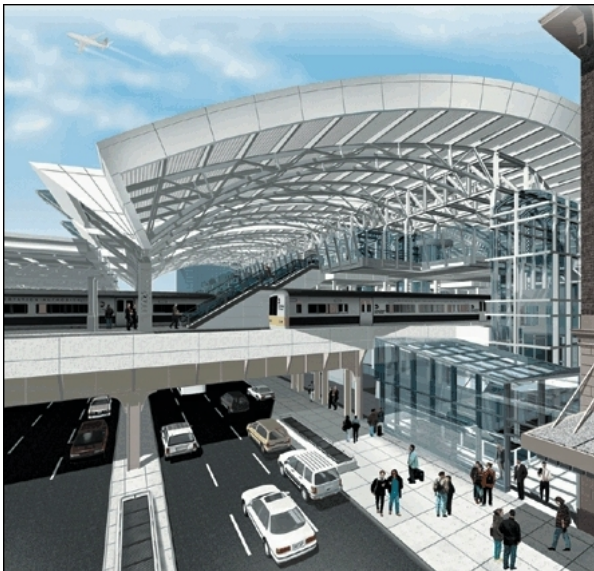




The 2001 LIRR Report Card

Results of the Annual, Independent Rider Survey
from the Long Island Rail Road Commuters Council



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-The *Official Voice* of LIRR Riders-
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The authors would also like to thank the Long Island Rail Road for extending its usual, outstanding level of cooperation during survey activities.

On the cover... Three centuries of Jamaica Station: an 1878 view of the original station at ground level; a 1928 postcard of the station, newly elevated to avoid grade crossings; and the new Jamaica Station/AirTrain terminal, scheduled to open in 2003.

About Us

Established in 1981, the Long Island Rail Road Commuters Council (LIRRCC) is the legislatively mandated representative of the ridership of MTA Long Island Rail Road and is the only *official* voice of LIRR riders. Our 12 volunteer members are regular users of the LIRR system and are appointed by the Governor upon the recommendation of the Nassau and Suffolk County Executives, and Brooklyn and Queens Borough Presidents. The Council is an affiliate of the Permanent Citizens Advisory Committee to the MTA (PCAC). For more information about us and our sister Councils, the NYC Transit Riders Council and the Metro-North Railroad Commuter Council, or to download further copies of this report in PDF format, please visit our website: www.pcac.org.

To Our Fellow Commuters...

No words can express the emotions of members and staff of the LIRRCC and our sister Councils in the wake of the World Trade Center disaster. None of us has been left untouched. We have all lost loved ones, friends, and colleagues. In particular, Council staff pause to mark the loss of 74 colleagues at the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey and three colleagues at the New York Metropolitan Transportation Council. We have also lost an important part of our heritage as New Yorkers. Our thoughts and prayers go out to the families of the victims of the tragic events of September 11.

But, even as we grieve, we join with millions of others in celebrating the human spirit. The worldwide outpouring of support, concern, and civility that has marked the days following September 11 has been nowhere more pronounced than right here at home, in the New York region. Selfless acts by millions of New Yorkers on Long Island, across the five boroughs, and throughout the State to aid relief and recovery efforts have proven that a broken heart can also be a caring one. If there were ever any doubt about the stuff from which New Yorkers are made, let it be forever dispelled. It is, in no uncertain terms, the right stuff.

To the MTA...

In September, the LIRRCC signed onto a joint letter sent with our sister Councils to MTA Chairman Peter Kalikow to express our gratitude to the MTA and its operating agencies for services rendered to the riding public on and after September 11. The Council would like to share this letter with the commuters whom we represent:

Dear Chairman Kalikow:

On behalf of the members of the PCAC and its affiliated Councils I would like to commend the employees of the Metropolitan Transportation Authority and its operating agencies for their bravery and commitment shown on September 11 and the days following. In the face of great fear and uncertainty shared by all in and around New York City, MTA and agency staff stayed at their posts assessing damage, planning emergency service, and keeping the subway and commuter rail systems functioning, helping hundreds of thousands of people evacuate Manhattan and return to their homes.

We recognize employees who put themselves at risk in the performance of these activities. We have learned of agency management and staff checking the integrity of collapsed and flooded subway tunnels, bus operators ferrying evacuees out of lower Manhattan and rescue workers in, and hundreds of agency capital construction personnel arriving – with a convoy of MTA equipment – to join rescue efforts.

Employees outside the disaster zone who, like the rest of us, simply wanted to return home to families and friends on such a tragic day, instead remained on the job, helping to direct people to subways and commuter trains, to operate those trains, and to keep signal and control systems running.

Back-office planning and operational staff immediately set to devising emergency service plans to keep subway and commuter rail service running, an immense task at NYC Transit in particular, hardest hit of the MTA agencies.

We also note that the MTA website has been consistently updated every few hours since September 11 with details of service changes and has proved to be an invaluable aid to riders as well as to media outlets reporting on the changes.

For all of this and more the Councils and the public we represent wish to express our gratitude to management and staff at the MTA and its agencies. Your efforts exemplify the attitude shared by all that, standing and working together, we will get through this time of tragedy.

Sincerely,

James L. Blair
PCAC Chairman

The Membership of the Long Island Rail Road Commuters Council, Barbara Josepher,
Acting Chairwoman

The Membership of the Metro-North Railroad Commuter Council, Richard Cataggio,
Chairman

The Membership of the New York City Transit Riders Council, Andrew Albert, Chairman

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Executive Summary

Since 1987, the Long Island Rail Road Commuters Council has undertaken an annual ridership survey to determine the issues of importance to LIRR riders. This year, 1,150 commuters were given "Report Card" forms and asked to rate various aspects of railroad service with a letter grade, from A to F.

In 2000, Report Card results showed the most sweeping grade improvements since the survey's inception, with increases in grade recorded for 38 out of 46 performance indicators and no significant declines seen in any category.¹ This year's results, however, are more mixed. For the second year in a row, riders gave the railroad a **C+** for overall service. However, out of the 48 performance indicators included on the 2001 Report Card², grades for 18 of them showed a decline and only two showed an increase. All of the declines were modest. Moreover, 9 out of the 18 declined grades and all of the increased grades were at least a C+, indicating above-average customer satisfaction.

This mirrors the results of Report Cards prior to 2000 when grades generally rose and fell by small amounts in successive years without changing the railroad's score for overall service. At the time, this was interpreted to indicate a natural variation in grades. Because this year's overall grade remains the same as 2000, the declines in grade seen for 2001 likely indicate a natural variation around the railroad's new, higher overall score. In other words, customers are happier overall than they were in 1999 but are still indicating to the railroad that progress must continue in key areas.

The performance indicators that declined in grade are as follows³: morning train crews (B); evening train crews (B-); Penn Station waiting area cleanliness (B-); personal security onboard trains (B-); personal security at home stations (C+); evening on-time performance (C+); morning seat availability (C+); morning schedule adequacy (C+); evening schedule adequacy (C+); home station maintenance (C+); morning home station announcements (C); management performance (C); personal security in parking areas (C); home station ticket-selling hours (C); evening home station announcements (C); Jamaica Station restroom cleanliness (C-); Flatbush Avenue waiting area cleanliness (C-); and Flatbush Avenue restroom cleanliness (D+).

The performance indicators showing grade increases are: personal security at Penn Station (B-); morning peak service (B-); personal security at Jamaica Station (C+); and evening peak service (C+).

¹ Only grade changes determined through analysis to be statistically significant changes are reported as increases or decreases in grade. Grade changes which are determined not statistically significant are not reported and are treated as unchanged grades, because there is no valid way to prove that these grade changes did not occur solely by chance.

² In 2001, riders were asked for the first time to rate announcements made at Penn Station and Flatbush Avenue during the morning peak.

³ For comparisons with 2000 grades, please see **Table Two: Results for Performance Indicators, Systemwide**.

The three highest grades in the 2001 survey were for morning and evening train crews (B and B- respectively), and perceived security at Penn Station (B-). This represents a return to the top spot for morning or evening train crews, a position held by one of the two indicators in every survey since 1994 with the exception of last year when train crews were edged out by satisfaction with new bi-level coaches. However, grades for both morning and evening train crews do represent a small decline over 2000. Perceived security at Penn Station represents an increase over 2000.

Lowest grades went to the Flatbush Avenue waiting area (C-), Flatbush Avenue restrooms (D+), and onboard restrooms (D+). Of these, the two lowest scores, for Flatbush Avenue and onboard restrooms, exhibited small declines from 2000.

As always, riders were asked whether they felt LIRR service to be getting better, getting worse, or staying the same. Here the picture of rider satisfaction was more clear. More than a third of riders (34.5%) reported that service was getting better, the railroad's best showing in seven years. Only 20.2 percent thought service was getting worse while 44.4 percent thought service was unchanged. This is a clear improvement over results in previous years. In 2000, 25 percent of riders thought service was improving and another 25 percent thought service was getting worse. In 1999, only 20 percent of riders thought service was getting better, while more than 30 percent thought it was getting worse.

Riders were also asked to identify the aspects of service which they would most like the railroad to improve. The top-three aspects of service for which riders desire improvement this year are: seat availability (identified by 11.4 percent of riders); on-time performance (9.0%); and parking (8.1%). It should be noted that seat availability has appeared in the top-three desired improvements on every Report Card since 1996. Elimination of short trains, one of the factors which impacts seat availability, stood at sixth place, identified by 3.3 percent of riders.

For the first time in several years, air-conditioning fell out of the top three spots, falling all the way to twelfth place. For the past two years, the Council has monitored railroad efforts to improve air conditioning since the systemic hot-car problems of 1998. The railroad responded with a set of proactive maintenance procedures and roving teams of mechanics and, judging from this year's Report Card results, the approach clearly seems to have eased complaints.

Each year, riders are asked a small, varying set of questions to determine how they stand on topical issues. In 2001, riders were asked about capital expenditures, service improvements, and home stations. Asked to rate four possible capital expenditures individually, 53.8 percent of riders identified East River tunnel fire-safety improvements as being of top importance, and another 46.7 percent identified state-of-good repair activities as being of top importance. Meanwhile, almost half of all riders rated the economic development project to construct a new Amtrak facility at the Farley post office adjacent to Penn Station as being of lowest priority (30.0%), or second-lowest priority (18.6%).

Riders were also asked to compare the top-five desired service improvements identified in last year's Report Card. For this question, instead of rating each item individually, riders were asked to *rank* them together in order of importance. Riders ranked on-time performance as being of top importance, followed in declining order of importance by seat availability, improved air conditioning, improved peak and off-peak service, and elimination of short trains.

Finally, riders were asked whether they commuted from the LIRR station nearest their home and if not, why not. More than one-quarter of riders (28.2%) reported that they do not use the station nearest their home. The overriding reason for not using their nearest station, given by 38.8 percent of respondents to this question, was inadequate schedules, followed by a lack of parking (29.9%) and slow service (19.2%).

Regarding overall performance by branch, once again the Port Washington branch was graded highest by riders, receiving a B-. The Ronkonkoma branch received the lowest score, a C-, a decline from last year's grade of C. Minor declines in grade were also reported for the Babylon, Montauk, and West Hempstead branches, all three of which received a C+ from riders in 2000, but were only graded a C on this year's Report Card. All other branches received a C+, including the Huntington and Port Jefferson branches whose performance improved from last year's grade of C.

Results for the question regarding whether railroad service has improved again show a pronounced trend towards customer satisfaction when analyzed by branch. More riders felt that service was getting better rather than getting worse on ten out of the railroad's 12 branches. Only the Far Rockaway and Ronkonkoma branches showed a higher proportion of riders feeling service to be getting worse. Riders from diesel territory were happiest of all, giving the railroad its best scores ever. More than 60 percent of riders from *each* of the Montauk, Oyster Bay, and Port Jefferson branches reported that service was getting better, while less than 11 percent of riders of each of the three branches thought service was getting worse. These results are almost certainly tied to a high level of customer satisfaction with the new bi-level diesel fleet. Diesel-territory Report Card scores have steadily risen since the first bi-level cars entered service, replacing obsolete, Eisenhower-era railcars that were the frequent subject of rider complaints.

Not surprisingly, commuters from almost all branches identified on-time performance and seat availability as among their top-three desired improvements for this year (**Table 14**). However, Oyster Bay and Port Jefferson riders also called for an increase in bilevel coach through-service from diesel territory to Penn Station.

In terms of the topical questions, again, on-time performance and the need for better peak and off-peak service were each identified by riders on four branches as among the most important service improvements that were noted on last year's Report Card. Almost all branches identified both fire-safety improvements in the East River tunnels

and state-of-good-repair activities as top-priority capital expenditures, by a wide margin over system expansion projects or the Farley project.

More than 80 percent of commuters on most branches indicated that they used the LIRR station closest to their homes. However, usage of the closest home LIRR station was dramatically lower for both the Huntington Branch (70.7 percent) and, most notably, the Ronkonkoma Branch (62.7 percent), likely indicating that many diesel territory riders still prefer to begin their trips on these electric branches rather than at diesel stations further east. Of those riders not using their closest LIRR home station, a majority of commuters on almost all branches indicated a lack of parking and inadequate schedules to be the overriding reasons.

The Council's results for 2001 indicate that riders have taken notice of the railroad's efforts to improve peak service, schedules, air conditioning, and fleet maintenance and remain as satisfied, overall, as they were last year. Diesel riders, in particular, are happy with the service on the railroad's new bi-level coaches.

However, while some problems are fading away, others are coming to the forefront. The 2001 Report Card clearly highlights the main concerns of riders as the railroad enters the 21st Century: on-time performance; seat availability; and parking. Although it is little comfort to riders, problems in these three areas are probably due to the railroad's own success. For the past several years, the LIRR has experienced significant and rapid ridership growth. Unfortunately, due to constraints at Penn Station, a facility which the LIRR must share with Amtrak and New Jersey Transit, there is little room to add peak-hour service. Thus, seats remain scarce, trains remain crowded, and general-access parking lots remain full. Indeed, these are most likely the reasons for the decline in the overall grade on the Ronkonkoma branch for 2001.

The Council is well aware that these problems have no easy solutions. For its part, the LIRR continues work on the East Side Access project which will connect the railroad to Grand Central Terminal on Manhattan's east side early in the next decade and allow for a 40 percent increase in service. Much sooner than that, a new fleet of M7 electric railcars currently on order will help the railroad expand the fleet and eliminate short trains as the new cars come online beginning in 2002. The railroad will also continue with its new, proactive maintenance procedures which have already been successful in reducing the incidence of short-train problems.

Parking is an even more difficult issue to address. With the implementation of bi-level diesel service, the railroad hopes to be able to entice riders to travel from the station nearest their homes instead of driving to lots at stations in electric territory, such as Ronkonkoma. However, as the Council's results show, many people continue to avoid their nearest stations because they find train schedules to be inadequate.

One strategy to alleviate overcrowded lots might be for the railroad to explore the implementation of "kiss-and-ride" customer drop-off areas so that commuters able to do so can be driven to and from stations without the need to park. This suggestion, with

which the Council wholeheartedly concurs, was raised in April of this year by our affiliated organization, the Permanent Citizens Advisory Committee, in its report, **Right of Passage: Reducing Barriers to the Use of Public Transportation in the MTA Region.**⁴

However, it must be noted that many lots are owned by municipalities, not the railroad, and many municipalities refuse to allow non-residents to park, or charge non-residents higher fees. Many municipalities also refuse repeated offers by the railroad to pay for improved or expanded parking facilities because if municipalities accept LIRR monies, then lots must be made accessible to the general public in direct proportion with the share of public monies used. Until such municipalities adopt a less restrictive view of who should be allowed to park within their borders to access railroad service, parking problems will never be eliminated.

Since the last Report Card, LIRR President Kenneth Bauer completed his first full year as railroad head. In that time, the LIRR has worked hard to improve service delivery and, especially, the railroad's responsiveness to rider input. The Council applauds these efforts. However, as the results of the 2001 Report Card demonstrate, a long road remains ahead. As is our legislative right and responsibility, the Council will continue to monitor the LIRR to help ensure that all areas of service and policy remain squarely in the interests of riders.

⁴ Schank, Joshua (April, 2001). Available from the PCAC by mail in printed format or as a PDF file online at <http://www.pcac.org/reports/pdf/rightofpassage.pdf>.

Methodology

Council members collected a total of 1,150 rider survey Report Cards⁵ aboard peak-hour, peak-direction LIRR trains between April 12 and June 14, 2001. Respondents were asked to grade the railroad on 48 performance indicators (please see **Table Two: Results for Performance Indicators, Systemwide**) and provide demographic data. In addition, open-ended comments were solicited.

Riders were asked to grade the performance indicators on the following scale:

A–Excellent
B–Good
C–Average
D–Below Average
F–Failing
NA–Not Applicable.

Graded data was analyzed and checked for statistically significant changes occurring since the Council's 2000 survey.⁶ In order to facilitate analysis, grades were converted to numerical values as follows: A=4; B=3; C=2; D=1; F=0.

As is standard in the statistical analysis of survey data, a confidence level of 95 percent was selected with a spread of \pm three percentage points. In order to achieve this, given the railroad's average peak ridership⁷ the appropriate sample size was determined to be one percent, or 1,069 riders. This number was adjusted slightly upwards to 1,150 riders in order to ensure an adequate number of cards would be collected from each branch. In the analysis of systemwide results, data were weighted by branch to ensure that each branch would be represented in the sample in the same proportion that each branch is represented in overall system ridership.

Because branch ridership is by definition lower than systemwide ridership and branch sample sizes were fixed in advance in order to be able to report on systemwide data most accurately, branch data is less precise. Sample sizes and spreads for branch results may be found below in **Table One: Sample Sizes and Spreads for Branch Data**. For the sake of comparison with systemwide results, the table assumes a 95 percent confidence level for branch data. Because branch sample sizes are fixed, branch spreads could be reported for any confidence level (for a fixed sample size, a change in confidence level will elicit a proportionate and opposite change in spread), however this would not aid in comparison.

⁵ A copy of the 2001 Report Card survey form may be found in **Figures 1 and 2**.

⁶ Doyle, Michael and Schank, Joshua (October 2000), **The 2000 LIRR Report Card: Results of the Annual, Independent Rider Survey from the Long Island Rail Road Commuters Council**. Available from the LIRRCC by mail in printed format or as a PDF file online at <http://www.pcac.org/reports/pdf/licard00.pdf>.

⁷ Data from the **Long Island Rail Road Fall 2000 Ridership Book**, the most current data source available at the time of the survey, indicated average weekday morning-peak railroad ridership to be 110,200.

Finally, out of the 1,150 cards collected, 633 comments were recorded. These comments were categorized and numerically tabulated, systemwide and by branch.

Table 1: Sample Sizes and Spreads for Branch Data (Given 95 Percent Confidence Interval)

Branch	Sample Size	Sample Size as % of Branch Ridership	Spread
Babylon	250	01%	0.03
Far Rockaway	50	01%	0.07
Hempstead	50	01%	0.07
Long Beach	150	02%	0.04
Montauk	50	02%	0.07
Oyster Bay	50	02%	0.07
Port Jefferson	50	01%	0.07
Huntington	150	01%	0.04
Port Washington	150	01%	0.04
Ronkonkoma	150	01%	0.04
West Hempstead ⁸	50	03%	0.07

⁸ Due to the unforeseen disqualification of a number of potential report card survey forms for this branch after the completion of card-collection activities, the actual sample size was reduced to 49, representing the total remaining number of valid report card forms.

Results for Performance Indicators and Topical Questions

Systemwide Results

As shown in **Table 2**, the railroad's overall grade of C+ remains unchanged from 2000. In contrast to last year when grades rose in 38 categories, this year out of 48 performance indicators⁹, 18 grades went down and only four improved. However, most categories received grades of C+ or higher, indicating above-average customer satisfaction, and fewer than one quarter of categories received below-average grades.

Table 2: Results for Performance Indicators, Systemwide¹⁰

Indicator	1999	2000	2001
Overall Service	C	C+	C+
On-Time Performance AM	C+	B-	B-
On-Time Performance PM	C	C+	C+ ↓
Seating Availability AM	C+	B-	C+ ↓
Seating Availability PM	C-	C+	C-
Schedule Adequacy AM	C+	B-	C+ ↓
Schedule Adequacy PM	C+	C+	C+ ↓
Train Crews AM	B	B	B ↓
Train Crews PM	B-	B	B- ↓
Announcements: On-Board AM	C+	C+	C+
On-Board PM	C	C+	C+
Penn Sta. AM	NA	NA	B-
Penn Sta. PM	B-	B-	B-
Jamaica Sta. AM	C+	B-	C+
Jamaica Sta. PM	C+	C+	C+
Flatbush Av. AM	NA	NA	C+
Flatbush Av. PM	B-	B-	C+
Home Sta. AM	C	C+	C ↓
Home Sta. PM	C	C+	C ↓
Cleanliness On-Board	C	C+	C+
On-Board Restroom	D+	C	D+
Home Sta. Wait Area	B-	B-	B-
Home Sta. Restroom	C+	C+	C+
Penn Sta. Wait Area	B-	B-	B- ↓
Penn Sta. Restroom	C+	C+	C
Jamaca Sta. Wait Area	C	C+	C
Jamaica Sta. Restroom	C-	C	C- ↓
Flatbush Av. Wait Area	C	C	C- ↓
Flatbush Av. Restroom	C-	C-	D+ ↓

Indicator	1999	2000	2001
Management Performance	C	C+	C ↓
Escalator Reliability	C	C+	C+
Winter Heating	C+	C+	C+
Summer A/C	C-	C	C
Seat Condition	C	C+	C
Security: On-Board	B-	B-	B- ↓
Penn Sta.	B-	B-	B- ↑
Jamaica Sta.	C+	C+	C+ ↑
Flatbush Av.	C+	C+	C+
Home Sta.	B-	B-	C+ ↓
Parking	C	C+	C ↓
Home Sta. Hours	C+	C+	C-
Home Sta. Ticket- Selling Hours	C	C+	C ↓
Home Sta. Maintenance	C+	C+	C+ ↓
Peak-Hour Service AM	C+	C+	B- ↑
Peak-Hour Service PM	C	C	C+ ↑
Midday Service	C	C+	C+
Late-Night Service	C	C	C
Weekend Service	C	C+	C

⁹ In 2001, categories were added for morning announcements at Penn Station and Flatbush Avenue.

¹⁰ **Only** statistically significant changes are reported (please see **Methodology**). The arrow symbol indicates that a statistically significant change has occurred since the previous year and denotes the direction of the change. Significant changes in 2001 are further indicated in bold. t

This mirrors the results of Report Cards prior to 2000 when grades generally rose and fell by small amounts in successive years without changing the railroad's score for overall service. This likely indicates that customers in 2001 are happier overall than they were in 1999 but are still indicating to the railroad that progress must continue in key areas.

As shown in **Table 3**, based upon the numerical values used to determine the final letter grade for each category (please see **Methodology**), the three highest grades in the 2001 survey were for morning and evening train crews (B and B- respectively), and perceived security at Penn Station (B-). This represents a return to the top spot for morning or evening train crews, a position held by one of the two indicators in every survey since 1994 with the exception of last year when train crews were edged out by satisfaction with new bi-level coaches. However, grades for both morning and evening train crews do represent a small decline over 2000. Perceived security at Penn Station represents an increase over 2000.

Table 3: Three Highest-Scoring Categories, Systemwide

Year	Highest-Scoring Category (Grade/Change)	Second Highest-Category (Grade/Change)	Third Highest-Scoring Category (Grade/Change)
2001	Morning Train Crews (B)	Evening Train Crews (B-)	Perceived Security at Penn Station (B-)
(2000)	Bi-level Coaches (B+)	Morning Train Crews (B)	Perceived Security at Penn Station (B-)
(1999)	Morning Train Crews (B)	Evening Train Crews (B-)	Perceived Security at Penn Station (B-)

Lowest grades, shown in **Table 4**, went to the Flatbush Avenue waiting area (C-), Flatbush Avenue restrooms (D+), and onboard restrooms (D+). Of these, the two lowest scores, for Flatbush Avenue and onboard restrooms, exhibited small declines from 2000.

Table 4: Three Lowest-Scoring Categories, Systemwide

Year	Lowest-Scoring Category (Grade/Change)	Second Lowest-Scoring Category (Grade/Change)	Third Lowest-Scoring Category (Grade/Change)
2001	On-board Restroom Cleanliness (D+)	Flatbush Avenue Restroom Cleanliness (D+)	Flatbush Avenue Waiting Area Cleanliness (C-)
(2000)	Flatbush Avenue Restroom Cleanliness (C-)	On-board Restroom Cleanliness (C)	Jamaica Station Restroom Cleanliness (C)
(1999)	Jamaica Station Restroom Cleanliness (C-)	Summer Air-Conditioning (C-)	On-board Restroom Cleanliness (D+)

As always, riders were asked whether they felt LIRR service to be getting better, getting worse, or staying the same. As demonstrated in **Table 5**, here the picture of rider satisfaction was more clear. More than a third of riders (34.5%) reported that service was getting better, the railroad's best showing in seven years. Only 20.2 percent thought service was getting worse while 44.4 percent thought service was unchanged. This is a clear improvement over results in previous years. In 2000, 25 percent of riders thought service was improving and another 25 percent thought service was getting worse. In 1999, only 20 percent of riders thought service was getting better, while more than 30 percent thought it was getting worse.

Table 5: Perception of Change, Systemwide

Year	The LIRR Is Getting Better	The LIRR Is Getting Worse	No Change Is Occurring
2001	34.5%	20.2%	44.4%
(2000)	(25.3%)	(24.6%)	(49.8%)
(1999)	(20.4%)	(30.0%)	(49.6%)

Riders were also asked to identify the aspects of service which they would most like the railroad to improve. As can be seen in **Table 6**, the top-three aspects of service for which riders desire improvement this year were: seat availability (identified by 11.4 percent of riders); on-time performance (9.0%); and parking (8.1%). It should be noted that seat availability has appeared in the top-three desired improvements on every Report Card since 1996. Elimination of short trains, one of the factors which impacts seat availability, stood at sixth place this year, identified by 3.3 percent of riders. As well, as shown in **Table 7**, seat availability and on-time performance have both appeared among the top-three responses for this question for the past three Report Card surveys, indicating that they lie at the core of commuter concerns.

Meanwhile, for the first time in several years, air-conditioning fell out of the top five spots, falling all the way to twelfth place. For the past two years, the Council has monitored railroad efforts to improve air conditioning since the systemic hot-car problems of 1998. The railroad responded with a set of proactive maintenance procedures and roving teams of mechanics and, judging from this year's Report Card results, the approach clearly seems to have eased complaints.

Table 6: Top 20 Most-Wanted Improvements, Systemwide¹¹

Most-Wanted Improvement	% of Total Responses To This Question
Seat Availability	13.0%
On-Time Performance	10.3%
Parking	9.2%
Newer Trains	4.5%
On-Board Cleanliness	4.4%
Eliminate Short Trains	3.7%
Evening Peak Service	3.2%
Overall Peak and Off-Peak Service	3.0%
Service Schedules	3.0%
Thru-Service to Penn Station	2.8%
Overall Peak Service	2.7%
Air-Conditioning	2.4%
Diesel Service	2.3%
Platform and Station Cleanliness	2.0%
Evening Express Service	1.8%
Comfort	1.6%
Morning Peak Service	1.6%
Overall Fares	1.6%
Overall On-board and Station Delay Announcements	1.4%
On-board Restrooms	1.4%

Table 7: Comparison of Top Three Most-Wanted Improvements, Systemwide¹²

Year	First Most-Wanted Improvement (Percent of Responses)	Second Most-Wanted Improvement (Percent of Responses)	Third Most-Wanted Improvement (Percent of Responses)
2001	Seat Availability (13.0%)	On-Time Performance (10.3%)	Parking (9.2%)
(2000)	On-Time Performance (11.1%)	Seat Availability (7.9%)	Eliminate Short Trains (6.9%)
(1999)	Schedule Adequacy (18.1%)	Seat Availability (17.1%)	On-Time Performance (14.7%)/Climate Control (14.7%)

¹¹ Only responses which account for 1.0% of total responses for this question are listed.

¹² Only responses which account for 1.0% of total responses for this question are listed.

On each year's Report Card, riders are asked a small, varying set of questions to determine how riders stand on topical issues. In 2001, riders were asked about capital expenditures, service improvements, and home stations. Results are shown in **Table 8**. Asked to rate four possible capital expenditures individually, 53.8 percent of riders identified East River tunnel fire-safety improvements as being of top importance, and another 46.7 percent identified state-of-good repair activities as being of top importance. Meanwhile, almost half of all riders rated the economic development project to construct a new Amtrak facility at the Farley post office adjacent to Penn Station as being of lowest priority (30.0%), or second-lowest priority (18.6%).

Table 8: Importance of Possible Capital Expenditures, Rated Individually

Possible Capital Expenditure	Level of Importance (5 Being Highest)				
	1	2	3	4	5
Fire-Safety Improvements in the East River Tunnels	9.3%	7%	13.7%	16.3%	53.8%
A new Penn Station Facility in the Farley Post Office Building	30.0%	18.6%	29.4%	10.5%	11.5%
System Expansion Projects Such as East Side Access	14.2%	14.6%	28.8%	18.2%	24.1%
State-of-Good-Repair Activities	8.4%	7.3%	16.1%	21.3%	46.7%

Riders were also asked to compare the top-five desired service improvements identified in last year's Report Card. For this question, instead of rating each item individually, riders were asked to *rank* them together in order of importance. As shown in **Table 9**, riders ranked on-time performance as being of top importance, followed in declining order of importance by seat availability, improved air conditioning, improved peak and off-peak service, and elimination of short trains. The top rankings given to on-time performance and seating availability for this question again reflect the importance of these issues for riders as demonstrated on Report Cards for the past several years.

Table 9: Importance of Possible Service Improvements¹³, Ranked Together (Based on Responses in 2000)

Possible Service Improvement	Rank (1 Being Highest)
Better On-Time Performance	1
More Available Seats	2
Better Air-Conditioning	3
Better Peak and Off-Peak Service	4
No More Short Trains	5

¹³ Possible service improvements represent the top five most-desired service improvements from 2000.

Finally, **Tables 10** and **11** show the results of a topical question regarding parking. Riders were asked whether they commuted from the LIRR station nearest their home and if not, why not. More than one-quarter of riders (28.2%) reported that they do not use the station nearest their home. The overriding reason for not using their nearest station, given by 38.8 percent of respondents to this question, was inadequate schedules, followed by a lack of parking (29.9%) and slow service (19.2%).

Table 10: Usage of Closest LIRR Home Station

Respondent Uses Closest LIRR Home Station	Percent of Responses
Yes	71.8%
No	28.2%

Table 11: Reasons for Not Using Closest LIRR Home Station, Systemwide¹⁴

Reason	Percent of Responses
Poor Schedule	38.8%
No Parking	29.9%
Slow Service	19.8%
Other	8.5%
Inadequate Bus Connections	3.0%

¹⁴ Responses are not mutually exclusive. Respondents were asked to indicate more than one reason, if applicable.

Results By Branch

Regarding overall performance by branch, as detailed in **Table 12**, once again the Port Washington branch was graded highest by riders, receiving a B-. The Ronkonkoma branch received the lowest score, a C-, a decline from last year's grade of C. Minor declines in grade were also reported for the Babylon, Montauk, and West Hempstead branches, all three of which received a C+ from riders in 2000, but were only graded a C on this year's Report Card. All other branches received a C+, including the Huntington and Port Jefferson branches whose performance improved from last year's grade of C.

Results for the question regarding perception of change again show a pronounced trend towards customer satisfaction when analyzed by branch. As shown in **Table 13**, more riders felt that service was getting better rather than getting worse on ten out of the railroad's 12 branches. Only the Far Rockaway and Ronkonkoma branches showed a higher proportion of riders feeling service to be getting worse. Riders from diesel territory were happiest of all, giving the railroad its best scores ever. More than 60 percent of riders from *each* of the Montauk, Oyster Bay, and Port Jefferson branches reported that service was getting better, while less than 11 percent of riders of each of the three branches thought service was getting worse. These results are almost certainly tied to a high level of customer satisfaction with the new bi-level diesel fleet. Diesel-territory Report Card scores have steadily risen since the first bi-level cars entered service, replacing obsolete, Eisenhower-era railcars that were the frequent subject of rider complaints.

Not surprisingly, commuters from almost all branches identified on-time performance and seat availability as among their top-three desired improvements for this year (**Table 14**). However, Oyster Bay and Port Jefferson riders also called for an increase in bilevel coach through-service from diesel territory to Penn Station.

In terms of the topical questions, again, on-time performance and the need for better peak and off-peak service were each identified by riders on four branches as among the most important service improvements that were noted on last year's Report Card (**Table 15**).

Almost all branches identified both fire-safety improvements in the East River tunnels and state-of-good-repair activities as top-priority capital expenditures, by a wide margin over system expansion projects or the Farley project (**Table 16**).

More than 80 percent of commuters on most branches indicated that they used the LIRR station closest to their homes (**Table 17**). However, usage of the closest home LIRR station was dramatically lower for both the Huntington Branch (70.7 percent) and, most notably, the Ronkonkoma Branch (62.7 percent), likely indicating that many diesel territory riders still prefer to begin their trips on these electric branches rather than at diesel stations further east. Of those riders not using their closest LIRR home station, a majority of branches on almost all branches indicated a lack of parking and inadequate schedules to be the overriding reasons (**Table 18**).

Table 12: Results for Performance Indicators, by Branch

Indicator	Bab.	F.R.	Hem.	L.B.	Mon.	O.B.	P.J.	Hun.	P.W.	Ron.	W.H.
Overall Service	C	C+	C+	C+	C	C+	C+	C+	B-	C-	C
On-Time Performance	B- am C+ pm	B- am B- pm	C+ am C pm	B am B- pm	B- am C+ pm	B- am C+ pm	B- am C+ pm	B- am C+ pm	B am C+ pm	C+ am C pm	C+ am B- pm
Seating Availability	B- am C- pm	B- am C+ pm	C+ am D+ pm	B- am C pm	B- am C+ pm	B am C+ pm	B- am C pm	C+ am C- pm	B- am C pm	C am D pm	B am B- pm
Schedule Adequacy	B- am C+ pm	C+ am C+ pm	C+ am C+ pm	B+ am C+ pm	C am C- pm	C am C- pm	C am C- pm	B- am C+ pm	B am B- pm	C am C- pm	D+ am D+ pm
Train Crews	B am B- pm	B+ am B+ pm	B- am B- pm	B am B pm	B am B pm	B am B pm	B am B- pm	B- am B- pm	B am B- pm	B- am B- pm	B- am B- pm
Announcements: On-Board	C+ am C+ pm	B am B- pm	C+ am C+ pm	B- am C+ pm	C+ am C+ pm	C+ am C pm	C+ am C pm	C+ am C+ pm	B- am B- pm	C+ am C+ pm	C+ am B- pm
Penn Sta.	B- am B- pm	B am B pm	B- am B- pm	B am B pm	B- am B- pm	B- am C+ pm	B- am B- pm	B- am B- pm	B- am B- pm	B- am C+ pm	B- am B- pm
Jamaica Sta.	C+ am C+ pm	B- am C+ pm	B- am B- pm	B- am B- pm	C+ am B- pm	C+ am C+ pm	C+ am C+ pm	B- am C+ pm	B- am B- pm	C am C pm	C+ am C+ pm
Flatbush Av.	C+ am C pm	C+ am C+ pm	C+ am C+ pm	C+ am C+ pm	C am C+ pm	C+ am C+ pm	C+ am C pm	C+ am C+ pm	B- am B- pm	C- am C- pm	B- am C+ pm
Home Sta.	C am C pm	C am C pm	C am C pm	C am C pm	D+ am D+ pm	C- am C- pm	C- am C- pm	C am C pm	C+ am C+ pm	C am C pm	D am D+ pm
Cleanliness On-Board	C	B-	C	C+	B-	B	C+	C	C+	C	C
On-Board Restroom	D+	C-	D	D+	C-	C+	C-	D+	C	D+	D+
Home Sta. Wait Area	C+	B-	B-	B-	C	B	B	B-	B	B-	B-
Home Sta. Restroom	C	C+	C+	C	C-	B-	B-	C	C+	C+	C-
Penn Sta. Wait Area	B-	B	B-	B-	B-	B-	B-	B-	C+	C+	C+
Penn Sta. Restroom	C	C+	C+	C+	C+	C	C+	C+	C	C	C-
Jamaca Sta. Wait Area	C	C+	C+	C+	C	C+	C	C	C	C	C-
Jamaica Sta. Restroom	D+	C-	C-	C-	C	C-	C-	C-	C+	C-	C
Flatbush Av. Wait Area	C-	C	C	C-	C	B-	D+	C-	B-	C-	C
Flatbush Av. Restroom	D	D+	D	C-	C-	C	C-	D+	C	C-	D+
Management Performance	C	B-	C	C+	C	C	C-	C	C+	C-	C
Escalator Reliability	C	C+	C+	C+	C+	C+	C+	C+	B-	C	C
Winter Heating	C	B-	C+	C+	B-	B-	C+	C+	B-	C-	C+
Summer A/C	C	C+	C	C	C+	B-	C	C	C+	D	C
Seat Condition	C	B-	C	C	B	B-	B-	C	C+	C-	C+
Security: On-Board	B-	B	B-	B-	B-	B	B-	B-	B-	C+	B-
Penn Sta.	B-	B+	B-	B-	B	B	B-	B-	B-	B-	B-
Jamaica Sta.	C+	C+	C+	C+	C+	B-	C+	C+	B-	C	C+
Flatbush Av.	C+	C+	C+	C+	C+	B-	C-	C+	B-	C	B-
Home Sta.	C+	B-	C+	B-	C	B-	B-	B-	B	C	C+
Parking	C	C+	C	C	C-	B-	C+	C	B-	D+	C
Home Sta. Hours	C	C-	C+	C+	D+	C	C-	C+	B-	C+	C
Ticket-Selling Hours	C	C-	C	C	D	D	D+	C+	B-	C	D-
Home Sta. Maintenance	C	C+	B-	C+	C-	C+	C	C+	B-	C+	B-
Peak-Hour Service	B- am C+ pm	B- am C+ pm	B- am C pm	B- am C+ pm	C+ am C+ pm	C+ am C pm	C+ am C pm	C+ am C+ pm	B am C+ pm	C+ am C- pm	C+ am C+ pm
Midday Service	C+	C+	C+	C+	D+	C	C	C+	B-	C-	D+
Late-Night Service	C	C-	C	C-	D+	C-	D+	C	C+	C-	D+
Weekend Service	C	C	C	C	D+	C	C	C	C+	C-	D+

Table 13: Perception of Change, by Branch

Branch	The LIRR Is Getting Better	The LIRR Is Getting Worse	No Change Is Occurring
Babylon	28.5%	21.3%	48.5%
Far Rockaway	13.0%	21.7%	65.2%
Hempstead	31.3%	22.9%	45.8%
Long Beach	36.8%	21.3%	41.9%
Montauk	63.3%	6.1%	30.6%
Oyster Bay	60.4%	10.4%	27.1%
Port Jefferson	63.0%	4.3%	32.6%
Huntington	40.6%	19.5%	39.1%
Port Washington	36.0%	15.1%	47.5%
Ronkonkoma	27.1%	15.1%	47.5%
West Hempstead	35.6%	13.3%	51.1%

Table 14: Top Three Most-Wanted Improvements, by Branch

Branch	Most-Wanted Improvement	% of Total Responses To This Question
Babylon	Seat Availability	12.2%
	Parking	10.4%
	On-Time Performance	8.1%
Far Rockaway	On-Time Performance	11.9%
	Parking	9.5%
	Overall Peak and Off-Peak Service	7.1%
Hempstead	On-Time Performance	20.0%
	Seat Availability	11.1%
	Overall Express Service	8.9%
Long Beach	Seat Availability	12.7%
	On-Time Performance/ On-board Cleanliness (tie)	7.1%
	Parking	6.3%
Montauk	Diesel Service	25.0%
	On-Time Performance/ Seat Availability (tie)	6.8%
	Overall HVAC/ Overall Peak Service (tie)	4.5%
Oyster Bay	Thru-Service to Penn Station	19.0%
	Diesel Service	11.9%
	Service Schedules	9.5%
Port Jefferson	Overall Peak Service	14.9%
	Diesel Service/ Service Schedules/ Thru-Service to Penn Station (tie)	12.8%
	Evening Peak Service	6.4%
Huntington	Parking	20.1%
	Seat Availability	10.8%
	On-Time Performance	9.4%
Port Washington	Seat Availability	18.1%
	On-Time Performance	11.2%
	Parking	10.3%
Ronkonkoma	Seat Availability	20.7%
	On-Time Performance	15.7%
	Newer Railcars	10.0%
West Hempstead	Service Schedules/ Overall Peak and Off-Peak Service (tie)	17.1%
	Overall Peak Service/ Morning Peak Service (tie)	9.8%
	Seat Availability	7.3%

Table 15: Top-Ranked Possible Service Improvements, by Branch (Based on Responses in 2000)

Branch	Top Possible Service Improvement
Babylon	Better On-Time Performance
Far Rockaway	Better Peak and Off-Peak Service
Hempstead	Better On-Time Performance
Long Beach	Better On-Time Performance
Montauk	Better Peak and Off-Peak Service
Oyster Bay	Better Peak and Off-Peak Service
Port Jefferson	Better Peak and Off-Peak Service
Huntington	Better On-Time Performance
Port Washington	More Available Seats
Ronkonkoma	More Available Seats
West Hempstead	Better On-Time Performance

Table 16: Importance of Possible Capital Expenditures, Rated Individually, by Branch

Branch	Possible Capital Expenditure	Level of Importance (5 Being Highest)				
		1	2	3	4	5
Babylon	Tunnel Fire-Safety Improvements	11.5%	9.8%	11.5%	14.5%	52.8%
	New Penn Station/Farley Facility	29.5%	17.8%	32.9%	9.7%	10.1%
	System Expansion Projects	26.8%	31.2%	44.2%	29.7%	40.1%
	State-of-Good-Repair Activities	9.6%	10.8%	15.0%	20.4%	44.2%
Far Rockaway	Tunnel Fire-Safety Improvements	9.1%	6.8%	11.4%	20.5%	52.3%
	New Penn Station/Farley Facility	39.5%	25.6%	30.2%	N/A	4.7%
	System Expansion Projects	13.6%	13.6%	38.6%	11.4%	22.7%
	State-of-Good-Repair Activities	9.1%	4.5%	15.9%	34.1%	36.4%
Hempstead	Tunnel Fire-Safety Improvements	8.2%	8.2%	12.2%	14.3%	57.1%
	New Penn Station/Farley Facility	18.4%	16.3%	38.8%	10.2%	16.3%
	System Expansion Projects	10.4%	12.5%	41.7%	12.5%	22.9%
	State-of-Good-Repair Activities	4.2%	6.3%	12.5%	18.8%	58.3%
Long Beach	Tunnel Fire-Safety Improvements	9.9%	5.7%	13.5%	17.7%	52.5%
	New Penn Station/Farley Facility	27.7%	19.1%	26.2%	12.1%	14.9%
	System Expansion Projects	16.4%	12.9%	25.0%	22.1%	23.6%
	State-of-Good-Repair Activities	10.6%	9.2%	14.8%	21.1%	44.4%
Montauk	Tunnel Fire-Safety Improvements	9.3%	4.7%	11.6%	23.3%	65.1%
	New Penn Station/Farley Facility	26.8%	19.5%	31.2%	12.2%	9.8%
	System Expansion Projects	11.4%	13.6%	20.5%	25.0%	29.5%
	State-of-Good-Repair Activities	6.7%	2.2%	11.1%	20.0%	60.0%
Oyster Bay	Tunnel Fire-Safety Improvements	4.2%	14.6%	16.7%	20.8%	43.8%
	New Penn Station/Farley Facility	18.8%	22.9%	25.0%	12.5%	20.8%
	System Expansion Projects	12.5%	16.6%	25.0%	18.8%	27.1%
	State-of-Good-Repair Activities	8.5%	19.1%	14.9%	21.3%	36.2%
Port Jefferson	Tunnel Fire-Safety Improvements	6.4%	4.3%	27.7%	6.4%	55.3%
	New Penn Station/Farley Facility	27.7%	14.9%	34.0%	17.0%	6.4%
	System Expansion Projects	8.3%	8.3%	35.4%	20.8%	27.1%
	State-of-Good-Repair Activities	8.3%	6.3%	22.9%	33.3%	29.2%
Huntington	Tunnel Fire-Safety Improvements	6.4%	5.0%	5.7%	20.0%	62.9%
	New Penn Station/Farley Facility	35.0%	22.1%	23.6%	7.1%	12.1%
	System Expansion Projects	10.0%	14.3%	31.4%	23.6%	20.7%
	State-of-Good-Repair Activities	5.8%	2.9%	17.3%	18.7%	55.4%
Port Washington	Tunnel Fire-Safety Improvements	12.1%	4.3%	14.3%	17.9%	51.4%
	New Penn Station/Farley Facility	26.1%	16.4%	29.1%	16.4%	11.9%
	System Expansion Projects	16.4%	9.0%	28.4%	20.1%	26.1%
	State-of-Good-Repair Activities	11.7%	8.0%	19.0%	24.1%	37.2%
Ronkonkoma	Tunnel Fire-Safety Improvements	6.4%	7.1%	20.6%	17.0%	48.9%
	New Penn Station/Farley Facility	35.4%	17.3%	27.8%	7.6%	11.8%
	System Expansion Projects	16.2%	16.9%	28.2%	12.7%	26.1%
	State-of-Good-Repair Activities	6.3%	4.9%	16.1%	15.4%	57.3%
West Hempstead	Tunnel Fire-Safety Improvements	10.6%	10.6%	12.8%	17.0%	48.9%
	New Penn Station/Farley Facility	23.4%	21.3%	19.1%	27.7%	8.5%
	System Expansion Projects	17.4%	23.9%	23.9%	26.1%	8.7%
	State-of-Good-Repair Activities	8.7%	4.9%	16.1%	41.3%	30.4%

Table 17: Usage of Closest LIRR Home Station, by Branch

Branch	Respondent Uses Closest LIRR Home Station	Percent of Responses
Babylon	Yes	80.8%
	No	19.2%
Far Rockaway	Yes	88.0%
	No	12.0%
Hempstead	Yes	86.0%
	No	14.0%
Long Beach	Yes	82.0%
	No	18.0%
Montauk	Yes	82.0%
	No	18.0%
Oyster Bay	Yes	90.0%
	No	10.0%
Port Jefferson	Yes	88.0%
	No	12.0%
Huntington	Yes	70.7%
	No	29.3%
Port Washington	Yes	83.4%
	No	16.6%
Ronkonkoma	Yes	62.7%
	No	37.3%
West Hempstead	Yes	90.0%
	No	10.0%

Table 18: Reasons for Not Using Closest LIRR Home Station, by Branch¹⁵

Branch	Reason	Percent of Responses
Babylon	No Parking	60.4%
	Poor Schedule	18.9%
	Other	15.1%
	Inadequate Bus Connections	3.8%
	Slow Service	1.9%
Far Rockaway	No Parking	50.0%
	Poor Schedule	50.0%
	Slow Service	N/A
	Inadequate Bus Connections	N/A
	Other	N/A
Hempstead	Poor Schedule	44.4%
	No Parking/Other (tie)	22.2%
	Slow Service	11.1%
	Inadequate Bus Connections	N/A
Long Beach	No Parking	56.7%
	Slow Service	20.0%
	Poor Schedule	13.3%
	Other	10.0%
	Inadequate Bus Connections	N/A
Montauk	Poor Schedule	58.3%
	No Parking/Other (tie)	16.7%
	Slow Service	8.3%
	Inadequate Bus Connections	N/A
Oyster Bay	No Parking	33.3%
	Poor Schedule/Slow Service/ Other (tie)	22.2%
	Inadequate Bus Connections	N/A
Port Jefferson	Poor Schedule	66.7%
	No Parking/Inadequate Bus Connections (tie)	16.7%
	Slow Service	N/A
	Other	N/A
Huntington	Poor Schedule	52.0%
	No Parking\Slow Service (tie)	19.0%
	Other	6.3%
	Inadequate Bus Connections	3.2%
Port Washington	Slow Service	44.0%
	Poor Schedule	42.1%
	No Parking	21.1%
	Other	5.3%
	Inadequate Bus Connections	2.6%
Ronkonkoma	Poor Schedule	41.2%
	Slow Service	29.9%
	No Parking	19.6%
	Other	6.2%
	Inadequate Bus Connections	3.1%
West Hempstead	No Parking	50.0%
	Poor Schedule	33.3%
	Other	16.7%
	Slow Service	N/A
	Inadequate Bus Connections	N/A

¹⁵ Responses not mutually exclusive; respondents indicated more than one reason, where applicable.

Results for Customer Comments

Customer concerns are also apparent from the comments submitted by riders. In order to develop a clearer picture of these concerns and enable comparison, comments are presented below in tabular form, grouped by category and by branch. Categories were created for positive comments, negative comments, and suggestions. Results are also compared with those from last year. Overall there were far fewer total comments when compared to the 2000 Report Card (633 versus 1,347).

In addition, this year, for the first time, "Suggested Improvements" was eliminated as a separate category. In past years, the Council found that entries in this category could more usefully have been placed under other, more specific categories. In order to achieve a better-defined picture of customer opinion in terms of specific service and policy issues, this change was made on the 2001 Report Card. However, the total number of suggestions and requests remains reported under individual categories and is tabulated by category and branch below.

Systemwide Results

Positive Comments

Similar to last year, in general there were very few positive comments. Out of 633 total comments, only 30, or about 5 percent, were positive. As Table 19 shows, the branches with the greatest percentages of positive comments were West Hempstead, Port Washington, Huntington, and Hempstead. Both Port Washington and Hempstead were among the top in positive comments last year as well.

Table 19: Positive Comments, Systemwide and by Branch

Branch	Pos. Comments	Total Comments	% Pos.
West Hempstead	2	22	9%
Port Washington	4	52	8%
Huntington	7	100	7%
Hempstead	2	30	7%
Long Beach	4	63	6%
Port Jefferson	1	16	6%
Babylon	6	142	4%
Oyster Bay	1	27	4%
Ronkonkoma	3	128	2%
Montauk	0	31	0%
Far Rockaway	0	22	0%
Systemwide	30	633	5%

Table 20 shows a breakdown of positive comments by category. Well over half of all positive comments fell into the "General/Miscellaneous" category. Most of these comments simply complimented the LIRR on a job well done. The second most popular

category for positive comments was for employees, where conductors were often recognized for good service. The percentage of positive comments in each of these two categories increased over last year. In all other categories, the percentage of positive comments either fell or remained the same.

Table 20: Systemwide Positive Comments, by Category

Category	# of Comments	% of Total
General/Miscellaneous	18	60%
Employee Conduct	8	27%
Equipment and Maintenance	1	3%
Service Requirements	1	3%
Cleanliness	1	3%
Management	1	3%

Negative Comments

There were a total of 149 negative comments, accounting for 24 percent of all comments (**Table 21**). The branches with the greatest percentages of negative comments were Hempstead and Port Washington. Both of these branches saw significant increases over last year, when they had much smaller percentages of negative comments.

Table 21: Negative Comments, Systemwide and by Branch

Branch	Neg. Comments	Total Comments	% Neg.
Hempstead	11	30	37%
Port Washington	19	52	37%
Long Beach	18	63	29%
Ronkonkoma	36	128	28%
Far Rockaway	6	22	27%
Port Jefferson	4	16	25%
Huntington	24	100	24%
Oyster Bay	5	27	19%
Babylon	26	142	18%
Montauk	5	31	16%
West Hempstead	1	22	5%
Systemwide	149	633	24%

Broken down by category, as **Table 22** shows, there were more negative comments under “General/Miscellaneous” than under any other category. One explanation for this is an increasing number of negative comments about cell-phone users, which went into this category. Negative comments about “Heating, Ventilation, and Air Conditioning” dropped from 15% to 8% of all negative comments.

Table 22: Systemwide Negative Comments, by Category

Category	# of Comments	% of Total
General/Miscellaneous	28	18%
Service Requirements	24	15%
Heating/Ventilation/Air Conditioning	13	8%
Local Stations and Parking	12	8%
Equipment and Maintenance	10	6%
On-Time Performance	9	6%
Scheduling	9	6%
Penn Station	9	6%
Communications	8	5%

Suggestions

Suggestions were by far the most numerous type of customer comment. Many suggestions were merely negative comments phrased in the form of suggestions, but some of them were truly neutral. There were 419 suggestions in total, accounting for 66 percent of all comments, roughly the same percentage as last year. The branches with the greatest percentages of suggestions were West Hempstead, Montauk, and Oyster Bay. West Hempstead and Montauk were among the branches with the greatest percentages of suggestions last year as well.

Table 23: Suggestions, Systemwide and by Branch

Branch	Suggestions	Total Comments	% Sug.
West Hempstead	19	22	86%
Montauk	26	31	84%
Oyster Bay	21	27	78%
Babylon	110	142	77%
Far Rockaway	16	22	73%
Ronkonkoma	89	128	70%
Huntington	69	100	69%
Port Jefferson	11	16	69%
Long Beach	41	63	65%
Hempstead	17	30	57%
Port Washington	29	52	56%
Systemwide	419	633	66%

As **Table 24** shows, the “Scheduling” and “Local Stations and Parking” categories received the greatest percentages of suggestions. Most “Scheduling” suggestions were requests for more frequent service or express service. Most “Local Stations and Parking” suggestions were requests for parking improvements, namely providing more of it. This category saw an eight-percent increase over last year. Cleanliness, which accounted for seven percent of all suggestions last year, accounted for less than five percent in 2001.

Table 24: Systemwide Suggestions, by Category

Category	# of Suggestions	% of Total
Scheduling	81	18%
Local Stations and Parking	63	14%
Service Requirements	46	10%
General/Miscellaneous	43	10%
Equipment and Maintenance	29	6%
Communications	24	5%
Heating/Ventilation/Air Conditioning	23	5%

Results by Branch

Following is a brief discussion about the most-prominent concerns of commuters from each branch of the railroad. Since suggestions and negative comments about a particular category both show concern about that aspect of the LIRR, they have been used as the barometer by which to assess customer comments and, taken together, are here termed "comments of concern".

Babylon Branch

Commuters on the Babylon branch were most concerned with "Local Stations and Parking" (14% of comments). Their main concern was a lack of parking, although there were many complaints about the conditions of local stations, especially Amityville. This is different from last year, when "Service Requirements" were Babylon riders' number one concern, and "Local Stations and Parking" accounted for only six-percent of their concerns. Commuters were also very concerned with "Equipment and Maintenance" issues (10% of comments), particularly the use of older equipment. Many of them were further concerned about regulation of on-board cell-phone use, cell-phone concerns making up most of the comments under "General/Miscellaneous" (10%).

Table 25: Main Babylon Branch Comments of Concern

Category	Negatives	Suggestions	Combined	Percentage
Local Stations and Parking	2	17	19	14%
Equipment and Maintenance	5	8	13	10%
General/Miscellaneous	5	8	13	10%
Service Requirements	2	10	12	9%
Communications	3	9	12	9%

Far Rockaway Branch

Unlike last year when the "Cleanliness of Trains and Stations" category accounted for the greatest percentage of Far Rockaway Branch comments of concern, this year "Service Requirements" accounted for the greatest percentage (18%). Commuters mostly voiced concerns about the need for additional service. They were also very concerned with "Scheduling" (14% of comments), many of them expressing a desire for more frequent service and more service that does not involve changing at Jamaica.

Commuters were equally concerned with “Capital Projects and Electrification” (14%). These comments of concern centered on various requests for capital improvements to tracks and signals.

Table 26: Main Far Rockaway Branch Comments of Concern

Category	Negatives	Suggestions	Combined	Percentage
Service Requirements	2	2	4	18%
Scheduling	0	3	3	14%
General/Miscellaneous	1	2	3	14%
Capital Projects and Electrification	0	3	3	14%
Local Stations and Parking	1	1	2	9%

Hempstead Branch

Hempstead Branch concerns were more concentrated than those of other branches, comments falling primarily into three categories. Commuters were most concerned with “Local Stations and Parking” (25% of comments), “Service Requirements” (21% of comments), and “Scheduling” (21% of comments). Last year, very few Hempstead riders (less than five percent) voiced concern about “Local Stations and Parking.” In 2001, comments in this category generally dealt with the need for more parking and complaints about resident parking restrictions. This year’s concerns about “Service Requirements” and “Scheduling” focussed mostly on short trains and the need for additional scheduled service.

Table 27: Main Hempstead Branch Comments of Concern

Category	Negatives	Suggestions	Combined	Percentage
Local Stations and Parking	1	6	7	25%
Service Requirements	4	2	6	21%
Scheduling	1	5	6	21%
General/Miscellaneous	3	2	5	18%

Huntington Branch

Riders on the Huntington Branch were most concerned with “Local Stations and Parking” (20% of comments) and “Scheduling” (19% of comments). Comments of concern focussed on desires for more parking and more frequent trains. This stands in contrast to 2000, when local stations and parking accounted for only 10% of Huntington comments of concerns.

Table 28: Main Huntington Branch Comments of Concern

Category	Negatives	Suggestions	Combined	Percentage
Local Stations and Parking	4	15	19	20%
Scheduling	2	16	18	19%
General/Miscellaneous	2	10	12	13%
Equipment and Maintenance	0	7	7	8%
Heating/Ventilation/Air Conditioning	2	5	7	8%

Long Beach Branch

Long Beach Branch commuters were most concerned with “Service Requirements (19% of comments) and “Scheduling” (17% of comments). These concerns mostly reflected a desire for additional service. Last year, Long Beach commuters indicated they were most concerned with “Cleanliness of Trains and Stations”, however, this year that category accounted for less than five percent of comments of concerns.

Table 29: Main Long Beach Branch Comments of Concern

Category	Negatives	Suggestions	Combined	Percentage
Service Requirements	5	6	11	19%
Scheduling	1	9	10	17%
General/Miscellaneous	4	5	9	15%
Ticket Types/Sales/Policy	0	4	4	7%
Fares	2	2	4	7%
Penn Station	1	3	4	7%

Montauk Branch

Montauk Branch commuters were mostly concerned with “Local Stations and Parking” (16% of comments) as well as with “Scheduling” (13% of comments). They expressed a need for more parking and for more frequent service, especially to handle weekend riders during the summer. Last year, Montauk commuters were not nearly as concerned with parking, which accounted for less than 5% of the branch’s comments of concern in 2000. However, commuters in 2000 were just as concerned about scheduling issues.

Table 30: Main Montauk Branch Comments of Concern

Category	Negatives	Suggestions	Combined	Percentage
Local Stations and Parking	0	5	5	16%
Scheduling	0	4	4	13%
Service Requirements	0	3	3	10%
General/Miscellaneous	2	1	3	10%
Rest Rooms	1	2	3	10%
Hunterspoint Avenue	1	2	3	10%

Oyster Bay Branch

Commuters on the Oyster Bay Branch were by far the commuters most concerned with “Scheduling” (38% of comments), especially about a lack of frequent service. This was their main concern last year as well. Results for no other category rose above eight percent.

Table 31: Main Oyster Bay Branch Comments of Concern

Category	Negatives	Suggestions	Combined	Percentage
Scheduling	1	9	10	38%
Equipment and Maintenance	1	1	2	8%
Heating/Ventilation/Air Conditioning	1	1	2	8%
Communications	0	2	2	8%
Local Stations and Parking	0	2	2	8%
Fares	0	2	2	8%
Ticket Types/Sales/Policy	0	2	2	8%

Port Jefferson Branch

Port Jefferson commuters were very concerned both with “Scheduling” (27% of comments) and with “Heating Ventilation and Air Conditioning” (27% of comments). Most of their scheduling comments centered on the need for more frequent service and more express service. Most HVAC comments concerned the perception that the air-conditioning on the new bilevel coaches is too cold. Last year there were also concerns about scheduling, but less than five percent of comments of concern focussed on air-conditioning.

Table 32: Main Port Jefferson Branch Comments of Concern

Category	Negatives	Suggestions	Combined	Percentage
Scheduling	0	4	4	27%
Heating/Ventilation/Air Conditioning	2	2	4	27%
General/Miscellaneous	1	2	3	20%

Port Washington Branch

Port Washington commuters were also very concerned with “Scheduling” (17% of comments), as well as with “Service Requirements” (15% of comments). Their concerns dealt with severe overcrowding reported by many riders. Various problems at Penn Station were also a concern (15% of comments). Meanwhile, concerns about cleanliness, prevalent last year, accounted for only six percent of comments of concern in 2001.

Table 33: Main Port Washington Branch Comments of Concern

Category	Negatives	Suggestions	Combined	Percentage
Scheduling	2	6	8	17%
Service Requirements	4	3	7	15%
Penn Station	5	2	7	15%
General/Miscellaneous	3	3	6	13%
Local Stations and Parking	1	4	5	10%
Communications	2	2	4	8%

Ronkonkoma Branch

Ronkonkoma commuters were most concerned with “Scheduling” (14% of comments) and “Service Requirements” (14% of comments). Their comments in both of these areas focussed on the difficulty of getting a seat during rush hours, which many said to be nearly impossible.

Table 34: Main Ronkonkoma Branch Comments of Concern

Category	Negatives	Suggestions	Combined	Percentage
Service Requirements	3	15	18	14%
Scheduling	2	16	18	14%
General/Miscellaneous	6	9	15	12%
Heating/Ventilation/Air Conditioning	6	7	13	10%
Local Stations and Parking	3	9	12	10%
Equipment and Maintenance	4	8	12	10%

West Hempstead Branch

Unlike riders on other branches, West Hempstead commuters were primarily concerned with “Communications” (20% of comments). However, they were also concerned with "Scheduling", “Cleanliness”, “Employee Conduct” (each 15% of comments). In fact, West Hempstead riders submitted proportionately more comments of concern regarding "Cleanliness" and "Employee Conduct" than any other branches. This stands in contrast to 2000 when concerns centered on “Heating Ventilation and Air Conditioning.”

Table 35: Main West Hempstead Branch Comments of Concern

Category	Negatives	Suggestions	Combined	Percentage
Communications	0	4	4	20%
Scheduling	0	3	3	15%
Cleanliness	1	2	3	15%
Employee Conduct	0	3	3	15%
Service Requirements	0	2	2	10%

Conclusions

The Council's results for 2001 indicate that riders have taken notice of the railroad's efforts to improve peak service, schedules, air conditioning, and fleet maintenance and remain as satisfied, overall, as they were last year. Diesel riders, in particular, are happy with the service on the railroad's new bi-level coaches.

However, while some problems are fading away, others are coming to the forefront. The 2001 Report Card clearly highlights the main concerns of riders as the railroad enters the 21st Century: on-time performance; seat availability; and parking. Although it is little comfort to riders, problems in these three areas are probably due to the railroad's own success. For the past several years, the LIRR has experienced significant and rapid ridership growth. Unfortunately, due to constraints at Penn Station, a facility which the LIRR must share with Amtrak and New Jersey Transit, there is little room to add peak-hour service. Thus, seats remain scarce, trains remain crowded, and general-access parking lots remain full. Indeed, these are most likely the reasons for the decline in the overall grade on the Ronkonkoma branch for 2001.

The Council is well aware that these problems have no easy solutions. For its part, the LIRR continues work on the East Side Access project which will connect the railroad to Grand Central Terminal on Manhattan's east side early in the next decade and allow for a 40 percent increase in service. Much sooner than that, a new fleet of M7 electric railcars currently on order will help the railroad expand the fleet and eliminate short trains as the new cars come online beginning in 2002. The railroad will also continue with its new, proactive maintenance procedures which have already been successful in reducing the incidence of short-train problems.

Parking is an even more difficult issue to address. With the implementation of bi-level diesel service, the railroad hopes to be able to entice riders to travel from the station nearest their homes instead of driving to lots at stations in electric territory, such as Ronkonkoma. However, as the Council's results show, many people continue to avoid their nearest stations because they find train schedules to be inadequate.

One strategy to alleviate overcrowded lots might be for the railroad to explore the implementation of "kiss-and-ride" customer drop-off areas so that commuters able to do so can be driven to and from stations without the need to park. This suggestion, with which the Council wholeheartedly concurs, was raised in April of this year by our affiliated organization, the Permanent Citizens Advisory Committee, in its report, **Right of Passage: Reducing Barriers to the Use of Public Transportation in the MTA Region.**¹⁶

However, it must be noted that many lots are owned by municipalities, not the railroad, and many municipalities refuse to allow non-residents to park, or charge non-residents higher fees. Many municipalities also refuse repeated offers by the railroad to pay for

¹⁶ Schank, Joshua (April, 2001). Available from the PCAC by mail in printed format or as a PDF file online at <http://www.pcac.org/reports/pdf/rightofpassage.pdf>.

improved or expanded parking facilities because if municipalities accept LIRR monies, then lots must be made accessible to the general public in direct proportion with the share of public monies used. Until such municipalities adopt a less restrictive view of who should be allowed to park within their borders to access railroad service, parking problems will never be eliminated.

Since the last Report Card, LIRR President Kenneth Bauer completed his first full year as railroad head. In that time, the LIRR has worked hard to improve service delivery and, especially, the railroad's responsiveness to rider input. The Council applauds these efforts. However, as the results of the 2001 Report Card demonstrate, a long road remains ahead. As is our legislative right and responsibility, the Council will continue to monitor the LIRR to help ensure that all areas of service and policy remain squarely in the interests of riders.

Appendix: Representative Customer Comments

Respondents' comments were categorized and the number of comments for each category was tabulated. Within each category, the comments were further broken down into positive comments, negative comments, and suggestions or requests. For example, a positive comment might be "The new seats are great," a negative comment might be "A lot of seats are broken," and a suggestion or request might be "Install wider seats."

Representative comments from every branch of the railroad are included for each category below. A comment was generally taken to be "representative" if it reflected sentiments expressed in more than one other comment. The absence within a category of representative comments from a particular branch indicates that no "representative" comments were received from that branch for that category. The categories have been organized into eight related groups for ease of reference. Some of the comments have been edited for clarity.

Service Delivery

Service Requirements

Total number of comments: 71

positive: 1

negative: 24

suggestions/requests: 46

Babylon Branch

Longer cars and more seats are the biggest requirements. (Bellmore)

Far Rockaway Branch

LIRR boastfully announced additional Far Rockaway service on their new schedule. Where is it? (Hewlett)

Hempstead Branch

No more short evening trains to Long Island during rush hours. (Nassau Blvd.)

LIRR should have some type of plan when service stops. Six weeks ago the crowding was frightening and there is no security. It took three hours to get home. Don't you think we should be compensated for that? If this happened on a plane we would get a free ride. (Nassau Blvd.)

Huntington Branch

The express trains crawl from Jamaica to Hicksville. Run faster trains. (Huntington)

Long Beach Branch

Switching at Jamaica to a packed train is not fun. (Long Beach)

By adding more stops without more cars in the morning, the train becomes more crowded and arrives later. (Long Beach)

Longer trains, more seats. (Long Beach)

Port Washington Branch

During my peak commute, I hardly get a seat in either the morning or the evening. We need seats. (Great Neck)

Ronkonkoma Branch

We need new trains and better service on the Ronkonkoma branch. (Wyandanch)

More seats, express trains after 6:00 p.m. (Ronkonkoma)

It seems as if the Ronkonkoma Branch is always packed. We need solutions so that every night is not a fiasco. (Ronkonkoma)

Scheduling

Total number of comments: 90

positive: 0

negative: 9

suggestions/requests: 81

Hempstead Branch

You stopped the 7:14 a.m. train from stopping at Jamaica, but the train gets to Penn Station no earlier. (Hempstead)

Huntington Branch

We need better scheduling so that there are more seats available in the early morning and evening. (Merillon Avenue)

Lack of trains on the Oyster Bay Branch leads to more commuters using Syosset station, greatly worsening the parking situation. (Syosset)

Better off-peak and weekend service is required, plus more express trains during peak hours. (Huntington)

Long Beach Branch

Take out some local stops on off-peak trains. For example, the 7:04 a.m. Oceanside-to-Flatbush train has too many stops. (Oceanside)

I would like to see off-peak trains make quicker connections. (Oceanside)

Montauk Branch

Add more trains on the Montauk Branch in summer to accommodate crowds. (Patchogue)

Oyster Bay Branch

If I miss my 6:30 a.m. train I have to wait until 7:30. (Glen Street)

Run more service on the Oyster Bay Branch. Don't give Oyster Bay the lowest priority. (Glen Street)

Port Jefferson Branch

Schedule more express trains between Huntington and Penn Station during rush hours. (Northport)

Port Washington Branch

More express trains. (Port Washington)

Ronkonkoma Branch

The main line needs more service than the Babylon Branch due to increased ridership on the main line. Reduce scheduled travel times – every time a new schedule comes out more time is added to the schedule. (Ronkonkoma)

Why not improve the schedule for the Port Jefferson Branch? You could have express trains and you'd fill them easily with all the North Shore commuters that presently drive to Ronkonkoma. (Ronkonkoma)

The Ronkonkoma Branch is so busy, why can't the trains be 15 minutes apart instead of 30 to 40 minutes apart? (Wyandanch)

My home station would be St. James but even with bilevels I'd have to change at Jamaica during peak hours. Plus, additional stops make commute just as long as my trip from Ronkonkoma. Why? (Ronkonkoma)

The main line needs better late-night service – the Babylon Branch should be emulated. (Deer Park)

West Hempstead Branch

Additional service to Valley Stream is needed, during peak hours especially. (Lakeview)

On-Time Performance

Total number of comments: 22

positive: 0
negative: 9
suggestions/requests: 13

Babylon Branch

We need better on-time performance. (Babylon)

If the train is late by just five minutes each way, that's almost one additional hour a week I have to commute. (Babylon)

Far Rockaway Branch

The LIRR's lateness has put my job in jeopardy and cost me a lot of money in extra day care since I also arrive home late every night. (Valley Stream)

Port Jefferson Branch

Why are westbound Ronkonkoma trains almost always five minutes late during the off-peak? (Smithtown)

Montauk Branch

Do better with on-time performance. (Hampton Bays)

Operations

Total number of comments: 7

positive: 0
negative: 1
suggestions/requests: 6

Babylon Branch

Why can't trains arrive in the station ten minutes prior to leaving? (Babylon)

Ronkonkoma Branch

Closing train doors and pulling one car out of the station and then sitting there is unnecessary when customers are left on the platform. (Ronkonkoma)

Maintenance of Service During Severe Weather Conditions

Total number of comments: 1

positive: 0
negative: 0
suggestions/requests: 1

Port Jefferson Branch

Service in inclement weather must be improved! (Kings Park)

Communications

Total number of comments: 32

positive: 0
negative: 8
suggestions/requests: 24

Babylon Branch

More announcements regarding train problems. Also advise what train it is before the doors closed, not afterwards. (Babylon)

Why not advise short trains before they arrive in the station? (Babylon)

Horrible communication when there is a problem. (Babylon)

Huntington Branch

Improve station announcements. (Hicksville)

Oyster Bay Branch

Tell the truth when there is a delay. If train is delayed one hour, don't tell us there are ten-minute delays. (Glen Cove)

Port Washington Branch

More communication when delays occur! (Manhasset)

Ronkonkoma Branch

During delays we must have more information. For the past 20 years, conductors have just hid during delays. (Wyandanch)

Customer Comfort And Safety

Heating, Ventilation, and Air-Conditioning

Total number of comments: 36

positive: 0
negative: 3
suggestions/requests: 33

Babylon Branch

Use less air-conditioning. I freeze on the train during the summer. (Copiague)

Better control of heat in winter and air-conditioning in the summer. (Copiague)

Huntington Branch

Improve air-conditioning maintenance to minimize cars without it. (Hicksville)

Port Jefferson Branch

Turn the air down on the new bilevels! (Smithtown)

Ronkonkoma Branch

Better heating and cooling. (Central Islip)

No air-conditioning in this car today, but it is over 85 degrees outside. (Deer Park)

When a car isn't comfortable (i.e. air-conditioning not working) the ride feels twice as long. (Ronkonkoma)

Cleanliness/Availability of On-Board Rest Rooms

Total number of comments: 10

positive: 0
negative: 3
suggestions/requests: 7

Port Washington Branch

Upgrade on-board bathrooms. (Port Washington)

Cleanliness of Trains and Stations

Total number of comments: 27

positive: 1

negative: 6

suggestions/requests: 20

Huntington Branch

Run cleaner trains. (Cold Spring Harbor)

Clean up all the pigeon droppings in Huntington. (Huntington)

Ronkonkoma Branch

The trains are filthy at times. (Deer Park)

Do a more thorough cleaning. I've seen roaches onboard several times recently. And put garbage receptacles on the train. (Central Islip)

West Hempstead Branch

Why are there no garbage cans on the trains? (West Hempstead)

Alcohol and Smoking Policy

Total number of comments: 1

positive: 0

negative: 0

suggestions/requests: 1

Babylon Branch

Can anything be done about beer drinking on board? Especially on the 3:44 p.m. train from Jamaica to Babylon. (Babylon)

Security and Emergencies

Total number of comments: 4

positive: 0

negative: 2

suggestions/requests: 2

Babylon Branch

I am concerned for my personal security when I see bums hanging out all the time in the waiting area. (Copiague)

Railroad police should patrol so youngsters don't congregate on platforms and in waiting rooms and vandalize escalators and windows. (Lindenhurst)

Capital Facilities And Equipment

Local Stations and Parking

Total number of comments: 75

positive: 0
negative: 12
suggestions/requests: 63

Babylon Branch

There's never any parking available when one needs to take a late train. (Wantagh)

Parking, parking, parking! (Babylon)

The stairs at Amityville station are in dangerous condition. There are broken steps and the staircase is filthy. The escalators are very often not working – this presents a hardship for the elderly and handicapped. (Amityville)

Eliminate the fee for non-resident parking. (Lindenhurst)

I just moved from Massapequa to Copiague and the Copiague station rates very poorly. There need to be a lot of changes. (Copiague)

Hempstead Branch

Parking for non-residents should be available. Not every town has a station! (Garden City)

Build more parking facilities for Uniondale riders. (Hempstead)

Huntington Branch

Please get us more parking. It's very important. (Syosset)

We need another garage at Hicksville. (Hicksville)

Parking at Syosset is awful. If you are not there by 7:15 a.m., no spots are available and the Nassau County Police Department will be sure to ticket you. (Syosset)

More parking a home stations. (Hicksville)

Montauk Branch

Pave the parking lot at Mastic-Shirley and add lines. (Mastic-Shirley)

Port Washington Branch

More parking spaces. (Port Washington)

Ronkonkoma Branch

Parking security is the worst ever! What happened to the great Suffolk County Police? (Brentwood)

The parking situation in Deer Park is severely overcrowded and unsafe. (Deer Park)

Western Terminals and Hub Stations:

Flatbush Avenue

Total number of comments: 2

positive: 0

negative: 2

suggestions/requests: 0

Far Rockaway Branch

Flatbush is in need of a makeover! (Gibson)

Hunterspoint Avenue

Total number of comments: 4

positive: 0

negative: 1

suggestions/requests: 3

Montauk Branch

Include Hunterspoint Avenue on the survey. It has lousy ticket selling and no public address announcements. (Bay Shore)

Jamaica Station

Total number of comments: 3

positive: 0
negative: 0
suggestions/requests: 3

Port Jefferson Branch

Why are there video monitors in Jamaica when there is never any sound? (Greenlawn)

Penn Station

Total number of comments: 18

positive: 0
negative: 9
suggestions/requests: 9

Long Beach Branch

Install MetroCard Vending Machines at or near the waiting room at Penn Station.
(Island Park)

Woodside Station

Total number of comments: 3

positive: 0
negative: 1
suggestions/requests: 2

West Hempstead

There should be better announcements at Woodside for transferring riders, especially for Port Washington Branch trains. (Westwood)

Equipment and Maintenance

Total number of comments: 40

positive: 1

negative: 10

suggestions/requests: 29

Babylon Branch

Why do all the new trains and bilevels get used only on the North Shore lines? Why can't the LIRR run some new equipment on the Babylon Branch? (Amityville)

The M-1 cars are in poor condition and need replacement. (Wantagh)

There are no questions about the condition of the trains – they are noisy, shaky, and unpleasant to ride in. (Amityville)

Train maintenance and operating conditions should be the most important things the LIRR monitors. There is no excuse for short trains, inadequate air-conditioning, or a lack of seating. (Lindenhurst)

Huntington Branch

The railroad needs to reliably service cars. Air-conditioning units go down, doors malfunction, lights go out. (Huntington)

Long Beach Branch

Get the new trains on all lines. (Centre Avenue)

Ronkonkoma Branch

Old trains, poorly maintained, guarantee service failures. (Deer Park)

We are the last to get the new trains. Why? (Ronkonkoma)

Capital Projects and Electrification

Total number of comments: 16

positive: 0

negative: 0

suggestions/requests: 16

Babylon Branch

It's crazy that fixing the East River tunnels is not the number-one priority. (Copiague)

Huntington Branch

Do not build a new Penn Station at the Farley Post Office Building. It is a waste of money. (Huntington)

Ronkonkoma Branch

An additional improvement would be service into Grand Central Terminal. (Deer Park)

The Ronkonkoma Branch needs a second track east of Farmingdale to eliminate delays. (Wyandanch)

Fares And Tickets

Fares

Total number of comments: 21

positive: 0

negative: 6

suggestions/requests: 15

Babylon Branch

The LIRR has improved greatly. If this continues, the only complaint will be the fare. (Amityville)

Lower prices if service remains the same. (Bellmore)

Lower fares within New York City, e.g., from Queens to Manhattan. (Babylon)

Huntington Branch

I feel that the train fare is too costly. (Syosset)

Montauk Branch

Put Bellport station in the same fare zone as Patchogue, with increased service. (Patchogue)

Ticket Types, Sales, and Policy

Total number of comments: 24

positive: 0

negative: 4

suggestions/requests: 20

Far Rockaway Branch

If possible, I'd like not to have to show my ticket after Jamaica, so that I can get some rest. (Hewlett)

Ronkonkoma Branch

If you are required to stand, you should not be required to pay! (Central Islip)

Management

Total number of comments: 8

positive: 1
negative: 1
suggestions/requests: 6

Babylon Branch

Service has slid over the last few years. Does management really care? (Wantagh)

Employee Conduct

Total number of comments: 29

positive: 8
negative: 6
suggestions/requests: 15

Babylon Branch

Crews should say “thank you” and be cheerful on trains. (Babylon)

The crews are great. (Lindenhurst)

Port Jefferson Branch

Generally I think employees are very good. But conductors could visually check for last-second passengers trying to get on trains late at night. It is very hard having to wait over an hour for the next train. (Greenlawn)

West Hempstead

Get nicer conductors. (Westwood)

General/Miscellaneous

Total number of comments: 89

positive: 18

negative: 28

suggestions/requests: 43

Babylon Branch

Have certain cars on the train be designated as no cell-phone cars. (Bellmore)

Far Rockaway Branch

Clamp down on the unnecessary use of cell phones. Install something that causes them to shut down after one minute. (Woodmere)

Hempstead Branch

Limit cell-phone use. Eliminate idle chatter calls. (Hempstead)

Huntington Branch

Quiet cars would be nice. (Syosset)

Eliminate smoking on platforms and reduce cell-phone use. (Huntington)

Long Beach Branch

You need a more aggressive cell-phone campaign. Make frequent announcements regarding cell-phone courtesy. (Long Beach)

Add cell-phone free cars. (Oceanside)

Montauk Branch

Last week, after the third time I politely asked a passenger in the next seat to speak lower into her cell phone, she told me if I want quiet, I should ride the Hampton Jitney. I will take her advice! The Hampton Jitney limits cell-phone use. They have also already taken many former LIRR passengers. (East Hampton)

Port Jefferson Branch

LIRR is an embarrassingly unprofessional service for the greatest city in the world. (Northport)

Port Washington Branch

The LIRR has definitely improved through my commuter years; don't stop now.
(Plandome)

Run a more aggressive campaign to reach loud and discourteous cell-phone users.
(Port Washington)

Ronkonkoma Branch

Offer frequent-user bonuses as an incentive for riders to use trains more often. (Deer Park)

Install televisions with Channel 12 News in every car. (Deer Park)

Have cell-phone free cars or shaded cars for people who want to sleep. (Ronkonkoma)

i can't imagine a worse railroad in virtually any and every category. (Ronkonkoma)

West Hempstead Branch

There have certainly been some improvements in service. (Hempstead Gardens)