residents identify as Black or African American;
- 25.5% identify as Hispanic/Latino;
- 6.5% identify as Asian;
- 1% identify as Native American Indian; and
- 0.1% identify as Pacific Islander.

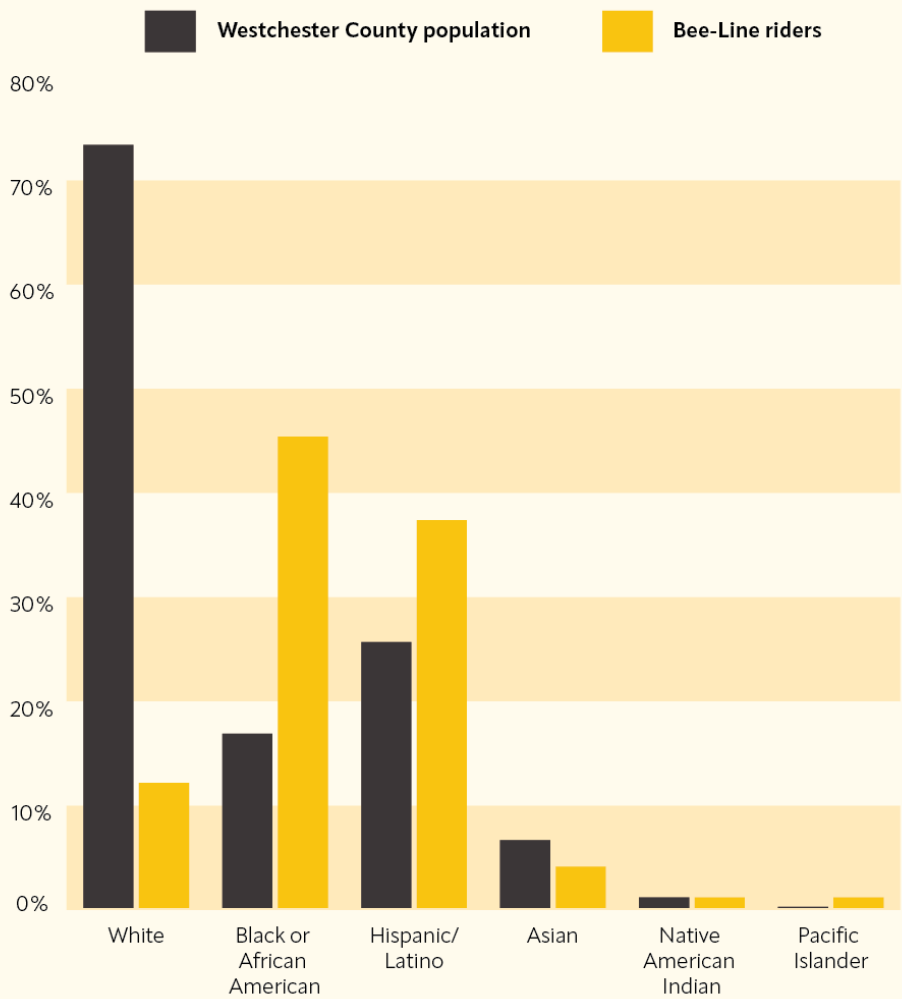
This differs significantly from the racial demographics of Bee-Line bus riders. According to the 2019 survey of bus riders conducted by the Westchester County Department of Public Works and Transportation:<sup>3</sup>

- 12% identify as White;
- 44% identify as Black or African American;
- 38% identify as Hispanic/Latino;
- 4% identify as Asian;
- 1% identify as Native American Indian; and
- 1% identify as Pacific Islander.

Other important demographics to note about Bee-Line Bus Riders displayed in Westchester County’s 2019 survey include:<sup>4</sup>

- 63% of Bee-Line bus riders lack access to a vehicle; and
- 46% of Bee-Line bus riders have an annual household income of less than \$25,000.

Demographic data of Westchester bus riders surveyed in the County’s report helps paint a fuller picture of who is on board. The data clearly shows the Bee-Line system provides a vital mobility service for Westchester County residents who are lower-income people of color and who depend on the bus as their primary mode of transportation.



*Racial Demographics of Bee-Line Bus Riders differs significantly from that of Westchester County residents as a whole.*

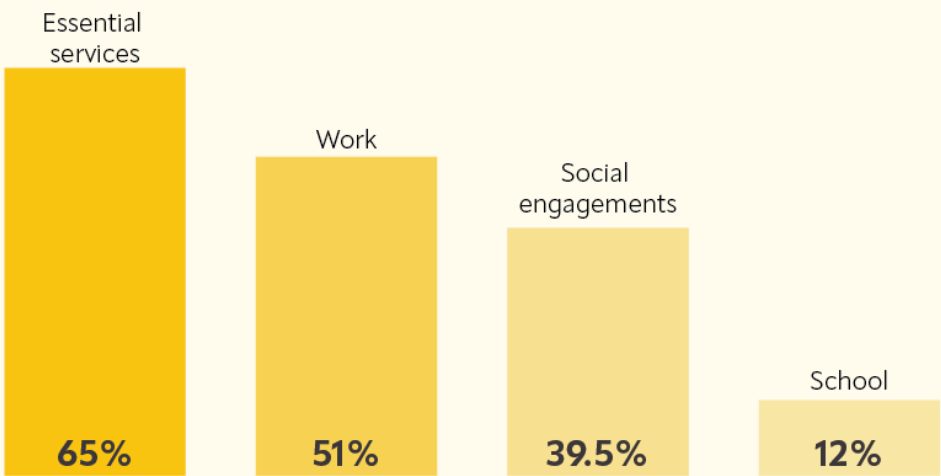
# WHY DO RIDERS CHOOSE THE BUS?

Every week, the Bee-Line connects nearly 100,000 people to jobs, schools, and other essential services through their 58 bus routes.<sup>5</sup> Many riders do not have a car or prefer not to drive, and their mobility to get to all of these places is tied to the bus routes and schedules. For these Westchester County residents, a reliable public transportation system is necessary to ensure that their way of getting to places is dependable, in order to enhance and safeguard their livelihoods. . Many also opt to take public transportation because it is better for the environment. Forty percent of the County’s greenhouse gas emissions are from transportation alone.<sup>6</sup> Fewer personal vehicles on the road leads to reduced traffic congestion, which improves air quality and the county’s overall greenhouse gas emissions.

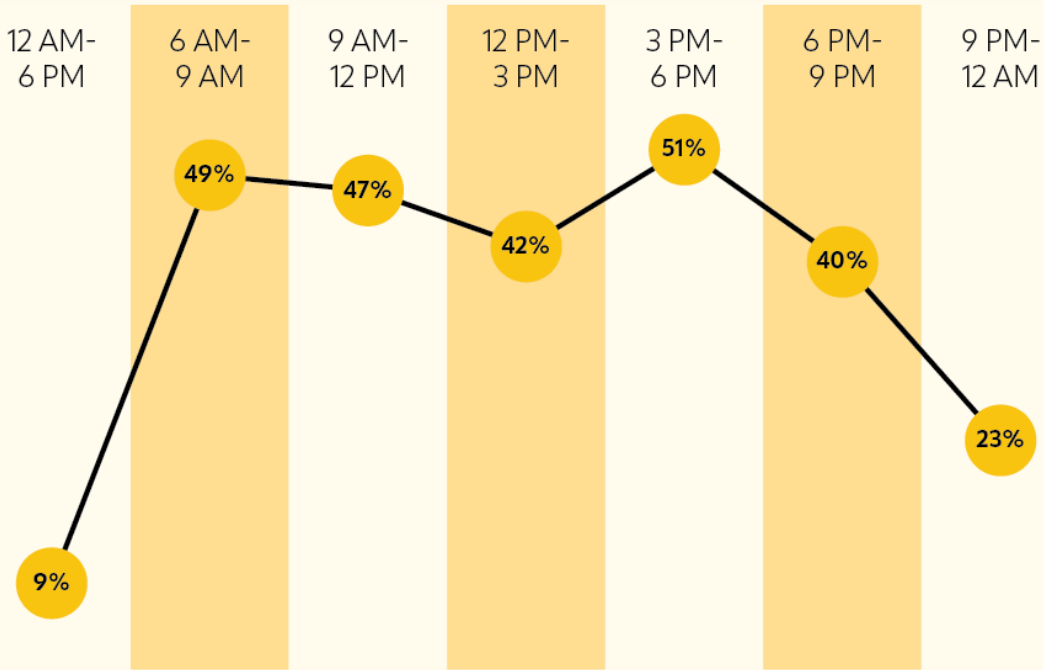
According to our questionnaire results, 64.8% of riders use the bus to commute to/from essential service, 50.7% of riders use the bus to commute to/from work, 39.4% of riders commute to/from social engagements, and 11.9% of riders commute to/from school (see graph).

The #BetterBeeLine campaign aims to mobilize riders in Westchester and increase public engagement on the Bee-Line’s proposed County Mobility and Bus Redesign study, which has not yet been finalized. In October 2021, Bee-Line unveiled a modified service plan that went into effect on October 11th, cutting 5% of scheduled trips. The decision was made due to declining ridership and a shortage of bus drivers, according to Liberty Line Bus Company, the operator of the Bee-Line Bus. The announcement came as a surprise to many bus riders, resulting in some waiting for a bus that never came. The lack of notice and limited details of where cuts were made showcase a larger transparency and communications issue plaguing the Bee-Line bus system. Since then, 74 bus/shuttle trips have been restored. However, riders are still concerned about the frequency of service. According to our questionnaire, more than 40% of riders need service from: 6am-9am, 9am-12pm, and 3pm-6pm (see graph).

If Westchester County does not meet the needs of its riders and expand service, there is a risk that people will continue to use their personal vehicles, or seek alternative modes of transport and revert to less sustainable options. This will also limit the mobility of the 63% of riders who lack access to a vehicle and require the bus to get around. Maintaining and improving equitable access to public transit is crucial to supporting business, education, and social opportunity.



Purpose of Commute Responses



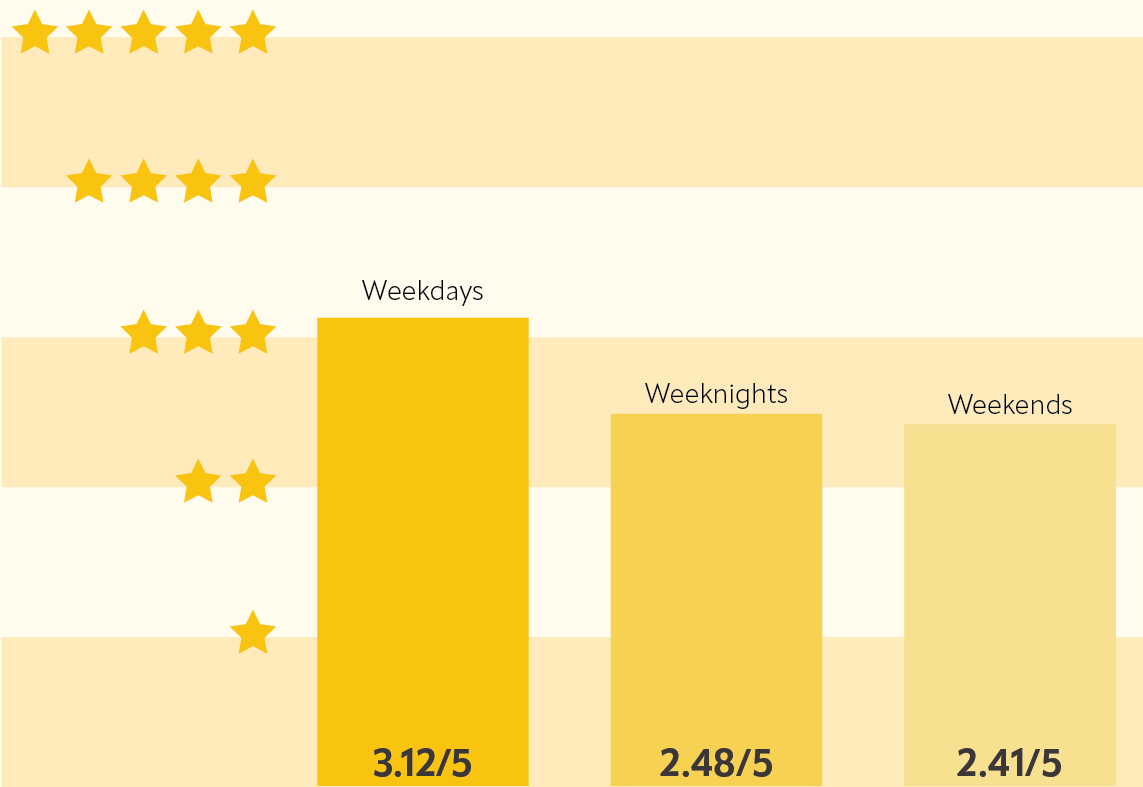
When Do Riders Need Bus Service?

# REQUESTS FROM RIDERS

Many of the requests we heard from riders had to do with the frequency of service on weeknights and weekends. We asked riders on a scale of 1-5 if service met their needs (1=Poor, 5=Excellent). For weekdays, riders on average scored service 3.12 out of 5. For weeknights, on average, riders scored service 2.48 out of 5. On weekends, riders on average scored 2.41 out of 5. Our questionnaire respondents want more service on weeknights and weekends, and this matches the same trends from the Westchester County Mobility and Transit Plan Survey conducted in the Spring of 2021.<sup>7</sup> This survey asked riders trade-off questions: would you prefer more buses running more frequently or to have more service earlier or later in the day. 54% said more frequency and 46% said longer hours. For the question about if riders would prefer more service on weekdays or weekends, 69% of riders wanted more service on the weekends.

When we spoke to riders, they described having to wait up to 30 minutes to an hour for buses. They also highlighted how they couldn't get home at night because of the scarce weekend and non-existent night service. Riders want to see more frequency in service and for Bee-Line to run longer hours to meet their needs.

A previous study commissioned by the Westchester Community Foundation and conducted by Conveyal evaluated employment access in Westchester County via public transit and the BeeLine, specifically the report analyzed transit connectivity and jobs during peak and off-peak hours. Peak hours were defined as those who commute between 6am and 7am, these are people who have typical 9 to 5 jobs while off-peak hours were defined as those who work more non-traditional hours and commute between 2pm to 6pm.<sup>8</sup> The report found that commuters with well-timed trips during peak hours have higher access than commuters with poorly timed trips and missed connections during off-peak.<sup>9</sup> If the Bee-Line ran longer hours, riders would have better mobility options—there would be more opportunity for those who do not work your “9-to-5.”



Does the frequency of service met your needs?

# THE RIDER'S EXPERIENCE

We asked riders a number of questions about their overall experience with Bee-Line, both while on and off the bus. This included questions about affordability of service, trip planning tools, bus stop amenities and conditions,, and general wait time for the bus to arrive.

Like the Metropolitan Transportation Authority’s bus system in New York City, the Bee-Line system charges riders a single \$2.75 fare per trip. Our questionnaire asked riders whether or not they thought that Bee-Line service was affordable. The vast majority of respondents, 81.7%, said “yes”. In one rider’s own words, bus rider Michelle from Yonkers who takes the #8 bus told us, “If you think about it, the cost of being able to travel from the Bronx border to Putnam County on a \$2.75 fare is phenomenal!”.

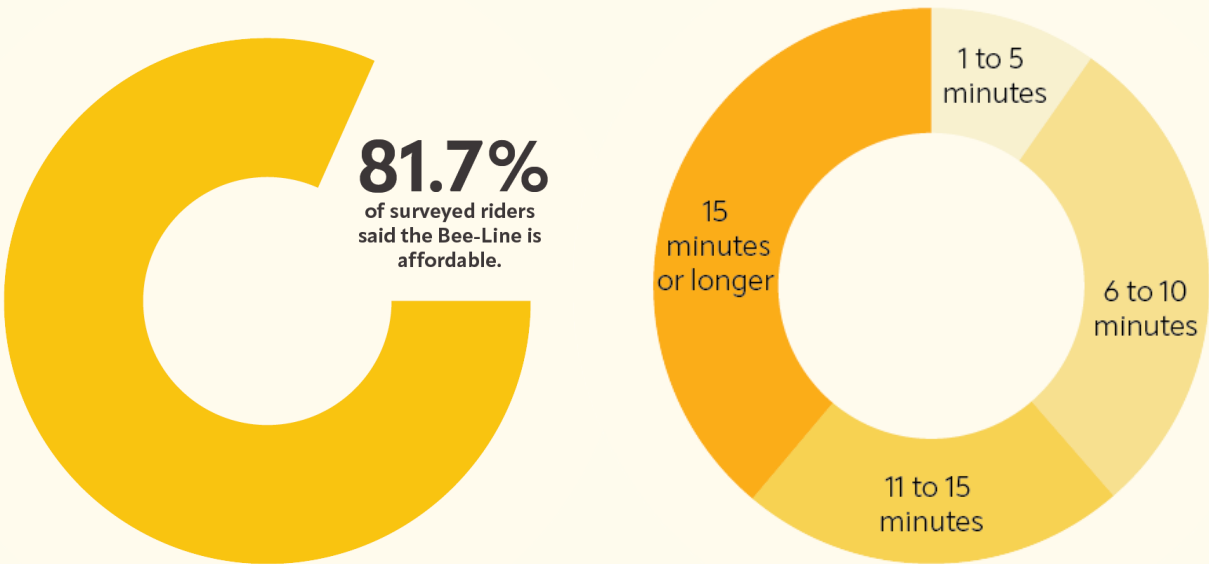
***“If you think about it, the cost of being able to travel from the Bronx border to Putnam County on a \$2.75 fare is phenomenal!”***

More than 60% of the bus riders who filled out the #BetterBeeLine questionnaire told us that they waited more than 10 minutes for their bus to arrive at its stop, with more than one-third of respondents waiting more than 15 minutes for the bus to arrive. Theresa, a Yonkers bus rider who takes the #20 and #25 to travel to and from work, told us “I wait between 15-20 minutes some mornings for the 25 bus”. Jeani, a Yonkers bus rider who relies on the #2 and #8 to travel to work and essential services, said, “Sometimes the late morning or early afternoon buses tend not to come and I have to wait an additional 20 minutes for the next scheduled bus”.

38.6% of the riders surveyed reported using paper bus schedules, 37.9% navigate the system with Google Maps, while 21.2% use Bee-Line Real Time. Riders have noted that the real time bus data is not reliable and difficult to navigate. Jeani has also observed “The buses arrive 4-5

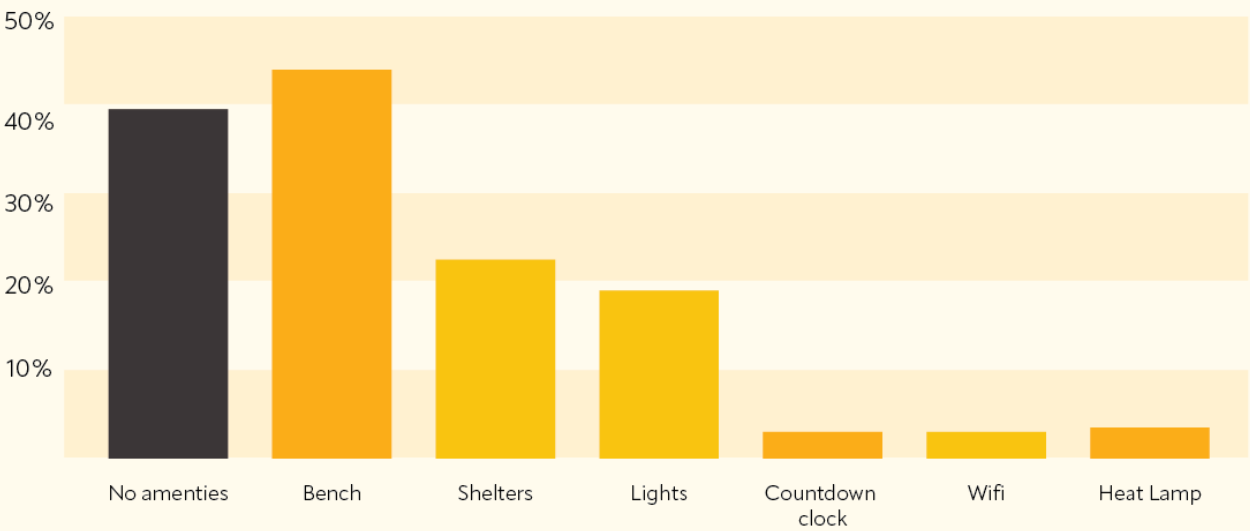
minutes early and do not wait at the bus stop if no one is there which results in missing the bus because it arrived at the stop too early”.

***“I wait between 15-20 minutes some mornings for the 25 bus. Sometimes the late morning or early afternoon buses tend not to come and I have to wait an additional 20 minutes for the next scheduled bus”.***



Is the Bee-Line affordable?

On average, how long do you wait for the bus?



What amenities are present at your bus stop?



Rukiat, a #78 bus rider and essential worker from Yonkers, detailed the problems she faced due to long late-night wait times and lack of accessibility at her bus stop, “Last winter right before midnight I had to stand in the middle of the street for almost an hour waiting for the bus. In the middle of the street where the yellow line was because no one cared to shovel around the bus stop.”

***“Last winter right before midnight I had to stand in the middle of the street for almost an hour waiting for the bus. In the middle of the street where the yellow line was because no one cared to shovel around the bus stop.”***

Bee-Line riders who answered the questionnaire had varying experiences when it came to amenities at bus stops. Over 44% of bus riders we spoke with had at least a bench at one of their stops, and over 20% had bus stop shelters. About 40% of respondents had no amenities at their stops at all. One of these riders told us, “It is disrespectful for workers, and shoppers to not have the liberty to sit on a bench during long waits for buses at the Ridge Hill Mall, and all bus stops should have a shed to stand under during inclement weather. All riders, no matter where they live, pay the same bus fare.”

***“All riders, no matter where they live, pay the same bus fare.”***

# CONCLUSION

A lot has changed since the almost recent Countywide conducted survey in 2019. We hope our collection of rider stories sheds light on some of the real experiences faced while riding on the Bee-Line. We also hope that our questionnaire results can inform the County about what riders want and need **today**:

- An increased frequency of buses as well as service running longer hours.
- Improvements to bus stops: the installation of benches, shelters, lights, and up-to-date schedules.
- More Metrocard refill stations so they can fill up their cards at their convenience.
- Better communication and transparency between Bee-Line and its customers—including the public in service cut decisions and accessing Bee-Line customer service outside of the 9-4pm current customer service phone hours
- Better accessibility practices so the Bee-Line can serve all Westchester residents

The County produces a survey every three years and we encourage riders to fill that survey out when it is released in Spring 2022.

COVID-19 has changed the way we live, work and travel: while some have been able to adopt a remote work model, essential workers and transit-dependent residents continue to lean on the Bee-Line to get to their jobs, stores, and other essential services. Westchester County must prioritize their residents who rely on public transportation, especially intra-city bus riders to ensure that their way of getting to places is dependable and respectable to safeguard their livelihoods. This starts by listening to their needs and concerns with the system. With this County Mobility and Redesign Study in progress, we must ensure that for the second round of outreach the County conducts a more robust collection of public feedback to make this redesign optimal. Holding multiple public meetings at accessible times and creating a forum to submit comments is important.



# ***PART II: BEE-LINE BUS RIDER STORIES***

In October 2021, Tri-State Transportation Campaign launched a Westchester Bus rider survey, which asked riders questions about their experience with Bee-Line. We wanted to learn more about why riders use Bee-Line and listen to their concerns with the current system. This information is particularly useful as Westchester County conducts a bus network redesign for the Bee-Line system.

This compilation of personal stories paints a picture of what issues riders face every day: unreliable service, inaccessibility, service not matching the needs of customers, etc. Many riders will be able to resonate with these experiences because they have encountered similar issues while riding the Bee-Line.

We want to thank all of the riders who shared their stories with us. Your efforts to improve the Bee-Line system are greatly appreciated, and we are excited about the work to come.

We hope that you read the rider stories below, and join our call for a #BetterBeeLine!



## MEET THE RIDERS

**Name:** Maria Rose Randazzo

**Hometown:** Yonkers, NY

**Bus Routes:** #5, #6, #8 and #20

My name is Maria Rose. I live in Yonkers where I have been riding the bus for over 20 years. I used to own a car but it became too expensive to maintain and because Westchester isn't walkable we need a reliable and safe public transportation system. I ride the bus to do my shopping and visit friends. I regularly take the #5, #6, #8, and #20. My mobility is limited to the Bee-Line schedule and currently: buses do not run 24/7 and service is limited on the weekends. I do most of my shopping on the weekends, and since service starts later, that means I have to either start my day later or call a cab to start my day. I used to work at a supermarket and I would have issues getting to work on time because the buses are unreliable. The bus schedule limited the hours I could work so we need more buses later to get home from work and maybe better coordination with local businesses.

At bus stops, there are no shelters or benches. If there is a shelter, there is barely anything to protect me and other riders from the wind, rain, or snow. Additionally, at night, there is no lighting at the bus stops. I feel invisible on the side of the road when bus conductors drive by and do not stop. Most of the time I have to flag them down. When it snows, the clearing of sidewalks is a mess—I am quite sure that this is a finger pointing issue between several departments as the street plowing is done by one department who causes the buildup on the sidewalks and there is a lack of personnel who should be cleaning city sidewalks. For example, on Lockwood depending on which side of the street, some sidewalks are cleared free of

snow straight to the street and some sections have a small foot path barely shoveled with snow all over the entire sidewalk. Plus every corner where one has to cross over is filled with snow, now ice, because no one cleans that space. To get to the street riders have to risk the hazards of walking on the ice or venture out though the cleared spaces between cars. The plowing done in my area tends to pile up the snow on the corners where pedestrians walk. Additionally, the Bee-line system works with a bare minimum crew on snow days and depends on the drivers getting into the station to determine what modifications are needed to the route schedules. Bee-Line should inform riders sooner than 5am the day of any cancellations/modifications made so that they have an appropriate amount of time to plan alternative travel routes.

Public transportation has always felt like a secondary concern. More personal vehicles that are off the road would produce less traffic and allow for the buses to run on schedule. But more money needs to be invested in public transportation to make it better so people will ditch their cars. This includes buying more EV buses, they are more reliable and environmentally friendly.

When people visit Westchester, they expect service like the MTA—we need newer more reliable buses and need to evaluate routes based on riders needs! This means more buses to the malls on the weekends to accommodate families without cars. And we need to bring modern technology to pay! And more Metrocard refill stations around Westchester so that riders can refill their cards along all routes.

Maria Rose Randazzo  
Yonkers, New York



## MEET THE RIDERS

**Name:** Christopher L Smith

**Hometown:** Harrison, NY

**Bus Routes:**

I'm Christopher Smith, I live in Harrison, New York. I rely on Paratransit to get around. I am legally blind and for me, most of the Bee-Line buses are a no go—the buses do not announce the stops out loud and I do not know when to get off. When I board the bus, I ask the driver to let me know when my stop is, however most of the time the driver forgets and I miss my stop. This prevents me from using the bus. The only reliable buses that I can take are ones that stop at every stop so that I can count the number of stops myself and get off. We need a bus system that announces all the stops so that the Bee-Line is accessible to all riders. Additionally, there is a lack of evening and Sunday service which restricts the ability to get places in the broader community. This is especially felt by paratransit riders who often are also not able to drive.

Christopher L Smith  
Harrison, New York



## MEET THE RIDERS

**Name:** Dalia R Levine

**Hometown:** New Rochelle, NY

**Bus Routes:** #45

My name is Dalia, I've lived in the Southern end of New Rochelle for the past 15 years. I originally moved to Westchester because of how the bus routes connect it to transportation options. It was very important to live somewhere where we did not need a second car. I usually take the #45 on Pelham road to the New Rochelle train station.

A major problem for me with the Pelham/Shore Road route is the once an hour frequency of buses and the buses stop running after 8:30pm. We need more frequency to get around! If I miss my bus, I have to walk or take a cab. When I need to go to appointments within Westchester county, I have to intricately plan my trip around the bus schedules. I need to be able to get around Westchester in a reliable way. The buses currently do not run frequently enough for me to return to my neighborhood at night.

The #45 makes multiple stops within a loop around the New Rochelle MetroNorth station. It's a place where many buses meet. However, the intersection of Huguenot and North is not safe for pedestrians to cross. It used to be a lot worse, but bus operators are aware of pedestrians: they pull up slowly to the curb and stop. Other drivers are not as aware. Additionally, the bus stop at North Ave and Huguenot Street has no street lights. I see riders waiting at the stop at 9pm, when it is dark and windy especially in the winter. A streetlight should be installed to ease the visibility for drivers to pedestrians.

When redesigning the County’s bus service, we need to keep in mind that COVID has changed the way we live. While the current bus service caters to those with 9-5 jobs, there are many people who are now working remotely from home and not commuting frequently. Yet the service needs to focus on those who do not have the luxury of working from home like nurses, construction workers, and other essential workers who need to be in person. We need to shift our focus to transit dependent riders whose mobility is determined by the bus and redefine what peak hours means.

Dalia R Levine  
New Rochelle, New York



# MEET THE RIDERS

**Name:** Ann M. Chiappetta  
**Hometown:** New Rochelle, NY  
**Bus Routes:** #60, #61 and #66

I’m Ann, I grew up in Mamaroneck and now live in New Rochelle and I take the #60, #66, #61 to get around town, visit Mamaroneck and White Plains. I am visually impaired and riding the bus can be difficult. Stops are not announced when the bus is coming to a stop or when boarding. I always have to sit in the front of the bus next to the driver so the operator can notify me of my stop and I don’t want to ask the driver every time—I want to have autonomy. The Subways and MetroNorth trains announce the stops and so should the Bee-Line. I know that the Bee-Line has these automated announcements however I only hear them 1-2 times a week. The driver should not be able to turn off or lower the volume. Keeping these announcements on would make the bus more accessible—and accessibility for people with disabilities makes it easier for everyone. Think of how the invention of curb cuts. They were made for people using wheelchairs. Now the curb cut is something that everyone uses—delivery people, people with strollers, and those with shopping carts or suitcases use it everyday. Accessibility for those with disabilities paves the way for everyone. This means that we should be investing in digital accessibility. Transit companies should be the leaders in adopting digital technology and make it a priority because it is a great opportunity to make the system more accessible. We want equal access.

Ann M. Chiappetta  
New Rochelle, New York



## MEET THE RIDERS

**Name:** Michael

**Hometown:** Yonkers, NY

**Bus Routes:** #1 and #2

I'm Michael. I used to live in New Rochelle and now live in Yonkers. I take the #1 or #2 bus from downtown Yonkers to the Van Cortlandt #1 subway station to travel into the city to dance Argentine Tango. The buses use the same bus stop when the lines overlap EXCEPT for one stop. The #1 bus stops at Riverdale and Main but the #2 bus stops at Riverdale and Hudson. I have to stand at the corner of Riverdale Avenue and Main Street to determine the next bus and then run (with a partial tear in my Achilles Tendon) to the correct bus stop. Other buses using the Main and Hudson Street bus stops run less frequently so there's no crowding of buses having one stop for both bus lines. It is very inconvenient to strategize where to stand for the next bus instead of using a singular stop. Some people are not aware of the fact that the routes converge and don't attempt to use the stop of the arriving bus. This redesign should consider making bus stops more accessible for riders to board in the most efficient way possible.

Additionally, the County needs to better announce any detours. Currently, the County only puts out notices about snow or delays, however they should also put out notices for scheduled street closures. For example, the Thanksgiving Day Parade happens every year on North Ave in New Rochelle. There are some closed streets near the transit terminal that prevents buses from entering the transit center.

Michael  
Yonkers, New York



## MEET THE RIDERS

**Name:** Michelle

**Hometown:** Yonkers, NY

**Bus Routes:** #1, #6, #25

I'm Michelle, I live in Yonkers, New York. I take the #1, #6, #25 to go shopping, run errands and to visit friends on the bus routes I take. I'm glad we have the Bee-Line in Westchester. I have a car but I use the bus so I don't have to worry about trying to find parking or paying for the meter when I'm out. For me, the bus is great—the stops are perfectly spaced from my house and I don't need to walk far. The bus connections are decent. I'm never waiting too long. I currently use cash to pay for the bus but I need to apply for the senior metrocard to get the special rate. To plan my trips, I usually go online to look at the most up to date information, however I know that not all of the bus stops have up to date schedules.

Michelle  
Yonkers, New York





## MEET THE RIDERS

**Name:** Amy Schriffin

**Hometown:** Yonkers, NY

**Bus Routes:**

My name is Amy Schiffin, I moved to Yonkers in 2000 from the city and I exclusively rely on the bus to get around to doctors appointments and shopping and other errands. When I moved here in 2000 there was bus service on the weekends into the city, and it was wonderful, however now there is no service at all.

During the week, many seniors, including myself, have stopped going into the city because we cannot make the 9:23am bus. The last bus to Manhattan from Yonkers is at 9:23am on weekday mornings. There used to be later buses but Bee-Line cut them from the schedule. So I don't use the bus to get into Manhattan anymore. We need bus service to Manhattan on the weekends so that those who depend on the bus are able to get around—our mobility shouldnt be limited to the scarce schedules. Service keeps getting reduced and because of that I'm planning on moving. We need a public transportation system that works for all, we pay taxes and expect better service. Buses that are reliable because currently if a bus does come, it arrives early or late. And that's not fair for riders.

Amy Schriffin  
Yonkers, New York



## MEET THE RIDERS

**Name:** Milie Burns

**Hometown:** Westchester, NY

**Bus Routes:** #42, #55 and #60

I'm Millie Burns, I moved to Westchester 22 years ago and I came here with a car. I noticed that most people in my neighborhood had 2 or 3 cars per household. In the interests of the environment, I began to completely rely on public transportation rather than replace my car once it died.

I use the bus to get to New York City industry film screenings. I used to take MetroNorth but found it more convenient once I was in the city if I used the subway. I usually take the Bee-Line #42, #55, or #60 and then a subway, depending on my ultimate destination. Attending my screenings can be difficult when the buses don't run early/late/frequently enough. Many screenings start at 6 pm and since the buses aren't operating when I am finished, I am forced to take the MetroNorth home. While grateful that I am not stranded in the city, I am forced to use the less convenient MetroNorth to return to Westchester.

Travels would benefit from better coordination between bus arrivals and subways reaching their terminal stations and vice versa. Bee-Line bus arrivals at and departures from both the Dyre Ave and Wakefield terminal stations need better coordination with the subway arrivals and departures and bus arrivals and departures being extended. Weeknights, the last #55 is scheduled to depart Dyer Avenue at 9:10 pm and the last #42 is scheduled to depart 241st St/White Plains Road at 10:30 pm. At least two more later departures, a half hour apart would make a world of difference

I am reluctant to travel by Bee-Line bus during COVID because too many riders do not follow the mask mandate—problematic when masks are down or completely absent in a small compact space. I recognize that there is only so much a bus driver can do when they’re driving but all riders need to properly wear a mask.

I use public transportation because it is better for the environment—I’d prefer to not get another car. The Bee-Line currently does not meet my needs nor many of its riders. I’d like to work with you to identify and solve the shortcomings so there can be a better system that truly serves the public and protects the environment.

Millie Burns  
Westchester County, NY



# MEET THE RIDERS

**Name:** Phyllis Rodriguez  
**Hometown:** White Plains, NY  
**Bus Routes:** #60


I’m Phyllis Rodriguez. I’ve been living in White Plains since 1974, I’m originally from Croton. I usually take the #60. The bus stop is very close to my house. I take the bus to visit friends, go shopping, etc. I truly enjoy riding the bus! I usually take the #60 because it stops in my neighborhood. When you get on a bus and look around, it’s super diverse. Riders come from all walks of life. You see people on their way to work, school, and going shopping. People with disabilities, who can’t drive, who don’t want to drive all flock to the Bee-Line. The bus is essential for me because I’m 79 and don’t feel safe driving and the additional expense of maintaining a car is a financial burden.

The Bee-Line could use some serious improvements. Schedules at bus stops are old and out-dated. Even when I look on the website for the most up to date schedules, the buses do not regularly follow the times listed! Worst of all is that at times, even if I get to the bus stop ten minutes early, the bus has left before the scheduled time. It seems to me that even if no one is waiting, the driver should always stay there till the time listed. This is very frustrating when planning your trips. I either end up arriving late to my destination or having to call a cab, which gets expensive. The frequency of buses is also a problem. You go to Main Street and buses come every 20-30 minutes. However since the schedules aren’t followed, you need to anticipate and arrive early, even though it’s not reliable.



Taking public transportation is also better for the environment. I've personally only ridden hybrid buses, so we need more EV buses if we want to reduce our carbon footprint. I want the County to be a place where you can walk and take reliable public transportation. I hope that the Redesign considers these issues, we have the opportunity to make the bus more accessible and easier to use.

Phyllis Rodriguez  
White Plains, NY



# MEET THE RIDERS

**Name:** Avis Bethea  
**Hometown:** Yonkers, NY  
**Bus Routes:** #2, #7, #20, and #25

I'm Avis, I live in Yonkers right by Central Avenue. I rely on the bus to get to work, go shopping, visit friends, go to doctors appointments and I take the #2, #7, #20, #25 bus and sometimes the #55. I usually have to make a bus transfer and a major issue with this is that some of the drivers will see you coming and pull off right when the light changes. I've heard two bus drivers say "People wait for the bus and the bus doesn't wait for people," which is a huge problem. Bus drivers should wait if they see riders coming. However, there are a lot of nice drivers who will converse with you making the ride more pleasant, it makes the trip go by quicker. If you miss your connection you can be waiting for 30 minutes to an hour for the next one to arrive. We need more frequent service on certain routes. I'll see three #2 buses and only 1 #7 within an hour. Waiting for a bus might be more comfortable if bus stops had benches or street lights. Only some of the bus stops have benches. Bus schedules at certain stops are outdated, like they still have June 2021 schedules. These need to be updated so riders know when the next bus is coming.

I use a Metrocard to pay for the bus but sometimes need to use change if I haven't been able to refill it. There needs to be better access to refilling Metrocards. Currently, there is a van that stops around Westchester that sells cards, however this van operates during working hours which is so inconvenient and inaccessible for people who work during the day. We need more Metrocard refill stations at major bus hubs.

Even during COVID, I still see packed buses because people need to get to their jobs and get groceries, etc. However, it makes me nervous to be on a packed bus during COVID. We should be using the larger buses for peak commuting times.

Avis Bethea  
Yonkers



# MEET THE RIDERS

**Name:** Diona Koerner  
**Hometown:** Greenberg, NY  
**Bus Routes:** BxM4C

My name is Diona and I live in Greenberg, New York. I’m very close to Central Ave where the bus stops so it’s easy for me to take the bus when I want to go into Manhattan to visit the Metropolitan Museum of Art or the Natural History Museum. I just get on the BxM4C. A lot of seniors take that bus to get into the city. It’s very convenient and I’ve never had issues getting into the city, however coming home is the problem. The Bee-Line Real Time App does not list the schedule for the BxM4C. Last week I figured out that the bus was listed as the 0023 instead which has been very confusing for those who use the app to plan out their trips. It seems like this is the only line that is mislabeled, I’ve never had other issues with other lines. We need this to be fixed or clarified so that riders can clearly know when the bus will arrive.

One time when I was headed back home, I waited for an hour. Nothing came so I walked to Grand Central to hop on the MetroNorth. Buses should come on time and it would be helpful to install countdown clocks at bus stops.

Diona Koerner  
Greenberg, NY

# ENDNOTES

1 Lader, Craig, and Naomi Klein. 2018. "WESTCHESTER COUNTY BEE-LINE SYSTEM FIRST AND LAST MILE CONNECTIONS MOBILITY STUDY." nypta. [https://nytransit.org/images/First\\_Last\\_Mile\\_Final\\_Report\\_-\\_February\\_2018\\_1.pdf](https://nytransit.org/images/First_Last_Mile_Final_Report_-_February_2018_1.pdf).

2 <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/westchestercountynewyork#>

3 CRI Research, and Westchester County. 2019. "A Survey of Bee-Line Passengers Conducted for the Westchester County Department of Public Works and Transportation, 2019." transportation.westchester.gov. <https://transportation.westchestergov.com/images/stories/pdfs/Planning/blinesurvey2019.pdf>.

4 ibid


5 Lader, Craig, and Naomi Klein. 2018. "WESTCHESTER COUNTY BEE-LINE SYSTEM FIRST AND LAST MILE CONNECTIONS MOBILITY STUDY." nypta. [https://nytransit.org/images/First\\_Last\\_Mile\\_Final\\_Report\\_-\\_February\\_2018\\_1.pdf](https://nytransit.org/images/First_Last_Mile_Final_Report_-_February_2018_1.pdf).

6 <https://www.westchestergov.com/253-energy-conservation-and-sustainability>

7 Westchester County Mobility and Transit Plan. 2021. "Key Results of Spring 2021 Online Survey." WestchesterMobility.org. [https://www.westchestermobility.org/\\_files/ugd/b59736\\_303f974042474e1286f1b8cea404cb5f.pdf](https://www.westchestermobility.org/_files/ugd/b59736_303f974042474e1286f1b8cea404cb5f.pdf).

8 Conveyal. 2020. Conveyal Results Memo 2020.

9 Conveyal. 2020. Conveyal Results Memo 2020.



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