Framing Livability: A Strategic and Creative Communication Approach to Improving Support for Public Transportation in Oregon

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FRAMING LIVABILITY
A STRATEGIC AND CREATIVE COMMUNICATION APPROACH TO IMPROVING SUPPORT FOR PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION IN OREGON

Final Report

NITC-RR-873

by

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16. Abstract Livability of place is a central theme in developing concepts about transit ridership. In order to develop strategy for a compelling public communication campaign to increase transit ridership, this project frames the connections between livability and transit and offers a set of public campaign examples. A national survey taken of riders provides possible message strategies. With this information, a creative strategy team was tasked with developing a strategy for messaging and developed the Green Rider profile. Recommendations for creative direction and further study are offered.			
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The success of public transportation depends upon public understanding of, and support for, livability. Recently, in response to state requirements to significantly reduce GHG emissions from light-duty vehicles, Portland Metro surveyed public opinions and concluded that the best way to sell efforts to combat climate change was to talk not about climate change but rather about livability: about the benefits to people's pocketbooks, choices, health and community. While this shift in approach has been marginally applied in Portland, a large gap in communicating and connecting with residents' concerns persists.

Oregon is recognized as a national leader in improving transportation options and limiting urban sprawl. In the 42 years since Senate Bill 100 launched Oregon's land use planning program, these efforts have gone by different names: "reducing reliance on the automobile," "reducing vehicle miles traveled," "reducing greenhouse gas emissions from transportation," "compact, mixed-use, transit-oriented development," "smart growth," "sustainability," and "livability," to name a few. Despite these varying approaches to simply communicating the benefits of public transportation, there remain vast misperceptions of these efforts. The main aim of this project is to understand public perceptions of transit and livability in order to be able to create strategic communication that can shift attitudes toward public transportation and, ultimately, change public behavior.

A review of literature and past strategic communication efforts was completed to gain an understanding of how livability, especially in relation to transportation, is conceived of and applied. Surveys of non-transit riders in 10 selected metropolitan areas across the country sought to better understand their relevant perspectives on livability and transit. Lastly, an undergraduate student team, who are part of the award-winning advertising program at the University of Oregon School of Journalism and Communication, conducted brief intercept conversations, gathered observational data from Portland and engaged in a creative assessment to develop messaging recommendations.

Key findings from the literature review include:

- Livability is poorly defined despite usage in plans and studies at the local, state and federal level.
- Transportation is a key component of livability.
- Several creative strategic communication campaigns have centered on making transit ridership more palatable with varying degrees of success.

Key findings from the survey include:

- Non-riders are generally supportive of public transit. Communication planners should not focus on building general support as the main goal, as general support is already prevalent.

- Offering public transportation options is of low importance to non-riders. For non-riders, protection from crime, employment opportunities and affordable housing are of top importance. Transportation system planners and communicators should seek to draw connections among priority livability issues and public transportation.
- Non-riders recognize the positive aspects of public transportation as cutting down on traffic, being good for the environment and being efficient. Non-riders also tend to believe that public transportation is designed more for other people's needs compared to their own and is crowded, dirty and noisy.
- The majority of non-riders are quite unaware of transportation policy decisions in their city and are not likely to give input on transportation policy. Regardless, non-riders are generally supportive, on average, of public transit. However, most non-riders think their lives would be mostly unaffected by reductions or increases in transit funding. Transportation communicators should take advantage of a supportive, non-riding public to highlight the benefits of transit funding and make these issues more salient to non-riders.

Key findings from intercept conversation and the creative process include:

- The team's audience descriptions go beyond the usual binary of describing riders as either "captive" or "choice" to include an emerging category of rider: The Green Rider. Our team identified this type of rider as a crucial player in creating a long-term culture of ridership among people who have the ability to drive. Additionally, the team identified reaching and expanding the base of Green Riders to build ridership and investment in transit policies as a key objective of strategic communication efforts from transit agencies.
- Creative direction recommended stories of heroism, underscoring belief systems and narratives of self-efficacy and use of local characters to engage the Green Rider.

These key findings and others are presented in this report through the lens of preproduction formative research and include several testable recommendations for campaign targeting and messaging.

1.0   INTRODUCTION

This project relied on research and community engagement reports developed by the Powell-Division Transit and Development Project in Portland (Metro, 2018). This corridor consists largely of wide streets and strip malls – in other words, an area that is not particularly pedestrian or bike friendly, and one very much like many other metro areas around the state and the country. Taking a focused approach to strategic communications provides meaningful insights and promising outcomes for the Powell-Division project, and the lessons learned can be carried forward as a model for livability-focused transportation projects in other metropolitan areas throughout the country. Creative messaging can be derived from this research and provide scalable communication approaches.

1.1   FORMATIVE RESEARCH FOR STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION DEVELOPMENT

Research done prior to message development to better understand the audience and guide strategic messaging is known as formative research (Palmer, 1981). A systematic approach to formative research has been shown to contribute to the success of communication efforts (Berkowitz, Huhman, Heitzler, Potter, Nolin and Banspach, 2008; Noar, 2006). According to Atkin and Freimuth (2013) formative research "is useful for determining which approaches are most promising and revealing whether certain components are ineffective or even counterproductive" (p. 53). Formative research helps communication practitioners identify relevant target audiences, predict which messaging strategies are likely to be effective and better understand what content is needed within a strategic and creative communication effort (O'Keefe, 2018; Shafer, Cates, Diehl and Hartmann, 2011).

There are typically two chronological stages that formative research follows: preproduction research and production research. First, preproduction research seeks to identify a target audience and to better understand that audience's relevant perceptions, experiences, motivations and barriers (Atkin and Freimuth, 2013; Shafer, Patel, Bulik and Zucker, 2017). Next, production research tests communication materials with specific target audiences to assess effectiveness and fine tune the messaging. This report presents preproduction formative research in service of creating audience and messaging recommendations that could be developed and tested at the production stage.

Preproduction research often begins with an extensive literature review on the issue that includes a detailed look at any similar communication efforts, if any are available (Berkowitz et al., 2008). Building off the literature review, preproduction formative research typically involves qualitative and survey research that seeks to understand and narrow the target audience, with a focus on how the audience perceives and experiences the issue. Audience insights and messaging recommendations are presented for each preproduction research method. Insights and messaging recommendations can overlap and sometimes diverge at the preproduction stage (Shafer et al., 2011). Production research is needed to test which of the research-based ideas from the

preproduction findings are appropriate for implementation. Guided by best practices in formative research for strategic communication development (Atkin and Freimuth, 2013) this project addressed the following research questions:

RQ1a: How has livability, especially in relation to transportation, been defined in past literature and applied in previous strategic communication efforts?

RQ1b: What insights and messaging recommendations can be developed from the review of relevant literature and previous campaigns?

RQ2a: What are non-transit riders' perceptions of the concept of livability, transit and their engagement with transit decision-making?

RQ2b: What strategic communication insights and messaging recommendations can be deducted from the survey findings?

RQ3: What insights and messaging recommendations can be developed from a creative process that uses conversational intercepts and creative communication best practices?

2.0   LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1   UNDERSTANDING LIVABILITY AS A COMMUNICATION CONTEXT

Livability is quality of life. For communities, livability is determined by both hard and soft variables: the quantified ratios of people and places, the opportunities for food purchase, education and jobs become metrics explaining how livable a place is. At the heart of these issues is transit, the ability to move through a place as a pedestrian, rider or driver. This review and project focuses on transit as the conceptual hub for considering the livability of a community and how transit solutions can be communicated in a strategic, creative campaign. A review of literature to define livability and, specifically, transit's place as a factor in livability is offered, as well as a review of a range of transit campaigns using a creative approach for audience engagement. The following literature review and campaign case study sections seek to answer RQ1a: How has livability, especially in relation to transportation, been defined in past literature and applied in previous strategic communication efforts?

2.2   LIVABILITY SCOPE

The concept of livability is expansive and inherently variable, taking on new meanings in various contexts. Examination of the term reveals key factors exist on a spectrum; those factors include safety, opportunity, environment, housing, health, proximity, community development and transit. New Urbanism and other urban living movements provide compelling possibilities for livability strategies to be put into practice. Like the similar social construct of "sustainability," livability has no singular definition. As Herman and Lewis (2016) explain, livability remains poorly defined in much work despite continued usage, studies and federal guidance. The concept has been reflected in local and state plans but without consensus around definitions, the ability for livability-related actions, research and conversations to pull in the same direction and strengthen planning objectives is inhibited.

In academic literature, livability is used in a myriad of ways. Few scholars have attempted to define it, even as it is a theme of research and inquiry. Those who present a definition often draw upon livability's category-spanning nature and incorporate multiple themes. In mainstream usage, livability blogs, brands and services further muddy understanding of the concept. Therefore, livability becomes an umbrella term, a broad concept used in policy, governance, reportage, branding, religion, biology, real estate and climate change. Policymakers, government agencies, businesses, scholars and professional problem-solvers provide perspective on this concept in multiple ways, defining it in relation to policy or geography/location or human well-being (Herman and Lewis, 2016). Appropriately, Lewis (2017) observes the term needs operationalization, especially for policymakers and researchers in planning and public policy fields, asking these questions to give direction: *How do people make determinations of a livable*

community? Why do certain places feel more, or less, livable to certain people? Do different individuals experience livability in the same way?

The Partnership for Sustainable Communities (USDOT, 2009) frames six principles of livability: safe and reliable transportation choices; affordable housing for all people; support of existing communities as regions evolve; enhanced economic and business opportunities; policy and program synergy around energy and transportation; and enhancement of legacy and unique personality of neighborhoods as they develop.

Matthias and Franklin (2013) explain two elements that must exist and remain in sync for a place to be livable. First, the needs and wants of people – shelter, energy, water and food, education, entertainment, transportation – must be recognized and met; often these needs are most recognizable in places determined inadequate in provision. Second, livability is determined by the built and natural environment, recognized as architecture, water bodies, green spaces, local climate and air regulation. The interrelationship of these two elements provides a rich area for research, creative problem-solving and innovation.

Harvey and Aultman-Hall (2016) show critical relationships between streetscapes and human experience in a community. The authors suggest developing robust approaches for measuring human experience through direct observation, surveys and interviews that record social interaction, placemaking, identity understanding, and transport behaviors. These qualitative approaches can be used to capture how people use and perceive urban spaces, including streetscapes and transit locales.

Interestingly, Redaelli (2017) offers a perspective wherein livability is directly connected to a sense of place through art in the public sphere. This merges artistic practice with neighborhood legacy and history, creates layers of meaning and common vision, and builds community. The study reviews public art in Portland, including TriMet's Public Art Program, which integrated art into the light rail ecosystem and the publicly funded art on the lines that link downtown with diverse communities (TriMet, 2017). Redaeli reports the projects helped create "a common vision in the neighborhood, supporting community cohesion, social inclusion and economic development." In this instance, TriMet supported livability of communities via creative placemaking.

The concept of livability is not without controversy. Goh (2011) writes there are "two broad and fundamentally-opposed semiotic trends, namely, the confidently cosmopolitan trend that emphasizes urban growth and the positive effects these are assumed to have on quality of life; and the dehumanizing trend that emphasizes the human cost of urban growth and its technological components." The ambivalence of such consideration and discussion appears in public discourse in Portland through news reports and collective community thinking (Theen, 2015; Weinberger, 2016).

Changing public opinion and behavior toward livability may be difficult, in part, because the planning, design and engineering fields continue to grapple with defining concepts such as sustainability and livability (Appleyard et al., 2014; Rodriguez-Nikl, 2011). This lack of focus impedes progress and impacts communication. Conversations about livability can shift quickly

from what makes a place livable to what makes a place desirable (de Hollander and Staatsen, 2003). City planning successes are generally about creating walkable neighborhoods, with diverse businesses, amenities, homes and people; these neighborhoods are not necessarily high income (Krizek, Handy and Rodriguez, 2009). However, definitions of livability change across generations (Ruth and Franklin, 2014).

2.3   TRANSIT THEMES

As one of the key indicators of livability, transit is vital to the ongoing ecosystem supporting a community's quality of life. Research in recent years has explored the rich interconnection between livability measures and transportation planning (Miller, 2013, as an example). The ongoing discussion and agenda to integrate people issues with transportation issues within many cities (including Portland, the focus of this study) is a compelling platform for research and inquiry amongst policymakers, business and governmental entities, community leaders and – to the point of this project – strategic communicators.

Arguably, the state of Oregon makes the concept of livability a priority in planning and research. To that end, the third goal of the Oregon Public Transportation Plan (ODOT, 2011) focuses on the synergy between public transportation and the livability of an area: "Community Livability and Economic Vitality Public transportation promotes community livability and economic vitality by efficiently and effectively moving people of all ages to and from homes, jobs, businesses, schools and colleges, and other destinations in urban, suburban, and rural areas."

Litman (2010) suggests livability and sustainability goals work well in partnership with transit and transportation planning goals, that the two movements have worked with a similar mission in mind for decades and dedicate effort to quality of life for neighborhoods. Schlossberg et al. (2013) posit three key indicators to understanding transit as a component of livability: 1) transit quality understood as service frequency; 2) built environments that offer walkability and access for transit users; and 3) pedestrian-oriented destinations within one-quarter mile of each transit stop.

Cervero (2009) examines how transportation projects can also meet livable development goals. Cervero, Kang and Shively (2009) find that transportation projects, specifically highway deconstruction and redevelopment, can gentrify neighborhoods and impede livability. Brown, Werner and Kim (2003) examine the conditions that support promotion and operation of livable transit systems. Levinson (2004) broadly explores how transportation can support livable communities.

Possible outcomes in livable areas with transportation options like passenger rail and greenway trails may include economic development, increased recreation and improved land use diversity (Gorewitz et al., 2009; Kamga, 2015; Shafer et al., 2000). Themes such as affordability, safety, accessibility and community engagement have emerged in livable communities in the U.S. and across the globe; taking a consumer-driven approach to moving projects forward and collaborating with various community partners has proven important (Biddulph, 2010; Hwang, 2008; Idrus et al., 2010).

Regarding strategic communication and behavior change, the lack of a recognizable, trusted national brand seems troublesome when it comes to public transportation (Emmerson, 2006). Successfully promoting livability and sustainable transportation seems to require identifying credible, practical benefits and communicating those benefits through well-designed campaigns that incorporate educational elements and facilitate two-way dialogue with local government, educational institutions and other stakeholders (Frattaroli et al., 2006; Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development, 2004). There may be value in emphasizing social trends, mobility services, connected vehicles, innovative transit and planning improvements (Carter and Walters, 2013). See Table 2.1 for key connections linking transit to livability identified in our review of the literature that offer many possibilities for developing strategic communication platforms.

Table 2.1: Livability and Transit: Key Connections Reviews These Linkages

Author	Transit Connection to Livability
Multiple authors	Quality of life
Schlossberg, 2013	Service frequency
	Walkability and access
	Pedestrian-oriented
Smith, 2017	Indicators of enjoyment: joy, excitement, relaxation
Gorewitz et al., 2009	Economic development
	Increased recreation
	Improved land use diversity
Biddulph, 2010	Affordability and safety
Levinson, 2004	Community networks

More recent studies begin to explore a particular human-centric approach. Smith (2017) focuses on "commuter well-being" in Portland as a frame for exploring issues of transit persuasion as an audience-driven approach to livability, establishing a multi-item measure of the experience of commuting to work and what influences that well-being. The study was based on previous indicators of arrival time confidence, stress, boredom, excitement, enjoyment and ease of trip (Ettema et al., 2011). Smith found, for example, that appealing to affective feelings of joy, excitement or relaxation – indicators of enjoyment – may be a more effective way to market bicycling over car commutes, and that, generally, feelings of pleasure, escape and thrill should be added to the scale. Finally, the study posits that commuter well-being has many likely influences, including mode, trip attribute, home satisfaction, job satisfaction and attitude.

2.4   STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND TRANSIT ISSUES

Livability and transit are compelling concepts to be used as the basis for development of persuasive story and strategic communication. The idea industry – informally defined here as the professions of advertising, design and media content – consistently take on social issues using the tools of language, design and media platform. As an example of this movement, in 2016 United Nations Secretary General Ban-Ki Moon addressed the gathering of industry creative leaders at the Cannes Festival of Creativity, part of the Cannes Film Festival in France. Moon gathered onstage the heads of six of the industry's leading holding companies (conglomerates of advertising and public relations agencies, studios and media outlets) and asked for their help in addressing the 17 United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. These goals center on issues of livability discussed here: infrastructure, clean water, sustainable cities, good health, and strong

institutions and support. Creative work is being developed to reach these goals, as each holding company takes on separate themes and approaches on a global platform. Relevant to this discussion, this UN request and subsequent produced work underscores the connection between strategic communication and the growing movement for advertising strategic communication to address issues of livability.

Longo (2013) offers seven errors in addressing climate concerns as he discusses innovative ways of addressing livability, noting that disruptive changes in daily work patterns can help address transit issues in cities.

Several studies look at how complex issues of environment and place might be marketed and, importantly, how this type of communication is approached by transit organizations. Jones (2014) suggests that narratives with hero characters positively affect the persuasiveness of an issue or policy presented as story. In 2004, Cronin and Hightower examined the role of marketing in public transit organizations and suggested that, at that time, marketing and advertising were not a standard part of transit organization structure; therefore, less emphasis – budget, management and critical thinking – was placed in that realm. The same may hold true now. Van Lierop and El-Geneidy (2017) studied market segmentation in transit communication often settled on broad categories of audience designation such as "captive" and "choice" riders; their work suggests communicators should look for more nuanced approaches to audience designation.

2.5 EXAMPLES OF STRATEGIC CAMPAIGNS FOR TRANSIT ISSUES

To approach any creative strategic communication campaign, it is important to build a curated library of work produced in the same category, around similar audiences and issues. In the case of transit communication campaigns, few take on strong conceptual or creative approaches, often relying more on straightforward informational, "just the facts" approaches. Here, we offer qualitative discussion of five examples instructive to understanding the potential opportunities for creative messaging, as well as the obstacles to crafting relevant and useful work. Though this collection is not an exhaustive audit of work in the field, it represents a range of creative styles and strategic approaches created for persuading audiences about transit decisions and their implied place in the livability of a community. The commentary is a subjective review of the creative approach.

2.5.1 Example 1: Toronto Transportation Commission, 2017

"We Move You" from the Toronto Transportation Commission uses the National Ballet of Canada to establish "movement" as a key concept in engaging audiences, especially new ridership. The campaign relied on a sophisticated audience engagement strategy in a progressive city known for support of the arts and sustainability, resulting in a crossover between the two lifestyle approaches. Feedback for the campaign included support from the art community, but negative feedback from body-positive groups. No public data is available on the success of the campaign to bring new riders to the TTC. Overall, the conceptual nature, while beautifully crafted, feels elitist and narrow. See Figure 2.1 for examples from the "We Move You" campaign.

Figure 2.1: We Move You Posters from Toronto Transportation Commission, 2017
Link: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ud2Osib5M0U

2.5.2 Example 2: City of Muenster Poster and Subsequent Iterations, 1991-2013

The conceptual nature of data visualization of driving impact has proven to be a successful approach to engaging audiences about the realities of different forms of transit. The city of Muenster, Germany, offered this poster in stations and in print (seen in Figure 2.2); the juxtaposition of energy and space usage for car driving, bus riding and bicycle riding clearly shows comparative realities. The Toronto Transportation Commission offered similar comparative notes in photo form and the results were made into a shareable GIF in 2013 (seen in Figure 2.3) that made the rounds of social media, as per an article in *The Atlantic* by Thompson (2013). In 2017, Australia's Cycling Promo Fund (cyclingpromotion.org) used the same comparative device to show the favorable impact of bicycle usage over car usage (seen in Figure 2.4). Visual evidence such as this is compelling as a strategic platform; the creative approach to this concept has not changed in three variations.
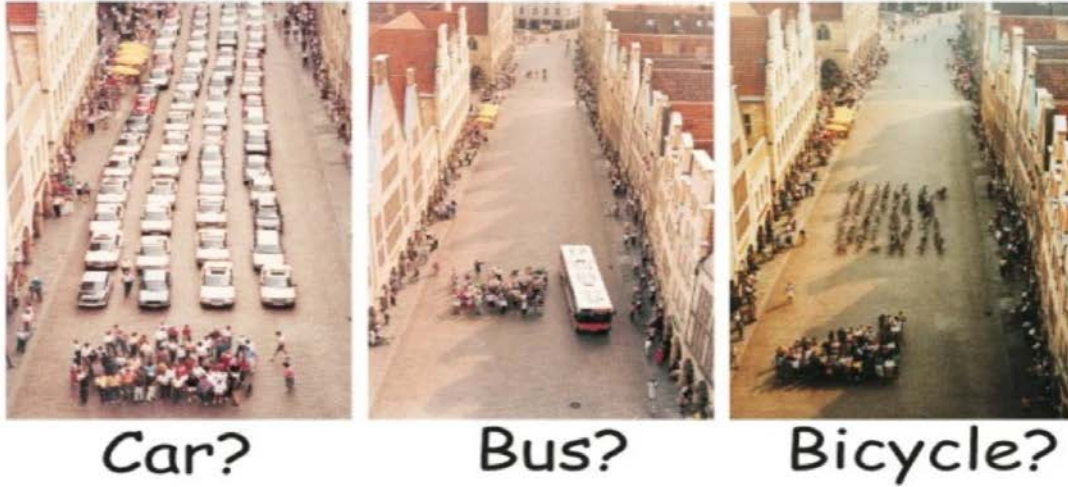
Figure 2.2: Transportation Poster Example from Muenster Planning Office, 2001
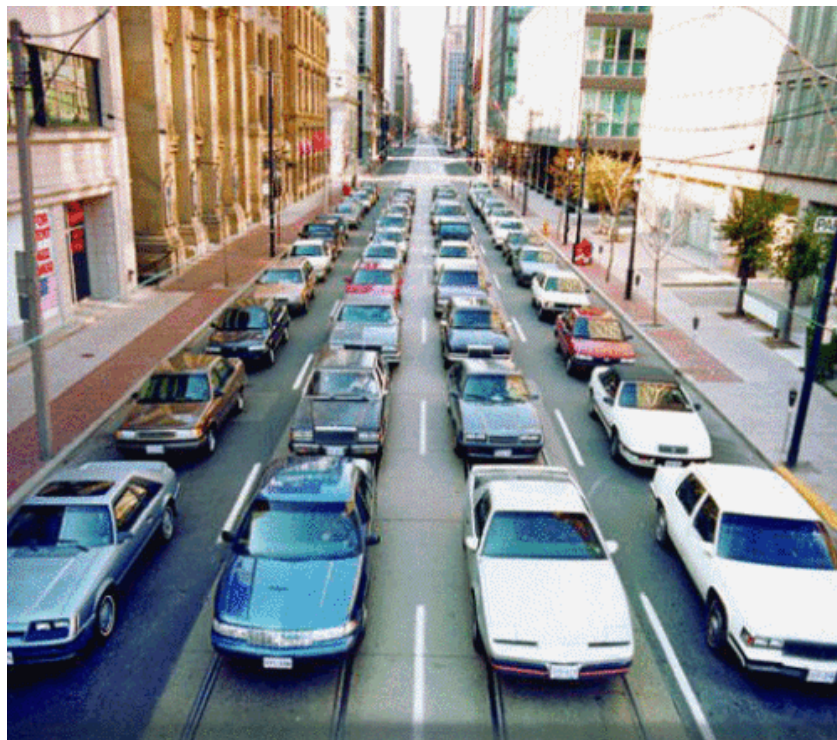
Figure 2.3: Toronto Transportation Commission, 2009, 2013
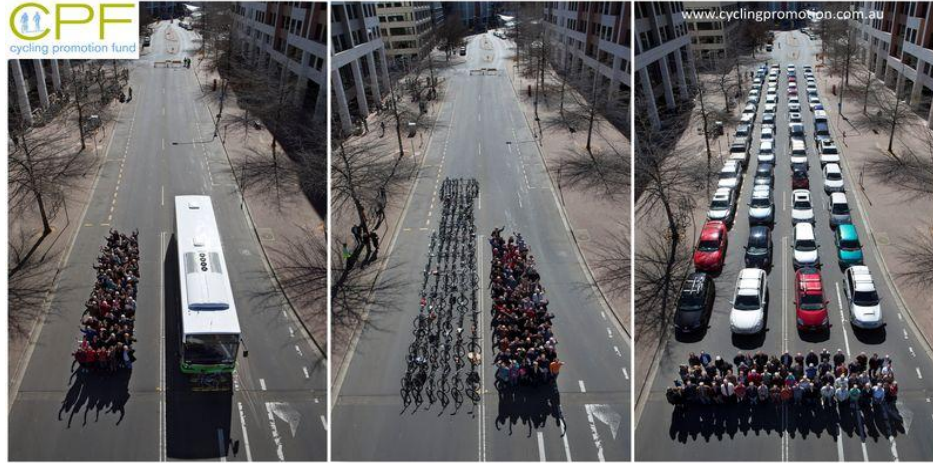
Figure 2.4: Transportation Messaging Example from Australia's Cycling Promo Fund

2.5.3   Example 3: Phoenix, AZ, Valley Metro, 2010

An interesting 2010 transit campaign example from Phoenix, AZ, proved to be successful, with data showing that ridership grew its year-over-year transit ridership by 5.1% (three times the 1.7% national average transit growth for that year). Valley Metro created a series of animated music videos performed by popular local bands to teach people the "how-tos" of riding buses and trains. WARC's (World Advertising Research Center) case study notes: "Leveraging each band's existing social network and news appeal, the campaign made a huge impact with minimal paid media (a $250,000 budget)." The strategy, developed after extensive primary research which included focus groups and rider intercepts, relied on a hyperlocal approach with the ability to engage an important new ridership and leverage social media in doing so. The creative approach of using popular local bands and vibrant, animated music videos created recognizable "heroes" as well as shareable content to engage the audience about simple issues such as how to buy a bus pass or how to transfer, demystifying ridership for the intended audience. The successful campaign won a Bronze EFFIE, an award for strategic effectiveness and success in a campaign. See Figure 2.5 for an example image from the "how-tos" campaign.

Figure 2.5: Valley Metro Transportation Promo Video Still Shot
Link: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K-CxDZIgWfg

2.5.4 Example 4: Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transit Authority (LA Metro), 2017

Nudd (2017) reports on the LA Metro ads used to promote anti-rudeness on transit. The campaign videos, directed by YouTube phenomenon Mike Diva, use bubble-gum colors and Japanese popular culture memes to promote kindness and enjoyment of ridership. Nudd underscores the visual lushness of the approach, placing it in a fantasy world that might seem unlikely for a government entity and placing the transit experience in a bizarre circumstance. One reviewer (Martin, 2017) commented that he'd never seen a state-funded PSA with such an entertaining aesthetic but wondered about cost. He notes:

> "As a heavy L.A. mass transit user myself, it can often be frustrating when a train is too far away, or a bus runs infrequently or off schedule. Also, let's be real, a lot of trains and buses smell like pee. And while this pee is the result of larger systemic issues which aren't all on the Metro department to solve, the quality of these videos did give me pause, wondering what kind of budget these PSAs had. Mike says that his production company is very good at stretching funds. 'Let's just say it was a lot cheaper than you'd think,' he said. And when you take into consideration the dollars necessary to build the new trains Los Angeles sorely needs, even a seemingly large PSA budget seems less significant."

The strategy of pop art-inspired platforms crafted in bubble-gum fantasy appealed to a minority of new riders. No public data exists on the success of the campaign. See Figure 2.6 for a static image of the video and link.

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Figure 2.6: Mike Diva-directed Videos for LA Metro, October 2017
Link to video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zIKsktVFRCk

2.6 PRELIMINARY MESSAGING RECOMMENDATIONS FROM LITERATURE AND CAMPAIGN REVIEW

The following section seeks to answer RQ1b: What insights and messaging recommendations can be developed from the review of relevant literature and previous campaigns? In the spring of 2015, The University of Oregon School of Journalism and Communication advertising department was asked to participate in a Sustainable Cities/TriMet project to develop strategic communication thinking about the Powell/Division corridor. A team of five students – including a project manager, two writers and two designers – worked as a small agency to develop a report on strategic and creative approaches to transit ridership for the area.

The team presented the report to TriMet leadership and Gresham city planners; the report was based on field research and a deep-dive literature and ethnographic review of the area. The report offered five themes for consideration for transit in the area: 1) Curation of gathering places was important to successful transit opportunities in the area; 2) Transit could help underscore the positive aspects of "living here" and empower riders through workspaces and public gardens; 3) Safety considerations should be built into transit decisions for bus stops, stations and walkways; 4) Pride in the area could be articulated through developing messages around the multicultural art emphasis of the area, using multiple languages for t-shirts, bus wraps, tickets and in-transit communication; 5) Trust and respect amongst the riders, the potential riders, the transit authorities and the transit employees could be addressed with town hall meetings, graphically recorded meetings and listening. The overall theme of the report was based on TriMet building a transparent reputation as a heroic entity, one that had the best intentions for riders, for families, for multiculturalism and for community. The report titled "The Eastside Blue Line Manifesto: Strategies for Building Community and Moving People on TriMet's Eastside Blue Line to Gresham" was presented in May 2015 to TriMet leadership. The detailed presentation explicates the five recommended themes summarized above. See Appendix A-1 for a copy of the report presentation.

3.0   SURVEY RESEARCH

To begin the strategic development of a speculative campaign for Portland, an online survey with adult participants (N=584) from 10 U.S. cities (oversampling from Portland) was conducted in 2016 as formative research. The insights from the survey results were then used as the basis for building strategy for a campaign in Portland.

3.1   BACKGROUND AND AIMS

Oregon is recognized as a national leader in improving transportation options and limiting urban sprawl. In the 42 years since Senate Bill 100 launched Oregon's land use planning program, these efforts have gone by different names: "reducing reliance on the automobile," "reducing vehicle miles traveled," "reducing greenhouse gas emissions from transportation," "compact, mixed-use, transit-oriented development," "smart growth," "sustainability" and "livability" to name a few. Despite these varying approaches to simply communicating the benefits of public transportation, there remain vast misperceptions of these efforts. We must better understand public perceptions in order to shift attitudes toward public transportation and, ultimately, change public behavior. The success of public transportation depends, we believe, upon public understanding of, and support for, livability. This research was designed to assess and understand how current non-transit riders perceive the concept of livability, and particularly the role that transportation options play in their perceptions of livability. The findings from this survey helped inform the development of creative communication strategies and targeting for the non-rider section of the public. Through the survey analysis the following research questions were addressed:

> RQ2a: What are non-transit riders' perceptions of the concept of livability, transit, and their engagement with transit decision-making?

> RQ2b: What strategic communication insights and messaging recommendations can be deducted from the survey findings?

3.2   METHODOLOGY

An online survey managed by the researchers was conducted among adult participants who were recruited nationwide from one of 10 cities selected for their comparative size and transportation infrastructure to Portland (i.e., Portland, Seattle, Las Vegas, Denver, Dallas, Detroit, Milwaukee, Oklahoma City, Memphis and Baltimore). Portland was oversampled for analysis purposes, with 28% of the final sample from Portland. At least 20 participants from each of the other cities were recruited as the goal was not to compare Portland with any one city but to gather data from a range of comparative cities for an aggregate comparison. Data was collected during October and November of 2016. Qualtrics, a leading survey company, was used as a panel company to recruit participants by making individuals who have expressed an interest in completing surveys aware of this research project and managing the eligibility parameters. Qualtrics, however, was not

involved in the design or execution of the study itself. The online questionnaire took approximately 10-15 minutes to complete. Participants had to live in one of the 10 cities listed above and be at least 18 years old. Additionally, to target an audience who are not regular public transportation riders, survey participants had to indicate that they had not ridden public transportation (e.g., a bus or light rail) at all in the past month. Multiple data quality checks were built into the data collection process, such as excluding anyone who spent less than one-third of the average survey duration (too fast of responders to be quality responses), excluding anyone who didn't pass either of two attention filter items and excluding anyone with non-legitimate open-ended responses (e.g., gibberish). Data was collected anonymously and with informed consent. This study was approved by the university's institutional review board.

3.3 PARTICIPANTS

The survey yielded a robust sample of non-transit users (N = 584), including 166 (28.4%) from Portland. Of the total respondents, 40.6% had never used any public transportation in their current city, 20.9% had used public transit once or twice in their current city, 13.7% had used public transportation 3-10 times in their current city, and 19.3% had used public transportation more than 10 times in their current city. Of those surveyed, 39.8% had close friends or family members who regularly use public transportation and 73.6% stated they drive themselves as their primary form of transportation to and from work. See Table 3.1 for sample characteristics (Note: This is not a representative sample. Although census data does exist for the city-wide populations, we could not find any available data that would allow us to compare our demographics to the census demographics of non-riders within each city. We did set a quota that at least 20% of the total respondents should select a race/ethnicity other than White to ensure some racial diversity within the sample).

Table 3.1: Survey Sample Characteristics (Total N=584)

Variable	n	%
City of residence		
Portland, OR	166	28.4%
Dallas, TX	96	16.4%
Detroit, MI	68	11.6%
Seattle, WA	67	11.5%
Las Vegas, NV	41	7.0%
Oklahoma City, OK	38	6.5%
Denver, CO	31	5.3%
Baltimore, MD	30	5.1%
Milwaukee, WI	27	4.6%
Memphis, TN	20	3.4%
Race, ethnicity*		
White/Caucasian	469	80.3%
Black/African American	53	9.1%
Hispanic/Latino	32	5.5%
Asian/Asian American	25	4.3%
American Indian/Alaskan Native	10	1.7%
Other	14	2.4%
Gender		
Female	387	66.3%
Male	139	23.8%
Transgender	1	.2%
Education		
High school graduate or less	130	22.3%
Some college	225	38.5%
College graduate	172	29.5%
Income		
Under $30,000	132	22.6%
$30,000-$50,000	145	24.8%
$50,000-$80,000	131	22.4%
More than $80,000	118	20.2%
	Mean	SD
Age	38.9	14.1

Note: Some numbers may not add up to N=584 because participants could select multiple race/ethnic categories or some participants declined to provide some demographic information.

3.4   MEASURES

Participants were asked questions about their transportation habits, opinions on public transportation, interest in learning more about public transportation and basic demographic items (see Appendix A-2 for survey items). Most measures were Likert scales, which are described within the results for each item.

3.5   ANSWERING RQ2A: NON-TRANSIT RIDERS' PERCEPTIONS

3.5.1 Non-transit riders' perceptions of the concept of livability

One matrix-formatted Likert-type item within the survey asked participants, "How important is it to you, personally, that your city offers each of the following?" on a scale of 1-5 from "Not At All Important" to "Extremely Important." Participants were then presented 12 livability-related concepts with an emphasis on transportation gathered from the literature review stage and also based on the expertise of the planning and public policy researchers consulting on this grant. The 12 livability-related concepts were (1) Ability to walk or bike to neighborhood schools, parks, shops, restaurants, etc.; (2) Affordable housing; (3) Short commute times; (4) Well-maintained streets for commuting; (5) Public gathering spaces, such as outdoor parks and indoor community centers; (6) Ample street parking; (7) Bicycle paths and/or bike commuting lanes; (8) Public transit in the form of buses; (9) Public transit in the form of light rail; (10) Good opportunities for employment; (11) Protection from crime; and (12) Protection for the environment. See Figure 3.1 for descriptive results from this item.
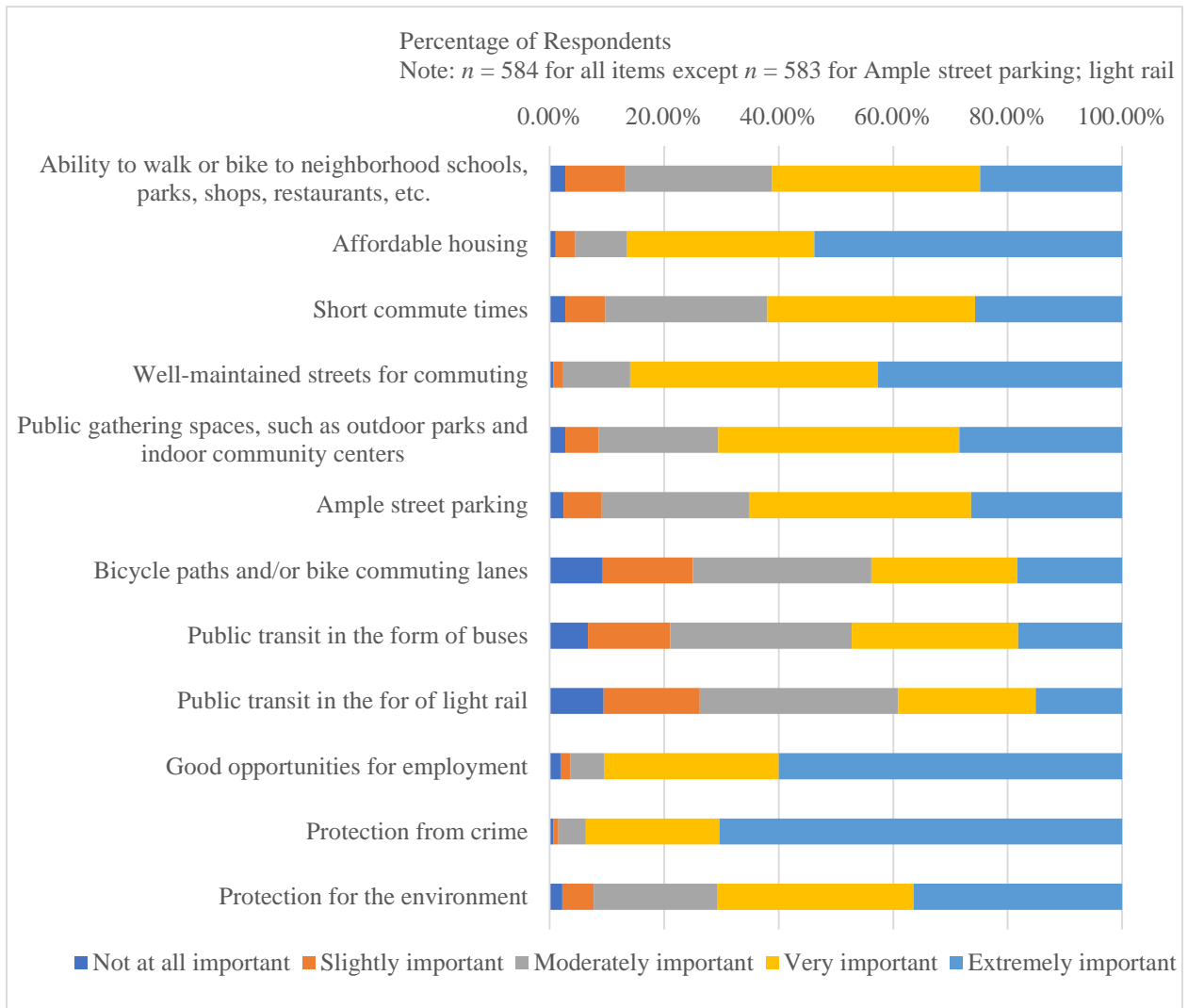
Figure 3.1: Importance of Livability-related Offerings

18

Insights: Public transportation options are of relatively low importance to non-riders as something their city offers. For non-riders, protection from crime, employment opportunities and affordable housing are of top importance. Transportation system planners and communicators should seek to draw connections among priority issues and public transportation.

3.5.2 Non-transit riders' perceptions of transit

Perceptions about public transportation and transit specifically were assessed through a series of questions. A semantic differential that asked, "When you think about public transportation what perceptions come to mind?" with 10 opposing statements was asked with a 1-5 scale between each set of opposing statements. Some statements were reversed-scored and have been aligned for report presentation. See Figure 3.2 for public transportation perceptions.
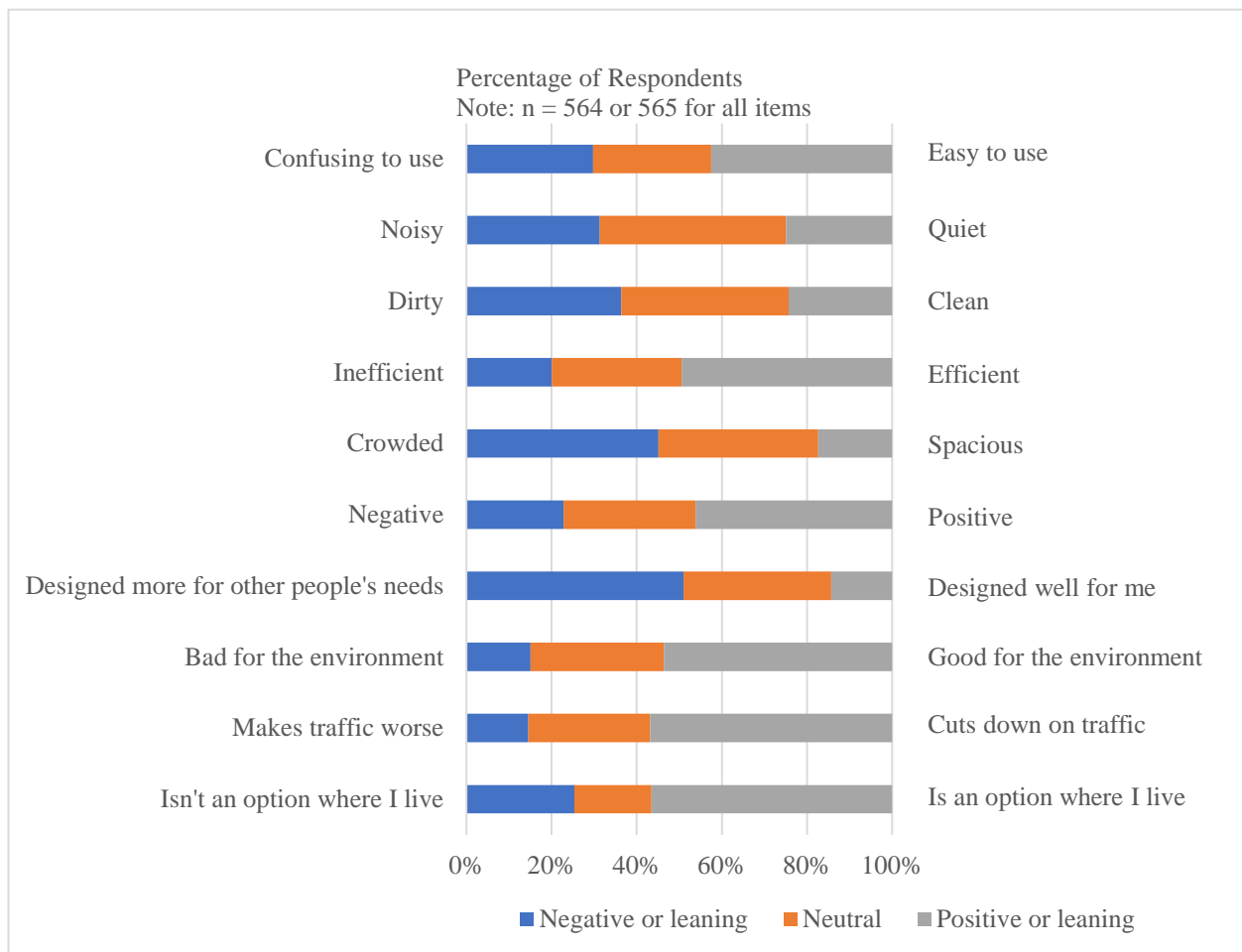
Figure 3.2: Semantic Differential of Public Transportation Perceptions

Insights: Non-riders recognize the positive aspects of public transportation as cutting down on traffic, being good for the environment and being efficient. Non-riders also tend to believe that public transportation is designed more for other people's needs compared to their own, and is crowded, dirty and noisy. Public transit communication professionals should seek to counter

these negative stereotypes through real examples (e.g., photos, testimonials) from people similar to the non-riders.

3.5.3 Non-riders' perceptions of who benefits from transit

Three items assessed perceptions of who benefits from transit under the larger question prompt of, "How well do the following statements reflect your opinions about public transit?" Response options were in a Likert-type scale 1-5 from "Does not describe my feelings" to "Clearly describes my feelings." The majority of non-riders were between "Moderately describes my feelings" and "Mostly describes my feelings" for items reflecting that people other than them benefited from public transportation: "Public transportation is a good thing for other people, besides me" (M = 3.56, SD = 1.23); "Public transportation mostly benefits the people who ride it" (M = 3.43, SD = 1.24); and "Public transit also benefits people who don't ride it" (M = 2.97, SD = 1.29).

Insights: Non-riders mostly don't see a personal benefit of public transportation. Transportation communicators should emphasize the benefits to non-riders, such as less road congestion, less emissions, how transit helps people you work with get around, etc.

3.5.4 Non-riders' reasons for not using transit

A matrix-formatted Likert-type item within the survey asked participants, "How much do any of these reasons apply to your decision not to use public transit more often?" on a scale of 1-5 from "Does not describe my feelings" to "Clearly describes my feelings." Participants were then presented six common reasons based on the earlier literature review plus one response labeled "another reason (please describe)" that provided a text box. See Table 3.2 for a summary of the results of the reported reasons for not using transit items. [Note: Of the 439 people who indicated "Another reason," only 216 filled in a text response with most responses being similar or duplicative of the other options (e.g., "inconvenient"). The most popular "Another reason" responses that weren't duplicates related to people expressing that they have and/or prefer to drive their own car (n = 29) or expressing a concern or annoyance about the behavior of other passengers (e.g., "weird people" or "too many homeless") (n = 21)].

Table 3.2: Reasons for Not Using Public Transit

	Mean	SD	n
Public transit is not convenient for me	3.36	1.39	548
Another reason (please describe):	3.02	1.73	439
Public transit is too slow	2.85	1.38	546
Public transit is too crowded	2.64	1.33	547
Public transit doesn't seem safe	2.49	1.38	547
Public transit is too dirty	2.49	1.33	548
Public transit is too noisy	2.2	1.29	548

Insights: Inconvenience was cited as the number one reason non-riders didn't use transit. Communication campaigns might include messages promoting self-efficacy in using transit. Future research should consider if there are some routes or circumstances that are seen as more

convenient (e.g., would not ride to work but would ride to a sporting event) and promote use of transit among what is perceived as convenient routes to encourage future use.

3.5.5   Experience and support for public transit

Two different items assessed non-riders' experience and support for public transportation. The first item asked, "How would you rate your overall experience using public transit in your current city" on a five-point Likert-type scale from "Extremely negative" to "Extremely positive." On average, respondents had between a neutral and somewhat positive experience with transit in their city (M = 3.43, SD = .98, n = 313) (Note: The low number of responses for this item reflects that most people who had never ridden transit skipped this question).

A second item asked participants, "How would you rate your support for public transit as a system? Meaning you support it and think positively of it regardless of whether you use it or not." with a five-point Likert-type scale from "Extremely unsupportive" to "Extremely supportive." On average, respondents were somewhat supportive of public transit (M = 3.97, SD = .97, n = 549).

Insights: Non-riders are generally supportive of public transit. Communication planners should not focus on building general support as the main goal, as general support is already prevalent.

3.5.6   Non-riders' engagement with transit decision-making

Four separate questions related to transportation policy engagement, decision-making and also support for transportation funding. Participants were asked, "How aware are you of decisions being made by city officials regarding public transportation?" using a Likert-type scale 1-5 from "Not aware at all" to "Very aware." Participants had a low awareness for decision-making about public transportation (M = 1.91, SD = .99, n = 540). Participants were then asked, "How likely are you to provide input to city officials about public transit?" using a Likert-type scale 1-5 from "Extremely unlikely" to "Extremely likely." Participants averaged close to "somewhat unlikely" to provide input (M = 2.33, SD = 1.14, n = 540).

The next two items sought to understand participants' positions on funding transportation and how it would impact their lives. First, participants were asked, "If my city spent LESS money on public transit, my quality of life would be…?" with a Likert-type scale 1-5 from "Negatively affected" to "Positively affected." Participants averaged closest to the middle response of "unaffected" if less money was spent on transit (M = 2.67, SD = .87, n = 552). Next, participants were asked, "If my city spent MORE money on public transit, my quality of life would be…?" on a Likert-type scale 1-5 from "Negatively affected" to "Positively affected." Participants again averaged closest to the middle response of "unaffected" (M = 3.37, SD = .91, n = 552).

Insights: The majority of non-riders are quite unaware of transportation policy decisions in their city and are not likely to give input on transportation policy. Regardless, non-riders are supportive, on average, of public transit. However, most non-riders think their lives would be mostly unaffected by reductions or increases in transit funding. Transportation communicators

should take advantage of a generally supportive non-riding public to highlight the benefits of transit funding and make these issues more salient to non-riders.

3.6   COMPARATIVE RESULTS AND INSIGHTS

The following information and charts highlight the comparative results and summarize insights. Comparative differences among demographic groups, such as by gender, age, income and race, were largely insignificant. Higher education was generally associated with more positive transit beliefs and support. Significant differences were found, however, on some questions based on (1) having a close friend/family who regularly uses transit; (2) having rode transit at least once in their current city compared to never riding; and (3) living in Portland vs. any other city. [Note: Independent samples t-tests were conducted to examine the comparisons. If Levene's Test for equality of variance was significant (i.e., unequal variance between groups), then results are reported from SPSS output under "equal variance not assumed"].

See Table 3.3 for significant comparative results for having a close friend or family member who regularly uses transit. Non-riders who know a close friend or family member who regularly uses transit had more positive attitudes about transit, believed transit benefits non-riders, thought their quality of life would be positively affected by increases in transit spending, were more supportive of public transit as a system, were more aware of transit policy decisions and were more likely to give input about transit to city officials than those who didn't know anyone who used transit regularly.

Insight: Knowing transit users has a positive effect on transit attitudes, beliefs, knowledge and support. Communicators should consider ways to encourage current transit riders to talk about how they regularly rely on transit with their friends and family.

Table 3.3: Independent Sample *t*-tests, Comparing Non-Riders Who Know a Close Friend or Family Member Who Regularly Uses Transit to Non-Riders Who Don't

Know someone, *n* = 215; Don't know anyone, *n* = 252; Not sure or skipped item (not included in analysis), *n* = 117.

Question Topic	Sample	M	SD	t-statistic	df
Public transit is efficient	Know Someone	3.65	1.07	4.40***	464
	Don't know	3.18	1.24		
Public transit is positive	Know Someone	3.49	1.19	2.60*	465
	Don't know	3.20	1.21		
Public transit is designed well for my needs	Know Someone	2.54	1.16	2.96**	465
	Don't know	2.22	1.15		
Other people, besides me, rely on public transit	Know Someone	4.13	1.00	3.80***	465
	Don't know	3.72	1.30		
Public transit also benefits people who don't ride it	Know Someone	3.27	1.20	4.32***	463.8
	Don't know	2.76	1.34		
If my city spent more on public transit my quality of life would be positively affected	Know Someone	3.53	.87	3.17**	465
	Don't know	3.26	.94		
Public transit is not convenient for me	Know Someone	3.20	1.40	-2.43*	465
	Don't know	3.52	1.40		
Support for public transit as a system	Know Someone	4.14	.95	3.87***	465
	Don't know	3.79	1.00		
Aware of public transit policy decisions	Know Someone	2.06	1.02	2.71**	465
	Don't know	1.81	.97		
Likely to give input to city officials about public transit	Know Someone	2.52	1.17	3.40**	465
	Don't know	2.15	1.12		

Note: ***p < .001, **p < .01, *p < .05.

See Table 3.4 for significant comparative results for non-riders who have ridden transit in their current city at least once. Non-riders who have ridden transit in their current city at least once had more positive attitudes about transit, believed transit benefits non-riders, thought their quality of life would be positively affected by increases in transit spending and were more supportive of public transit as a system than non-riders who have never used their city's transit.

Insight: There may be some benefit to encouraging non-riders to try transit, even just once.

Table 3.4: Independent Sample *t*-tests, Comparing Non-riders Who Have Never Ridden Transit in Their City to Non-riders Who Have Ridden Transit at Least Once in Their City

Never, *n* = 237; Once+, *n* = 315; Skipped item (not included in analysis), *n* = 32.

Question Topic	Sample	M	SD	t-statistic	df
Public transit is efficient	Never	3.27	1.24	-2.26*	549
	Once+	3.50	1.15		
Public transit is positive	Never	3.15	1.23	-3.44**	550
	Once+	3.51	1.19		
Public transit is good for the environment	Never	3.43	1.14	-2.98**	550
	Once+	3.72	1.11		
Public transit cuts down on traffic	Never	3.48	1.16	-2.22*	550
	Once+	3.70	1.12		
Other people, besides me, rely on public transit	Never	3.71	1.33	-3.18**	432.5
	Once+	4.04	1.03		
Public transit also benefits people who don't ride it	Never	2.78	1.29	-3.06**	550
	Once+	3.12	1.26		
If my city spent more on public transit my quality of life would be positively affected	Never	3.25	.93	-2.53*	550
	Once+	3.45	.89		
Support for public transit as a system	Never	3.77	1.03	-4.24***	467.5
	Once+	4.13	.90		

Note: ***p < .001, **p < .01, *p < .05.

See Table 3.5 for significant comparative results for non-riders who live in Portland. Non-riders who live in Portland were more likely to think public transit is good for the environment, believe that transit benefits non-riders and cite the slowness of transit as a reason to not use it than non-riders who live in other cities.

Insight: There are few differences on the study variables that are unique to Portland non-riders. There seems to be room for improvement in the perception of slow travel times for Portland non-riders. This may be an important barrier to address in communication materials.

Table 3.5: Independent Sample *t*-tests, Comparing Non-Riders Who Live in Portland vs. All Other Cities

Other cities, *n* = 389-402; Portland, *n* = 157-163. Sample size varies since participants were allowed to skip items.

Question Topic	Sample	M	SD	t-statistic	df
Public transit is good for the environment	Other cities	3.47	1.17	-4.20***	349.2
	Portland	3.88	1.00		
Public transit also benefits people who don't ride it	Other cities	2.88	1.26	-2.63**	553
	Portland	3.19	1.32		
Public transit is too slow (as a reason for not riding it)	Other cities	2.76	1.38	-2.21*	544
	Portland	3.05	1.37		

Note: ***p < .001, **p < .01, *p < .05.

3.7 SURVEY INSIGHTS OVERVIEW

3.7.1 About our target public

The survey focused on non-riders. Results indicate that the non-rider public tends to lean towards what we consider an "apathetic public." That is, people who are aware that transit exists, but mostly don't see transit as relevant or important to them. The current frame (way of thinking

about) transportation for this apathetic public is pragmatic and rider-focused; essentially, transit is a service for other people that gets other people from point A to point B. This current frame doesn't take into consideration how transit is part of a system that does a lot more than just move other people between places and serves a lot more people than just the riders. Our apathetic public would be likely to say, "Transit serves other people, but not me." They may even feel like they are subsidizing a service they don't use. Our public doesn't have strong opinions against transit (because they support others who need it); however, at times they might feel somewhat negative about paying for something they don't use. This apathetic public is likely to be passively resistant to pro-transit messaging, such that they are unlikely to pay attention to it or take the time to consider its relevance in their lives. The benefits and consequences of a public transportation system as a component of a livable city are unseen to this public. Our public doesn't see the benefits of having a good transit system as relevant to them (because they don't need to ride it). Our public doesn't see the consequences of a poor transit system as relevant to them either (because again, they weren't going to ride it anyway).

Within the large non-rider public exists smaller segments, non-riders who know someone close to them who uses transit and non-riders who have ridden transit in their city at least once. These segments of the non-rider public have less apathetic tendencies towards public transportation than the non-rider public as a whole and represent the potential to shift other non-riders to these more engaged positions.

3.7.2   Suggested messaging goal

To move apathetic non-riders from a "transit is for others" frame to a "the transit system benefits more than riders and makes my city livable" frame.

3.7.3   Theory-supported messaging ideas

Three messaging ideas were supported by the survey findings and relevant academic theories:

Humanize transit. Persuasion theories suggest one way to make a person feel more connected (increase personal relevance) is to use exemplars of similar others (Zillman, 2006), showing examples of how this affects people similar to them. Narrative exemplars are especially effective at this. When people have little to no experience with an issue, an exemplar can serve as a proxy for experience (which is a powerful heuristic) (El-Khoury and Shafer, 2016; Oatley, 2002). This idea is supported by survey findings that demonstrated non-riders with even a small amount of experience with transit were more supportive and had more personal relevance beliefs associated with transit than non-riders with no experience.

Apply social judgement theory (SJT). Individuals accept or reject messages to the extent that they perceive the messages as corresponding to their internal anchors (attitudes/beliefs) and as being ego-involved (affecting the person's self-concept) (Sherif, Sherif and Nebergall, 1965). The new frame would need to be close/consistent with their current beliefs/attitudes on transit and/or on livability. SJT supports the idea that incorporating relevant aspects of the target public's self (e.g., social, cultural, etc.) within the messaging – helping this public to see how the new transit frame reinforces their self-concept (O'Keefe, 1990).

Sidestep resistance to persuasion. Instead of trying to make them reject their current frame (which they would resist), try packaging the new frame message as an educational message, news or a celebration of successes (Knowles and Linn, 2004). The idea would be to align the new frame with their old frame, not making them reject their old frame but instead seeing this new frame as an extension of it. Letting the target public know that they aren't wrong that transit benefits others (riders) in meaningful ways and simultaneously helping the target public to understand transit also benefits them (non-riders) in meaningful ways.

4.0   THE PROCESS OF DEVELOPING STRATEGY FOR CREATIVE COMMUNICATION

This final component of our preproduction formative research was a creative process. This component was aware of the conclusions from the survey, and set out to both incorporate the survey insights and discover other insights from a fresh perspective. As previously mentioned, messaging recommendations are presented separately for each component of preproduction research conducted. These recommendations overlap and diverge in some instances; production research is needed to test which recommendations are appropriate for implementation.

The University of Oregon School of Journalism and Communication undergraduate advertising program has demonstrated success in developing strategy, insights and creative work for a range of clients. Project leaders gathered a team of top undergraduate student talent to work in conjunction with this grant. The purpose of this creative project was to review platform principles of livability for Portland as outlined in the literature review and research study goals, and then develop a possible creative proof of concept for key ideas. Though not a true extension of the research in formal understanding, this creative project was developed as corollary to the research study presented in this report and as a possible campaign platform to complement those findings. Therefore, this section describes the creative process of the team, connections to the work presented in this study and a strategic platform that grew from their work.

4.1   OVERVIEW

The creative project team consisted of two strategists, two writers and an art director, all in their junior or senior year of study, each showing understanding and mastery of their field of study. A professor and co-PI served as the creative director. All undergraduate students had experience in developing solutions through the strategic process and all had interest in sustainability and livability. In 2015, a similar student team undertook a campaign to consider transit messaging for Gresham, OR (Appendix A-1). Their interest inspired this team to pursue this next phase. Their ideas for this project are based on informal research and professional approach. The process does not follow standard research protocols and is, in fact, the informal discovery process often used by advertising agency creative teams; the undergraduate students relied on discovery and immersive techniques to develop these concepts.

This process follows the outline and key components in Figure 4.1. The team conducted informal research of historical, cultural and scholarly information, as well as reviews of public documents to develop a context of place. As primary research was established for this project, the creative team considered the findings and framework used. The team keyed in on concepts such as those presented in Figure 3.2, which show positive and negative perceptions of transit. This information and these influences were used to develop a Creative Brief (Appendix A-3) showing strategic insights and problem-solving approaches to engagement for ridership.
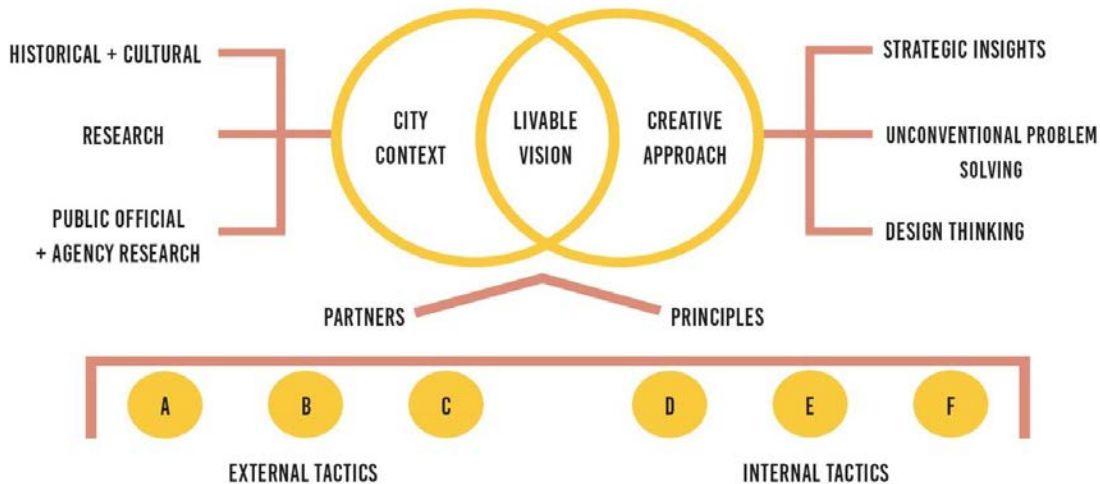
Figure 4.1: Mapping the Creative Process

Figure 4.1 attempts to visualize the creative process used by showing how the contextual information about the city of Portland and its transportation issues connect to the conceptual creative approach to develop the idea of a "livable vision" about transit issues. This vision can then offer external opportunities (e.g., messages, audience strategy and development of a "movement" for transit) and internal tactics (e.g., training of transit employees about the vision, building an organizational culture around themes). For this project, the focus is on recommendations for external tactic development.

4.2 PROBLEM FRAMING

4.2.1 Background

The city is a complex system and making improvements to it is a complex task. Using Portland as a case study, the creative team explored what makes a space livable and crafted design solutions around these findings. After reading through extensive research showing a strong correlation between public transit and livability, the team conducted informal discovery sessions to understand what people need in their city. With transportation as its focus, the creative team sought to clarify motivations for and barriers to transit use, identified a target audience and worked to craft creative solutions that would get people to use public transit. The main insight driving this creative work was that transit advertising must convey the authentic voices and power of transit users, rather than that of transit agencies.

The student team developed its own approach to discovery based on the question, "What does livability mean to you?" The first approach involved understanding the definition and scope of the phrase "livability." Synthesized institutional research yields seven key standards used to assess livability. Each of these factors exists on a spectrum; an individual can exist at different levels on each spectrum. These factors include engagement, opportunity, proximity, housing, transit, environment and health. Though these factors are deeply connected, the student creative team was interested in which of these was of highest priority to people living in urban areas.

In a series of more than 50 intercept conversations on the streets of Northwest, Southwest, Southeast and Northeast Portland, as well as in downtown Gresham, the creative team asked people at bus stops or near transit lines, "What does livability mean to you?" The discovery approach was conversational and informal. This approach is often used common to the development of creative ideas. These conversations were not recorded; instead, conversations served as quality listening and observation time with stakeholders. After gathering the responses to open-ended query, the creative team found "mobility" to be the most common response. Interviewees defined mobility as a combination of two key standards of livability: transit and proximity. Forty-nine percent of those interviewed mentioned urban congestion, transportation and the need for public transit. These conversations were direct, conversational and for creative concept development only; therefore, no probing questions were asked. Often in the development of ideas, strategists and creatives immerse themselves in the subject in place, talking to people and observing the audience and potential stakeholders. This process encourages the development of strategic insights and conceptual connections in more robust ways than a research brief.

4.2.2   Exploration

As in-place conversations pointed to feelings of mobility and immobility being key emotional drivers for Portland residents' perceptions of livability, the creative team turned to leveraging these emotions to encourage public transit use. Via strategic communications methods, the team developed audience personas for three types of riders: The Captive Rider, The Choice Rider and – new to the discussion of perceived audience – The Green Rider. The creative team then suggested an evolved brand voice for TriMet, Portland's transit agency, that would work across these audiences as well as sample executions to highlight how this new brand voice might live in the world.

4.2.3   Inspirations

To guide and inspire the development of strategic communications, the creative team developed a creative manifesto defining livability. The manifesto reads:

Livability (n) – The proposition that a city can and should work better. An idea that encompasses individual experiences and journeys, each cutting unique paths and merging to form a collective identity. This aggregate quality of life depends on purposeful infrastructure and the institutions and community that maintain it.

4.3   STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT

The process of developing strategy leading to strong creative ideas leverages background immersion insights to develop concepts around human truth and audience understanding. As a team develops this strategy statement, decisions are based on specific data, supported messaging opportunities and intuition. In this case, three messaging opportunities (3.7.3 above) grew from the project survey data: 1) Craft messages that humanize transit as a powerful force in daily life, in much the same way Valley Metro (Example 2.5.3 above) did with local bands and landmarks; 2) Apply social judgment theory to build messages that are empowering and based on personal

judgments and beliefs; and 3) Sidestep the resistance to persuasion by letting the selected audience extend their own thinking rather than be persuaded to believe or accept something out of their frame. These messaging opportunities paralleled the undergraduate team's development of key concepts. The 2016 team viewed these as opportunities to develop strategy and creative approaches with these themes in mind.

4.3.1   Tone

Based on insights from intercept conversations and guided by social judgment theory that identify mobility as the most important factor in livability for urban residents, the creative team decided that one crucial factor in creating messages for a transit agency is emphasizing how public transit empowers individual mobility. Instead of using frames that focus on collective good or environmental benefits, messaging must communicate how transit aids in personal mobility. All creative executions demonstrate how individuals have agency over their own mobility, rather than highlighting the usual talking points of transit agencies, such as statistics about the efficiency of transit systems.

4.3.2   Understanding audience

The team's audience descriptions go beyond the usual binary of describing riders as either "captive" or "choice" to include an emerging category of rider: The Green Rider. The team developed this rider persona as a crucial player in creating a long-term culture of ridership among people with the ability to drive. The team identified reaching and expanding the base of Green Riders as a key objective of strategic and creative communication efforts for transit agencies. In terms of the goal stated in 3.7.2 above – to move this public from a "transit is for others" frame to a "the transit system benefits more than riders and makes my city livable" frame – the Green Rider concept fulfills the strategic direction of the research.

Strategic development reviewed these two classifications of ridership identified in previous understanding of transit riders before keying in on the Green Rider. The Captive Rider is a transit user who cannot drive, cannot afford a car or both. This is the person most dependent on public transportation. Though they ride out of need, they are the most loyal and consistent user of public transit. The Choice Rider owns a car but chooses to use public transit. The Choice Rider must be convinced to take public transit, not only when it is most convenient but as an ingrained daily practice. Accomplishing this decreases city congestion and the cost of ridership per person and reduces bus stigma.

But it is the Green Rider, a new classification that emerged from the creative process as a powerful opportunity for increased ridership. Two insights support this new classification of rider. First, Portland's affinity for "green thinking" connected to stated needs of increased mobility provide an inviting platform for framing this mindset. By framing the need in terms of supporting a social movement, considerable opportunity arises for optimistic social identity messages. Second, positive messages would be developed that encourage secondary audiences – people who might not consider themselves part of that movement – to identify in that way. Simply stated: Messages that key in on, "I didn't realize that wanting mobility and efficiency made me 'green'" invite a set of heretofore untargeted riders and give them actionable

information and framing about livable practices. The Green Rider may be described as follows: The Green Rider can drive and might even be able to afford a car but often chooses not to own one. They may be considering giving up car ownership. It is this rider that research and subsequent strategic insight points to as the most lucrative opportunity for transit ridership growth in Portland.

The Green Rider is most likely to have positive opinions of public transit because they neither feel trapped like the Captive Rider, nor are they inclined to start driving again like the Choice Rider. Green Riders range from young professionals who trade their four-doors for fixies (a popular bicycle among urban riders because of its simple fixed-gear design) to urban retirees who realize the practicality of transit. Seminal to this argument is the growing number of young people swapping car keys for bus passes: the number of high school seniors with driver's licenses dropped nearly 15% in the last 20 years. Convincing transit messaging based on a strategy of empowerment, crafted with a powerful creative concept, has the power to drastically expand ridership among this audience. The stronger the perception of the transit system by this audience, the higher the increase in people who choose not to buy cars and the faster the Green-Rider movement snowballs. This, in turn, is an opportunity to increase funding for transit via policy and political visibility, helping the cycle of transit empowerment continue.

The Green Rider is the audience to engage; one that fits with the goal of this project and aligns with multiple insights from research, including being more persuadable due to listening to empowerment messages because of personal belief systems.

4.3.3   Creative strategic opportunities

The examples offered in section 2.5 show a range of creative approaches that have been undertaken with different audiences in mind. The Valley Metro, the data visualization in Muenster and the Gresham report provide valid success stories for further consideration. A strong creative team of writers, art directors and producers would use these insights to build a system of connected messages in multiple media with intent to inform, provoke interest and be memorable. Social media, engaging video and out-of-home installations and experiences could underscore the message, connecting this cohort to specific places of engagement.

Using these insights and examples as a starting point for discussion, creative concepts for the Green Rider strategy could develop three key platforms:

1) EMPOWERMENT: The Green Rider can be persuaded through stories of empowerment that explain the power of mobility without driving a car to work each day. The Powell/Division Corridor moves both young professionals and community members in the area. Empowerment narratives use heroic and likeable characters, interesting local landmarks and events and interesting stories about freedom from driving. The Valley Metro campaign is a good example that used empowerment with local characters, compelling music and engaging stories. The animation craft made this likeable.

2) PRACTICALITY AND SELF-EFFICACY: The Green Rider profile establishes that these potential riders believe in sustainable solutions and their own ability to address the problems of higher gas prices, higher carbon emissions and crowded highways. The

practical nature of "this scenario is better for me and the environment" than this alternative one lends itself to strong visual data comparisons, as in the Muenster and Toronto comparative example in 2.5.2. Self-efficacy theories within the Green Rider narrative suggest these riders believe in their own power to solve problems for themselves and for the environment.

3) HEROISM: The Green Rider could be cast as part of a hero culture, bringing TriMet along as part of an engaged way of living and working in the new realities of 21st century transit and community. Tactics might include TriMet offering shared workspaces at transit hubs, community gardens and workout centers as part of Green-Rider stations at Intel and other large employers that would be heroic partners in increasing ridership and transit usage.

The next steps in developing creative platforms would be building scripts, key characters, visual design and style guides using individual or blended approaches from these platforms.

4.4 CREATIVE PROCESS RECOMMENDATIONS

From this strategy development, three recommendations for campaign development to increase transit ridership are offered.

First, using livability as a key concept has strong creative implications for many audience segments, but especially for those riders who believe in their own ability to increase their quality of life. Livability gives conceptual platforms such as quality of life, walkability and access to pedestrian-oriented recreation and commerce, and increased economic development. Livability also has implications for long-term policymaking around transit decisions in a community.

Second, a review of selected public transit campaigns shows a range of strategy and creative approaches. Strong opportunities exist in developing message strategy around personal and community heroism, local characters and landmarks, personal empowerment and visual data. Often, less strategic approaches show a tendency for off-message approaches that play more to creative reward than to audience engagement. Creative craft should have strong strategy at its core; that is, craft should be beautiful and engaging while encouraging a strong audience profile to action.

Third, the Green Rider profile offered in this project poses a strong opportunity for developing scalable messages about transit to develop a city ethos and expand the number of Portlanders who consider themselves part of a solution. Demographic data shows millennials foregoing car purchases and driving in major cities; baby boomers also show trends of understanding the benefits of going driverless. The Green Rider profile suggests that empowering these cohorts about personal freedom and possibility could be more successful than talking to Captive Rider cohorts who take transit because they have to. Creative opportunities exist in three conceptual areas: 1) empowerment of the Green Rider through personal freedom and environmental leadership; 2) appeals through practicality and self-efficacy about transit decisions; and 3) narratives about personal and organizational community heroism.

Subsequent projects might explore the possibility of the Green Rider profile and the power of this growing cohort. Further review of livability and transit themes are needed to understand new urban realities and to avoid issues of gentrification as transit opportunities are made available. Studies concerning the marketing of transit could develop rationale for policymakers' investment in strategic communication campaigns that develop successful and engaging messages. Similarly, follow-up creative and tactical projects could roll out multimedia messages crafted around engaging new ridership; social media, engaging video and out-of-home installations and experiences could be used to underscore the message.

5.0 STRENGTHS, LIMITATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

5.1   STRENGTHS AND LIMITATIONS

This research project is strengthened by an approach that included qualitative and quantitative research as well as a creative process more typically seen in the professional world. The research included participants from Portland and comparable cities around the U.S. A strength of this study is the multitude of testable recommendations that are drawn from the variety of research and creative techniques applied during the project. Another strength of this study is the inclusion of interdisciplinary scholars and students who each contributed a unique perspective on the issue.

A key limitation, however, is that the recommendations for audience targeting and messaging, while mostly complementary, are also divergent in some respects. For example, recommendations from survey research identified potential segments among the non-riding public as non-riders who know a close friend or relative who regularly uses transit and also current non-riders who have ridden at least once before; whereas, the creative process identified a "Green Rider" segment. Potential audience segmentation should be further explored through production research testing messaging outcomes among these audiences. Another important limitation to note is that none of the methods used in this project sampled participants in a way that is generalizable to the larger population. Production testing should also incorporate methods that will allow findings to be generalizable among the populations of interest.

5.2   CONCLUSIONS

The preproduction formative research conducted for this project resulted in a creative presentation to TriMet (see Appendix A-1) and several audience and messaging recommendations that can be tested through production research.

The formative research that included an extensive literature review revolving around livability and transportation as well as studying previous transit promotion communication campaigns yielded several pragmatic messaging recommendations. These recommendations focused on five themes: 1) Curation of gathering places was important to successful transit opportunities in the area; 2) Transit could help underscore the positive aspects of "living here" and empower riders through workspaces and public gardens; 3) Safety considerations should be built into transit decisions for bus stops, stations and walkways; 4) Pride in the area could be articulated through developing messages around the multicultural art emphasis of the area, using multiple languages for t-shirts, bus wraps, tickets and in-transit communication; 5) Trust and respect amongst the riders, the potential riders, the transit authorities and the transit employees could be addressed with town hall meetings, graphically recorded meetings and listening. The recommendations pointed to TriMet building a transparent reputation as a heroic entity, one that had the best intentions for riders, for families, for multiculturalism and for community.

The survey portion of the formative research sampled from nine cities comparable to Portland, and also oversampled Portland residents. The online survey screened for adults that were "non-

riders," such that they hadn't ridden public transportation within the last month. Based on the survey results the overall messaging goal of moving apathetic non-riders from a "transit is for others" frame to a "the transit system benefits more than riders and makes my city livable" frame was recommended. Audience targeting recommendations from the survey found that two types of non-riders were especially favorable on key transportation and livability measures: (1) non-riders who had a close friend or family member that regularly used public transportation and (2) non-riders who had ridden transit in their current city at least once in the past. Three key messaging recommendations were drawn from the survey results and are consistent with communication and persuasion theories: (1) Humanize transit by showing examples of how transit affects people similar to them; (2) Position the new frame (way of thinking) as consistent with non-riders self-concepts; and (3) Help non-riders to understand the meaningful benefits of transit to non-riders in a way that doesn't directly challenge their existing schema by making less of a direct appeal and more of an educational or celebration type of message.

The creative process focused on using livability as a key concept in any creative executions. Creative recommendations included developing message strategy around personal and community heroism, local characters and landmarks, personal empowerment and visual data. A key contribution of the creative process as a formative research component was the idea to consider targeting a "Green Rider" segment through: 1) empowerment of the Green Rider through personal freedom and environmental leadership; 2) appeals through practicality and self-efficacy about transit decisions; and 3) narratives about personal and organizational community heroism.

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APPENDIX A-1

THE EASTSIDE BLUE LINE MANIFESTO: STRATEGIES FOR BUILDING COMMUNITY AND MOVING PEOPLE ON TRIMET'S EASTSIDE BLUE LINE TO GRESHAM

the
eastside
BLUE LINE
MANIFESTO

The Eastside Blue Line Manifesto

*Strategies for Building Community and Moving People
on TriMet's Eastside Blue Line to Gresham*

Presented to

**TriMet Strategic Communication Leadership
& City of Gresham Partners
April 29, 2015**

Submitted by

**University of Oregon
School of Journalism and Communication
Creative Strategists**

A Team Dedicated to Solving Problems for People and Brands
in a Changing World

April 2015

UNIVERSITY OF **OREGON** | **School of Journalism and Communication**

In partnership with

SCI
Sustainable Cities Initiative

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" WORK FOR
SOMETHING BECAUSE IT IS GOOD,
NOT JUST BECAUSE IT HAS A CHANCE
TO SUCCEED. "

–VÁCLAV HAVEL

FORWARD
FOREWORD

How can TriMet better communicate with the people of Gresham and the Eastside with the goal of creating a better user experience?

With this question as our starting point, our team agreed on two things to move forward. First, this project would be about the people of Gresham and making life better through connections. Second, we realized this project is bigger than a few students working on a communications system. This project could have real impact on lives and communities.

Before we could consider solutions, we had to begin to understand the relationship between TriMet and the people of the Eastside, all the way to Gresham. After preliminary research, our team took trips to Gresham to immerse ourselves. We rode buses, walked streets, ate food, and asked questions. But more importantly, we listened, and we connected the dots.

Out of our research and experiences, we recognized that the people of the Eastside are as divided as they are diverse. This divide is to be recognized as an opportunity for TriMet to connect, lead, and unite the people of Gresham Oregon.

In this report we share our research, insights, and ideas in the hope of helping TriMet adopt an even stronger, more indispensable stance in the community. This will be the era that tells the enduring story of TriMet, how it worked beyond obligation to make a community stronger and give the city of Portland the gift of a better future.

And the Eastside Blue Line is the place to do this. Here is our manifesto.

NICK AHRENS
Project Manager
The Eastside Blue Line Manifesto

April 2015

PROJECT STATEMENT & MISSION

OUR PROJECT MISSION IS TO EXPLORE creative & strategic communication opportunities for TriMet as it serves the people of the Eastside Blue Line Powell-Division corridor and Gresham area with bus and light rail transportation.

IN November 2014, University of Oregon Sustainable Cities Program Manager Bob Choquette approached University of Oregon School of Journalism and Communication Professor Deborah Morrison about the possibility of a project involving creative strategists from the University of Oregon's School of Journalism and Communication and Portland's TriMet agency.

The SOJC Advertising program is built upon the Creative Strategist model of advertising education. Critical, conceptual, and creative skills are used to solve problems responsibly for people and brands in a changing global economy. Students take classes in creative strategy, interactivity and media approaches, strategic planning, design and user experience, ideasmithing and idea development, conceptual writing, green brand strategy, and mobile technologies. Those skill clusters can be applied to solve problems for the type of user engagement needed in this TriMet Eastside Blue Line / Gresham Transit Center initiative. The experimental project was planned for Winter term 2015.

The project was framed by Bob Hastings, TriMet's Agency Architect; and Stacy Humphrey, from the City of Gresham's Department of Urban Design and Planning, who served as consultant. From there, a team of eleven undergraduates (mostly juniors) from the SOJC and one from Planning, Public Planning and Management, formed, led by Account Manager Nick Ahrens. Skills of the team range from strategic planning,

policy writing and leadership, user experience strategy and design, brand management, and conceptual writing. The team visited Gresham and the Powell-Division corridor multiple times in formal and informal settings. They rode the Blue Line east from Portland and the Max through the area, conducted interviews in grocery stores and businesses along the corridor, talked to a school principal and police officer in the area, and talked to bus riders and users on the route. As the TriMet and Gresham client team know, we also spent a day asking questions and thinking through the challenges with them in Portland.

Therefore, this report should not be taken as a set of data built on quantitative research. Instead, for this short term project, the team used observation, immersion, and secondary research to build recommendations, creative content and insights, strategic ideas and toolbox suggestions for next steps.

PROBLEMS & OPPORTUNIES

From this exploration and our reading of the TriMet site plus various secondary sources in the area, we offer the following perspective on problems associated with this communication challenge:

1. There exists a lack of compelling positive messages surrounding the Eastside TriMet experience. On the bus or in the car, in the shelters, on the site, or on the apps: institutional messages for riders seem disconnected from the facts of living and working in the area. Few engagement messages exist at shelters or at stations. Buses often offer only fear-driven safety messages. There exists no system of messages around experience and few useful tools to engage and build community.

2. There exists little formal research and creative content concerning how transit and transportation entities practices, suggesting that other transit and transportation entities deal with some of these same issues. Secondary research show that some innovative transit communication ideas happen around the globe when the synergy of leadership, opportunity, and brave institutional dedication to solving problems all work in unison.

3. Recent reports from then Secretary of State Kate Brown and The Oregonian's Worst Bus Stop crowdsourcing (as examples) suggest that TriMet is seen as unresponsive and not available to rider and community concerns. Even as Trimet works to solve ridership issues and provide services, the eastern Powell-Division corridor to Gresham appears to be plagued with small to large problems for riders. As a vital anchor institution in the region, TriMet has a responsibility to offer value to all riders: safety, useful information, community platforms, and connection.

4. The Eastside Powell-Division corridor and Gresham area's diverse populations have shifted quickly, causing gaps and challenges in building community in this area.

5. TriMet's overall digital presence is unfocused and seems to be not useful to riders and community. Serving a broad range of users -- some who are digital natives and others who are not -- means taking on an innovative approach to messaging and user experience. New social media accounts @TriMettiquette (as example) are interesting and begin to build a conversation.

GUIDING QUESTIONS

From these perspectives and subsequent conversations around the project, a set of directing questions were crafted:

> How can TriMet engage Eastside riders along the Powell-Division corridor and specifically at the Gresham Transit Center with communication strategies that solve problems and help through transition times?

> How is the existing communication system working and what can be done to build community throughout this system?

> What area resources or cultural hubs exist that can be a useful part of renewed engagement in the area?

> How can the Gresham Transit Center serve as a hub for the community and drive value?

> Where are communication opportunities for communication innovation from TriMet that could directly affect community and livability in Gresham?

> What types of user experiences could increase community and engagement in the Eastside area and thereby serve riders and drive TriMet success as an anchor institution in the area?

PROJECT GOALS

These questions gave us direction and strategic goals for the 10-week project.

> Explore the Powell-Division area and the Gresham Transit Center and better understand the community. Use secondary research, informal interviews, and experience to understand the opportunities and challenges.

> Develop themes and insights around these observations that explore key community needs and relate those to TriMet realities and opportunities.

> Develop a set of strategic ideas and toolbox approaches based on these themes and focusing on rider engagement, creative messaging, community leadership, livability, and useful technologies for living and working in the area.

> Outline a direction for work and creative content to be crafted for the area around TriMet's active engagement in rider experience.

> Develop this thinking and content around a feeling of heroism, the core concept that TriMet must act and communicate in brave and geenrous fashion.

OUR SIMPLE BELIEF

TriMet should be seen as the heroic part of public life, a brave and generous institution which supports the people of the area in multiple ways. This support should prove itself through innovative approaches to the problems at hand and through generous offerings around the core concept of "moving people" on a daily basis. Our strategic ideas are based on this important belief.

We have established the following themes as important to this strategy:

> **Gathering Places**
> **Living & Working Here**
> **Safety**
> **Pride of Ownership**
> **Trust & Respect**

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POLICY & TRENDS

Our review of policy and trends in transit and innovative concepts led us to consider how important institutions work and support people.

ANCHOR INSTITUTIONS are well-established organizations that cannot easily move locations because their stake in a community is too immense. These organizations offer necessity goods and are often key employers. Because of the size and importance of Anchor Institutions, they occupy unique and influential space within local economies.

Public transportation is a necessity good that is linked to personal and community-wide prosperity. The purveyors of public transportation are constantly working to ameliorate rider experience, expand services, and maintain quality. Yet, these incremental changes go beyond growth and convenience, they have the ability to transform patrons' quality of life.

TriMet is an Anchor Institution. As the transportation authority for the Portland-Metro area, TriMet has significant responsibilities in all areas but certainly in the Eastside coordor. With significant investments in the region – real estate, employment, maintenance costs and other resources – TriMet also has immense influence in how the community continues to shape identity, how it creates goals for the next chapter of growth, and how community members identify their community.

THE CITY OF GRESHAM is extremely diverse – with over 17 languages spoken at Hartley Elementary School, one indicator of the breadth of community diversity. Many neighborhoods have easy access to schools and grocery stores; however, many do not. The livability of parts of Gresham often is at risk; disenfranchised neighborhoods suffer from poor walking routes and decaying infrastructure.

Specific neighborhoods are registered food deserts, meaning residents are at or below 20% of the Federal Poverty Line, and at least 500 people live more than one mile away from a grocery store. Food deserts are a clear sign of poverty and negatively impact livability. Rockwood is an official food desert and has gained much local media attention because of this.

When mapping all major grocery stores in the Portland-Metro area, the red dots signaling Whole Foods, Safeway, Albertson's etc. dwindle as they reach Gresham city lines. Although Gresham has high numbers of ethnic food stores that cater to diverse populations, the lack of chain grocery stores is a sign of underlying poverty.

Farmers markets and buying clubs are gaining popularity to help fill the void, however they are an unsustainable answer to a systemic problem. Chain grocery stores represent more than access to food. They are an integral link in a wide interdependent web of local economic growth and prosperity. Chain grocery stores mean, less travel time, better health, lower carbon emissions and a shift in perceptions of certain neighborhoods. Public transportation has a similar, large impact on the livelihood and perception of neighborhoods.

Many residents see Gresham as a gateway to a higher quality of life. However, because Gresham is predominantly a commuter community it loses the kind of investment that is made in big metropolitan cities. This lack of investment can spur poor connectivity and communication between planners and residents.

As an Anchor Institution, TriMet has the unique influence in the community to spark interest and start a dialogue. TriMet has a clear stake in Gresham and has the potential to change not only ridership experience, but quality of life for Gresham residents.

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• Luckily for riders, transit innovation is at an all time high. There has been a flurry of transit systems creating unique experiences for their riders, so that the many hours they spend in transit can be an interesting experience. Take for example the Metro system in Moscow, where select cars double as art galleries, with framed pieces of art lining the walls. Other trains show extracts of literary pieces painted on the walls, and another features poetry.

• Another brilliant example comes from King County, Washington, featuring the Poetry on Buses program. The idea behind the program is to encourage riders to write poetry in their time on the bus, and submit their work for a chance to be showcased on the buses themselves. The important concept is creating a strong experience for riders during their travel. By being innovative and strategic any institution might create those experiences for their own transit system.

• Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP) realized this key to success in their quest for increased ridership. In their recent mobility plan they express their belief that, "Taxpayers will support investing in a transportation system that improves their quality of life. To accomplish this, Illinois needs innovative approaches to achieve measurable outcomes" CMAP hopes to enhance rider experiences from beginning to end by creating innovative solutions to problems they currently face. One of such problems is the rail crossings, which cause delays or infrequent service that deters ridership. In an effort to restore trust, CMAP created a data visualization exploration of the system. The beautifully designed data visualization maps out their mobility plan in a smart and visually compelling way, friendly to the public. Their hope is that the data visualization will create public support, added with the enhanced rider experience to increase ridership from 2.12 million in 2012 to 4 million in 2040.

• Like many transportation systems, Utah's UTA TRAX received a very unfriendly welcome when it first came to be. In 1992 voters rejected a tax measure that would have funded the first rail in Salt Lake Valley. Up until 1999 when TRAX finally started running,

citizens feverishly protested the systems arrival. (SITE 4.) So how did TRAX become one of the most loved and heavily used public transit systems in the U.S.? "We had a strong spirit of cooperation," says Steve Meyer, chief capital development officer of UTA, "We tried to get … everybody on the 'us' side" and did so through communication.

UTA is just one example of many transit systems understanding that building trust is key to engaging communities and developing useful policy. To do so, it is important that corporations come to the public's level and explain what they want to do, and more importantly why it will benefit them. Not surprisingly, UTA found that explaining to non-riders, normally most against the implementation of rail lines, how it would benefit them too yielded the best results. If transit corporations can find unique ways to show non-riders benefits of light rails, such as reduced traffic on freeways, public support will grow.

1. http://www.telegraph.co.uk/sponsored/rbth/culture/8799170/Moscow-Metro-Russia-history-architecture.html
2. http://poetryonbuses.org/collection/
3. http://www.cmap.illinois.gov/mobility/explore#/
4. http://www.citylab.com/cityfixer/2013/10/how-utah-turned-its-unpopular-public-transit-system-hit/7298/

LIVABILITY

When it comes to livability, there is a sum of factors that add up to make somewhere a perfect place to call home. Two factors at the top of that list are a friendly neighborhood atmosphere, and the accessibility to food. It is not possible to create a thriving city without first tackling those two factors. Therefore, any city looking to invest in their future should focus on their ability to create community, and ways to prevent food deserts.

Creating community is the first step in creating a sustainable city. In creating community you open the doors for civic engagement, and better communication between city officials and their citizens. However, the first steps to creating a thriving community are often the hardest and most misunderstood. Consider the Project for Public Spaces guide and the "Eleven Principles for Creating Great Community Places" asr example: an interesting perspective on how many institutions and cities fail to create community. The article stresses the importance of identifying the community's pre-existing assets, and the difference between designing for a space and creating place.

THEMES & INSIGHTS

GATHER

IT IS HERE WHERE WE GATHER. NOT OVER THERE OR SOMEWHERE ACROSS TOWN.

BUT HERE.

IT IS ON THESE HALLOWED GROUNDS WE CAN DO WHAT WE WILL AND BE WHO WE ARE.

IT IS HERE WHERE WE CAN COME TOGETHER AND SOLVE PROBLEMS.

IT IS HERE WHERE WE CAN MAKE NEW FRIENDS AND BE WITH OLD ONES.

IT IS HERE WHERE WE CAN HONOR OUR BELIEFS AND OPEN OUR HEARTS.

IT IS HERE WHERE WE CAN FEEL SAFE AND ACCEPTED.

IT IS HERE WHERE WE GATHER TOGETHER.

GATHERING PLACES

A gathering place is any place where people are able to congregate. Whether it be public or private, gathering places make people feel safe, welcomed, and accepted in order to be successful. Whether it be schools, parks, bus stops, grocery stores, libraries, churches, community centers, movie theaters and more, the places we gather help define livability and community. In order to have fair access to these gathering places, there must be reliable public transportation options. If residents cannot travel to a specific gathering place, then sadly it ceases to exist.

THE PLACES WE GATHER HELP DEFINE LIVABILITY AND COMMUNITY

Public transportation plays a vital role in where gathering takes place along the Powell-Division corridor and the Blue Line all the way to Gresham. We often take for granted how crucial reliable transportation is for our day-to-day connectivity. Without it, our world would become much smaller. Going to church or the store or work becomes an obstacle. Reliable transportation means livability: If you cannot easily walk, for example, you cannot get your favorite karovkas at the Russian grocery store down the block. People depend on public transportation for the essential elements that enrich their lives. Every Sunday night for the past decade, you've been gathering at your family's mexican restaurant for tapas and chilaquiles and good conversation. Without transportation options, that beloved tradition will come to an end. You decline your dream job offer because you have no way of getting to their office. With 18,000 people riding the bus on Powell and Division every day, that freedom of exploration opens up a big world full of big opportunities, goals, and possibilities.

Without reliable transportation, our world becomes limited to just our immediate surroundings. Without a robust, dependable transportation system, the gathering places that once made our lives rich and full are gone. Our beloved common places taken away due to problems of policy we cannot solve. By using transit, we can stay connected with new parts of the community and maintain relationships with old favorites.

Public transportation hubs have the potential to be fantastic gathering places for community members. When transit stations harbor a dangerous, unwelcoming, and unpleasant environment, the user experience becomes negative. In order for transit stations to create a positive environment for users, they must strive to enhance

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community connections, promote positive travel experiences and advocate tolerance for all community members. The design elements of the space should promote safety, be aesthetically pleasing, and conducive for connectivity. Instead of the current "destination driven" mindset, transit stations should strive to be the beginning of the destination, not just the means to get there. Transit stations have the ability to be much more than a station; they have the potential to foster positive community interactions and create a new space for gathering. Gathering places are an essential element in transforming a city of individualistic residents into a community; without easily accessible gathering places, people are unable to connect with one another outside of a private setting.

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INSIGHTS

> Public signs posted in multiple languages allow for higher rates of communication and comprehension among users, thereby increasing opportunities for social connectivity.

> Gathering places highlighting public interest eliminate hostile environments, and are conducive for interaction.

> Gathering places are essential in giving residents a sense of belonging.

> Public transportation providers and users are codependent; they thrive upon each other.

> Individuals who gather in places to build community depend on public transportation systems to act as anchor institutions. This allows for planning and investing in healthier practices for more dependable means of transporting and engaging the masses.

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LIVING HERE

YOU DO NOT CHOOSE WHERE YOU COME FROM.
YOU DO NOT CHOOSE YOUR FAMILY OR YOUR HERITAGE.
YOU DO NOT CHOOSE YOUR SKIN COLOR.
BUT THOSE THINGS BECOME YOU.

YOU CHOOSE WHO YOU WILL BECOME AND HOW FAR YOU WILL GO.

YOU CHOOSE TO SEARCH FOR A NEW BEGINNING, TO BETTER YOURSELF, TO TAKE A CHANCE.

YOU CHOOSE TO BEGIN AGAIN.

YOU CHOOSE TO WIPE AWAY THE HATE AND THE STEREOTYPE, TO TAKE A STAND.

YOU CHOOSE TO BE A FIGHTER, BECAUSE FIGHTERS SURVIVE AND TO NOT SURVIVE IS TO DISAPPEAR.

YOU CHOOSE TO EMBRACE THIS PLACE, TO GATHER HERE AND GROW TOGETHER.

YOU CHOOSE TO ADAPT BUT NOT LOSE YOUR IDENTITY.

YOU HAVE THE POWER TO BEGIN AGAIN.
YOU ARE THE FUTURE.

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LIVING HERE

"THIS IS THE POWER OF GATHERING: IT INSPIRES US, DELIGHTFULLY, TO BE MORE HOPEFUL, MORE JOYFUL, MORE THOUGHTFUL: IN A WORD, MORE ALIVE." -- ALICE WATERS

As Vera goes to work at the Roman Russian food store on Division Street in eastern Portland, she can't help but notice the amount of people bustling around. She and her neighbors have found a home here, bringing their tastes in music, commerce, churches, and food. The Russian food store is on such a busy street; Vera sees public transportation constantly moving people in front of her. The transportation system is good, she knows, because it brings more customers and allows the store to become a cultural hub for her community.

GRESHAM DOESN'T HAVE ONE IDENTITY; IT HAS MULTIPLE IDENTITIES

It is evident from the moment you step into Oregon's fourth largest city that Gresham is home to a diverse community. Gresham is located about twenty-five minutes east of Portland and home to many commuters who rely on the TriMet system. There is a stigma and stereotype that surrounds Gresham, even as there is a strong sense of diversity and community. The rapid changes in language, culture, ritual, food, communication, and people grows opportunities and challenges for community members like Vera.

Without reliable transportation, Gresham consists of over 105,000 people and an increasing population that includes Hispanics, Russians, Ukrainians, African-Americans as well as Asians and Pacific Islanders. According to census data in 2010 the population breakdown was: 76.0% of Gresham identified as white, 3.5% identified as African American, 1.3% identified as Asian, 0.7% identified as Pacific Islander, and 18.9% identified as Hispanic. To be sure, a visitor can hear Swahili, Cuban, Arabic, Thai, Karen, and Balachka within a few blocks of the Rockwood station.

Much like the population of the city, Gresham doesn't have one identity; it has multiple identities all trying to coexist in one community. Anecdotal evidence and team observation shows this. The diversity of Gresham can be seen in all parts of the city including: SE Powell/ SE Chavez, Jade District, SE Division/SE 162nd, SE Division/SE 182nd, Division/Eastman/Main, Stark/242nd. Each of these multicultural hubs include bus stops, some with shelters, many without.

These stops and different areas show an abundance of cultures as well as different high traffic and low traffic areas. The areas include people that rely heavily on transit for transportation including the 18,000 people that use the transit system in Gresham on a daily basis. These users

Along the streets and stops of the bus and Max line you see the diversity come to full bloom. There is modern age design near the city hall; yet more rundown areas where design is lacking. Living in Gresham very much seems to be defined by area of Gresham that you live in. Areas like Rockwood are known for a higher crime rate as well as more gang related activity. Principal Larry Conley of Hartley Elementary confirmed that Rockwood does indeed have a stigma that surrounds it. It is a very diverse community with over 19 languages spoken at Hartley Elementary School. Areas like these are plagued with turf wars and drug use that make it difficult to bring people together.

On the other hand, as you ride the bus or Max down the corridor you'll see an abundance of markets and culture come to life. Automotive stores in many different languages, grocery stores with themes from all around the world, small businesses with food and ritual attached: all have become a hub for the members of the community. While they are all part of the Gresham community, these hubs allow the people to escape to their own world and embrace the culture they trying so hard to keep even as they acculturate to Oregon. This appears to be a commonality for all of those living in Gresham; the desire to hold on to culture while giving family and children the opportunity of this new place. There is both openness to the idea of more community as well as distrust and wariness for change.

Living in Gresham is either a choice or a necessity, and regardless of how it is viewed it is a place that people call home. Vera lives in Gresham and that is her home, she is proud of the community that she has found there. She came to the United States from Novosibirsk, Russia decades ago and formed bonds in Gresham. For Vera, this move was a choice and a necessity. She is home now, living here and watching the buses move people along the street she knows.

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INSIGHTS

> Ethnic grocery stores around the corridor become a community hub for each ethnicity as well as a place to gather. Even as they exist, parts of the Eastside areas experience food deserts and lack of access to healthy food.

> Gresham is filled with families, commuters, work professionals, youth, and retired seniors, all who use the transit system. There is a common bond that exists amongst all ridership.

> It is difficult for people to accept new means of communication and step outside their community when they feel like outsiders. Language and culture connectors are important.

> Minorities, immigrants, and English language learners feel disconnected to the people/ government of the community because there are lapses in communication and clashes of culture.

> Research tell us that diverse populations are impactful in tackling issues such as education and problem solving, all while enhancing creativity and building community skills.

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SAFETY

THE MOMENT WE LEAVE OUR HOME,
IS THE MOMENT WE LEAVE OUR COMFORT ZONE.

UNTIL WE RETURN AGAIN,
WE SHARE A COMMON HUMAN NEED,
TO FEEL SAFE.

SAFE IS A PLACE

WITH LIGHT
AND EDGES
AND STRONG WALLS
AND PEOPLE WHO ARE PRESENT,
READY TO HELP AND LIFT.

SAFE IS HOW A PLACE FEELS

WHEN THE DOORS OPEN AND CLOSE
AND THE SEAT NEXT TO YOU IS FILLED
AND THE PEOPLE IN FRONT OF YOU
HAVE YOUR BACK.

SAFE MAKES A STATEMENT
WHERE WE GATHER.

SAFETY

"AT THE END OF THE DAY, THE GOALS ARE SIMPLE: SAFETY AND SECURITY."

-JODY RELL

The east side of Portland is a cultural melting pot. People of different colors, backgrounds, and lifestyles call Gresham home, the place where they exist and build lives. With a city area of 23.43 miles, and a current population of 105,000 people, Gresham is the fourth biggest city in Oregon. In highly populated urban areas such as Gresham, public transportation is turned to in order to effectively and safely get around. TriMet's Eastside Blue Line is the leading transportation options for the people of Gresham. There are over 18,000 Powell and Division riders everyday. Take this impressive number plus the numerous TriMet employees and you begin to understand how personal safety becomes TriMet's responsibility on a daily basis.

THE PEOPLE FEEL AS IF THEIR SAFETY CONCERNS ARE FALLING ON DEAF EARS

With great responsibility comes great opportunity. TriMet has the opportunity, and the possibility to become the leading national expert on public transit safety. Moving people safely is TriMet's corporate responsibility and it is crucial to the people of Gresham that TriMet works to innovatively and continuously solve safety issues. The people of Gresham have and continue to be very vocal about the changes that they feel TriMet needs to

make in order to improve their services. It is vital that TriMet takes these concerns and addresses them or the disconnect between the people of Gresham and TriMet will continue to grow. From collected research and trips into Gresham, our team was able to pinpoint key issues that should be highlighted and addressed in the upcoming Blue Line improvement. The key issues that should be focused on are as follows: improving shelters, lighting concerns, lack of clear signage, and equal safety opportunities for disabled and elderly passengers. Last but not least, the people of Gresham feel as if their safety concerns often fall on deaf ears.

It is a popular public opinion in Gresham that the shelters located on the Blue Line leave much to be desired. The shelters are small, do not contain enough seating for those waiting for the bus, and do not protect the people of Gresham against the weather. However, the real problem with the current shelters is the lack of safety opportunities they provide. The bus shelters are often unpatrolled (other than fare regulators) and do not offer any TriMet representation in case of emergency. Another problem with the shelters is the lack of a comprehensive lighting system or clock at all shelters. As a result, people feel uneasy and are not comfortable

during their time spent at the shelters. Crime rates aside, people psychologically need light to feel safe.

Another problem discussed was the lack of clear signage at the Gresham stops. Bus schedules and TriMet information need to be displayed at all times in a form understandable by all. With a quickly growing diverse community, many people have limited English proficiency. Signage should address and be understandable for all audiences in order to prevent accidents or safety misunderstandings. This includes disabled and handicapped passengers who might often feel as if their existence is overlooked thus putting them in danger. For example, disabled passengers expressed that it was difficult boarding and departing the buses and Max cars. Safety precautions must be taken to include these passengers. TriMet must also address passenger needs or at least let passengers know that their complaints or concerns are not falling on deaf ears. Luckily, social media and the internet make it easier than ever to communicate with the people of Gresham about safety opportunities. By listening to this input, TriMet can innovate and improve in key issue areas.

Overall, TriMet should continue on working to adhere and maintain basic safety standards at all times while creating stronger relationships with the people of Gresham. If these safety concerns are addressed, and a safe and sustainable system is innovated, TriMet will be heroic in the eyes of the public. When people feel like they are being taken care of, they return the sentiment. The people of Gresham and TriMet share a connection daily on the Blue Line as a community. Anchor institutions such as TriMet should provide safety opportunities for all.

INSIGHTS

> Safety is a human need and a priority for families and communities.

> Without a sense of security, people cannot relax, focus, understand, trust, grow, or invest themselves.

> It is difficult for people to accept new means of communication and step outside their community when they feel like outsiders. Language and culture connectors are important.

> People must see proof of safety, before believing they are safe.

> Open communication channels leave people feeling as if their voice matters.

> Ensuring safety grows from policy, training, community investment, and doing the right thing for neighbors and friends. Safety is personal.

> People are drawn to safe spaces. If a safe environment is created, people will gladly return.

PRIDE

PRIDE IS INVESTMENT, TO BE SHARED AND NURTURED AND
CELEBRATED AND PASSED ON.

IT HAPPENS IN A SONG "O SAY CAN YOU SEE"
AND A PLACE "LOOK THERE, THAT'S OURS"
AND A MOMENT THAT SMILES FOR YEARS AS A MEMORY.

PRIDE BECOMES.

IT ASKS US TO BELIEVE
ABOUT THE CORNER STORE
THE VIEW FROM THE BUS
THE PLACE WHERE WE GATHER
THE PEOPLE WE TRUST.

PRIDE WANTS A CLEAN SEAT AND A CLEAN WINDOW
AND A NEW IDEA THAT HELPS PEOPLE.

PRIDE IS OPTIMISTIC.

PRIDE IS FINDING OURSELVES TOGETHER.

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PRIDE

As one rides the bus towards Gresham along the Powell Division corridor, they may notice that things begin to change. The clean, symmetrical shapes of downtown fade away as shapes with more character begin to cast their shadows into the streets. Colors of silver and grey transform into neons and pastels, as the signs in storefronts present the English language less and less. As these things change, more bus shelters become just bus stops, graffiti invades and infects the area around them, and many of the helpful directions and signs begin to disappear.

When traveling through Gresham, it is apparent that some of the stops have had more work put into them, as compared to others. The Rockwood station has a nice, user friendly environment that displays bus arrival times in an aesthetically pleasing environment. Meanwhile, the Civic Center stop does not display any arrival times, nor does it have any features that make it feel safer, more aesthetically pleasing, or more convenient. It's also apparent that much of the stops had sheltered benches. Many had both benches and sheltered areas, but these two features rarely work in unison. When people that have mobility issues use TriMet, a sheltered area where they don't have to stand is beneficial. Moreover, defacement has become an issue around the stops, which pushed some patrons to spend their free time scraping graffiti off of the features, in order to maintain their local destinations. Bus stops say so much about a public transportation company, and when there is a certain amount of pride instilled into these stops it becomes evident to not just those that use the stops, but all who see them.

Pride should be evident on the buses and light rails as well. A large issue that presents itself is that the handicapped area is often not marked or accessible enough for those that need to use it. Many people will sit in the handicapped area unaware that it is meant for those with special needs, which makes it harder for people with limited mobility to reach their designated areas. In addition, on the light rails there isn't a driver that can help better accommodate those with special needs, which makes getting on and off of the light rail difficult for some. A man in a wheelchair will often not be able to get to the handicapped area of the light rail before it begins moving, and he often does not have enough time to get off of the light rail in time, often causing such people to be left behind and miss their stops.

THERE IS A CERTAIN AMOUNT OF PRIDE INSTILLED INTO THESE STOPS

On the buses, drivers are able to help those that need assistance, which makes the bus much more user friendly for people with disabilities.

While on the bus or light rail, the diverse language that represents Gresham fails to be seen on the vehicles. Especially when dealing with diverse areas, it is important that public transportation services provide more than one language when they display instructions and make announcements. Displays such as the emergency advice plan and bus stops destinations are only displayed in English, even in areas such as Rockwood, where there are more people that use English as a secondary language, when compared to those that used it as a primary language. When multiple languages are displayed on certain areas in and around the bus it can create convenience and a sense of pride in diversity.

When using TriMet services it is often hard to tell when the next vehicle will arrive, what time it will get you to your destination, and how to simply reach your destination. Some light rail stations, such as the Gresham City Center stop, don't display arrival times, which makes it difficult to manage and plan your day. TriMet's apps can help one figure out arrival and destination times, but due to that there are three different apps, they can often become confusing and difficult to use. Also, many of TriMet's users do not have devices that allow them to use TriMet's apps, often forcing them to call the TriMet hotline to find when the next light rail vehicle will arrive. Even if one can figure out when the light rail or bus will arrive, it can be difficult to determine the best route to get you to your destination. Manyt of TriMet's maps only show the route, without any surrounding streets or landmarks, which can cause confusion for those who are not familiar with the Portland suburb area.

Pride is an important element for building a strong brand and useful communication strategies. TRiMet must show pride in what it does for the Eastside in order to ensure pride from the community. TriMet has the opportunity to show that it takes pride in not just moving people, but pride truly caring about people. People rely on TriMet to provide so much for them, and it is often difficult to make accommodations for all of those that use the public transportation service. However, if TriMet can begin to show that they are aware of the issues that many Eastside patrons face, it can begin to instill a sense of pride to those that use the service. People that visit the Portland area should be envious of the services and accommodations that TriMet has created for all of its patrons. TriMet is well known for its success as a public transportation service, but it should show that it cares about maintaining its place amongst elite transportation services, not because it looks to transport people, but because it looks to improve the lives of those that use it. That becomes the heroic stance needed for us all to feel proud.

INSIGHTS

> Pride works synergistically between TriMet and the people of the community. The more effort and investment in Eastside communities, amenities, and people, the more pride is shown for the transit system so vital to the area.

> Pride is developed through shared spaces and shared successes. New ideas and new initiatives can be drivers for a proud community.

> Bus drivers and Max operators should be proud of their importance to the community. If they are, this should be celebrated. If they are not, why not?

> Being proud of one's community grows investment in that community.

> Pride and the stories that grow from it should be part of all ridership; disabled patrons or elderly riders should see TriMet, the buses and Max, and the bus drivers as part of a system of pride.

> Messages should show and not tell why a community or an organization takes pride in the place it lives and works. Research tell us that diverse populations are impactful in tackling issues such as education and problem solving, all while enhancing creativity and building community skills.

TRUST

TRUST IS A MIRROR.

SEEING EVERYTHING AND TELLING ALL.
KEEPING NO SECRETS AND REFLECTING NO WRONGS.
REVEALING THE FLAWS, THE BEAUTY,
THE ESSENCE THAT KEEPS US HUMAN.
DECLARING THE COLORS OF SKINS AND HEARING THE TONES OF
TONGUES.

TRUST IS A MIRROR.
EXPECTATIONS HIGH, BUT LIMITATIONS LOW.
TILL ONE DAY IT BROKE.
SLIPPED BETWEEN FINGERS.
ACCIDENTALLY SHOOK ON THE WALL.
THE FALL WAS FELT AND LOUDLY MADE KNOWN.
ONCE A PERFECT REFLECTION AND NOW A DISTORTED VIEW.
IT MUST HAVE BEEN CHEAP.
IT MUST HAVE BEEN THEIR FAULT.
AND CERTAINLY NOT OURS.
LOSING OUR INVESTMENT.
IT WAS RESPECTFULLY BUILT.
AND SO EASILY BROKEN.

TRUST IS A MIRROR.
THAT WE'LL NOW GLUE TOGETHER.
AND WHAT GOOD VIEW WAS LOST,
WILL BE FOUND AGAIN.

TRUST & RESPECT

The people of Gresham trust what they understand and those who understand them. Typically, understanding stems from a certain amount of similarity or likeness, the sense of accountability that comes from connection. In other words, trust and respect is more attainable when it is among those that are most like you. In Gresham's case, likeness is categorized mainly by culture – skin color, language, and nationality. However, despite the difference between cultures, not one individual can escape the natural traits of being human. Everyone wants to protect, to help, to stand for the ones they love and know. This leaves each culture, group, and individual with one common theme: no matter the difference, we all love just the same.

TRIMET MUST SPEAK TO THE WHOLE AS ONE THAT ENCOMPASSES ALL

As Gresham's main transportation system, TriMet struggles to capitalize on the opportunity of showing how differences can be our greatest similarity. The evidence of this struggle shows in simple things: languages spoken on the bus, the lack of safety at some shelters and stations and stops, crime on or near bus stops, the tone and trustworthiness of messages. This has led to a lack of trust not only between the people of Gresham, but between those people and Trimet. In the past, leaders and planners of TriMet and the city have viewed Gresham by distinguishing as three main categories: farm, urban, and suburban. It is true that Gresham has those three different characteristics; however, for TriMet to bring a sense of unity it must speak to the whole as one that encompasses all people.

The lack of understanding leads to TriMet's involvement in two main problems: high crime rates and language barriers. Much of the crime within the city happens at train stations, as witnessed by reports of gangs and tagging at several stops. After speaking with the police department, we found that typically high crime rates happen between Hispanics and African Americans. The two groups have a tendency to be the most aggressive, whereas the more European cultures stick close together and stay away from others. No matter the group, cultures have increasingly become more divided. The need for mediating structures and connecting purpose is real.

The second issue seen between Trimet and the people of Gresham is the language barrier. Most of the TriMet employees that our SOJC team met were Caucasian, their primary language was English.

Gresham is a city that houses over 70 different languages. Organizations such as the Immigrant Refugee and Community Organization (IRCO) and Sponsors Organized to Assist Refugees (SOAR) need institutional support.

Trust and respect are constructs which must be nurtured. To be leaders in the community, anchor institutions have the responsibility of building trust and respect through their own work and within the network of people and organizations vital to the area.

INSIGHTS

> The people of Gresham are focused on differences rather than celebrating similarities and connections.

> Language barriers are obstacles to trust and connection, limiting connectivity and community growth. Those communication barriers are formidable.

> Trust means working to understand the perspective of others. TriMet, as an anchor institution, should broker trust by facilitating communciation and community.

> Bureacracy and institutional language are barriers to trust, especially in immigrant communities.

> Tone of any message is important to building trust. If trust is built, all parties can work to move forward.

IDEAS & TOOLBOX

STRATEGIC IDEAS FOR BUILDING COMMUNITY & CONNECTION
TOOLBOX SPACES FOR NOTES & NEW ASSOCIATIONS

GOALS & GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR STRATEGIC IDEAS OF THE EASTSIDE BLUE LINE MANIFESTO

As with any urban transit institution, TriMet has challenges around crime and safety, budget considerations, growing populations, and institutional innovation. At the same time, energy and success around social media outreach, new building and systems communication, and planning efforts in communities are happening. All of these affect the shape and scope of strategic communication tasks.

We address this communication with a set of optimistic strategic approaches focusing on engaging the community and building connection and opportunity for this Eastside area.

These ideas grow from communication's role in civic engagement, safety and security, welcoming communities, and innovative executions.

We approached these ideas with these broad goals:

Offer ideas that connect TriMet to the community in new ways.

Steer away from advertising and social media ideas

Leverage language and culture and in doing so, solve community problems.

Consider how people feel in shared spaces.

Build strategic platforms that can serve as discussion points for TriMet and Gresham planners.

Work in the "what if?" space that lives outside budgets and strict policy.

Build off a simple strategy based on tone and human need.

ONE TONE & MISSION

BUILD AND INSPIRE AN HEROIC TONE AND MISSION FOR MESSAGES AND ACTIONS ON THE EASTSIDE BLUE LINE.

From secondary research, in place exploration, and anecdotal reports, our team believes TriMet often communicates as a far-removed institution. This results in accusations of arrogance, ineptitude, lack of safety; though indeed, we believe TriMet people care deeply about these issues and the important mission of the organization. New initiatives concerning safety and improvements in the area prove this.

IT IS IMPORTANT FOR THE EASTSIDE TO SEE HEROISM

We offer this message and tone framing as a strategic place to begin communicating both online and in place: in buses and cars, on platforms and stations, via apps and website. This represents the tone and persona — and the actions and behavior — of TriMet for the Eastside.

And it is especially important for the geographic and cultural community of the Eastside to understand a true heroism on the part of TriMet: increasing ridership, increasing diversity in the already most diverse community of the state, compelling stories that can be part of the TriMet story. These important considerations suggest TriMet has an opportunity to grow a new chapter of investment in the Eastside and Gresham areas.

TOOLBOX

"Understanding Heroism" The Heroic Imagination Project
http://b.3cdn.net/raproject/ed834126c9c0786b1e_93m6i2aqj.pdf

Good Magazine
http://magazine.good.is/

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HEROIC

TO BE HEROIC IS TO STAND TALL AND PROUD
WITH REASON.

HEROIC IS BRIGHT AND NOT INSTITUTIONAL,
SMART AND NOT ARROGANT, TRUSTWORTHY AND
NOT DUPLICITOUS, STEADFAST AND NEVER TURNS AWAY
FROM THE PROBLEM.

HEROIC GOES BEYOND OBLIGATION.
HEROIC BRINGS PEOPLE TOGETHER.
HEROIC MAKES MISTAKES AND FINDS WAYS TO FIX
THOSE PROBLEMS BECAUSE IT'S THE RIGHT THING TO DO.

HEROIC DOES NOT SPEAK ABOUT ITSELF IN THESE
TERMS. IT SHOWS RATHER THAN TELLS. IT CONNECTS.
IT ANTICIPATES, MAKES THINGS HAPPEN BEFORE THERE
IS NEED.

HEROIC IS OPTIMISTIC. HEROIC IS HUMAN.
HEROIC MOVES PEOPLE.

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TWO ^{PLACE}

USE TRIMET'S BUILT-IN COMMUNITY GATHERING SPACES AND CONNECTIVE COMMUNICATION TO HELP SOLVE REAL PROBLEMS OF THE AREA.

Make shelters and stations more useful. Realizing that some of these improvements are part of the Eastside improvement plan, we want to emphasize the importance of place in building a strong and authentic communication system to inform livability.

http://walyou.com/innovative-bus-stop-concepts/

Useful means shelters serve as mini-parks, community info spaces, language tutorial. Create in place community boards that represent certain stops, stations, and specific gathering places along Powell-Division and into Gresham.

TOOLBOX

Make shelters and stops
do double duty as TriMet-owned
parks. Beautiful.

Improve bus stops and bus shelters for safety measures. As they are complete, offer aspirational messages at each stop. Let each stop be ownable and in place.

Each shelter and station should have strong
lighting, clocks, charging stations for phones.

Sponsor school fairs, yearbooks, newsletters. Connect those sponsorships to specific stops with posters and community boards.

Schools are the heart of any community. Place
TriMet and City of Gresham messages and support
where it belongs. Schools win, TriMet wins.

Bring music and food to Friday afternoons at shelters and stations.

Maybe it's only at Gresham Transit Center this
summer, maybe it grows. But the sense of fes-
tivities when music and food ends the work week
shows that TriMet knows people live here.

communitymusicworks.org archive

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Hold smaller community meetings at select churches, community centers, and community grocery stores in key areas. Partner with organizations such as IRCO and SOAR. Those community meetings should include graphic recording of discussions.

Graphic recordings are large poster-like visuals that note and curate meetings. By using facilitators fluent in languages, the recordings could become long-lasting connectors between TriMet and the community.

As example, Sarah Moyle creates large graphic recordings around Portland. Here's one she did for Design PDX. The finished work is 4' x 7'. This is a representation of an hour long speech to a roomful of 70 people. People love to see what they have said make the poster. Delivering this type of graphic recording in multiple languages could be a strong connector with the audience. It could be a piece of evidence that stays up in the church or community center after the meeting, reminding participants of what TriMet says and does, how it listens.

TOOLBOX

PDX Graphic Meetings Recorder
Sarah Moyle
sarah.d.moyle@intel.com

Hold competitions for mural and bus wrap art. Involve multiple cultures and voices, using different stops and shelters for ownership of multiple themes around a core idea. Maybe that idea is FAMILY or COURAGE or other themes common to being people living in a shared place.

Pentagram Design in New York created this huge mural from community and historical themes for the National Center for Civil and Human Rights. When seen from across the street, the mural still lets viewers interact by placing their hand "on" the mural.
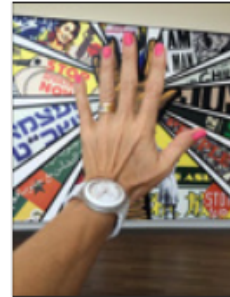
Art can refocus communities, bring them into focus to share what is important. With smart project management, other partners -- design studios, advertising agencies, art centers and schools -- can join the effort and find artists and vendors willing to help the cause.
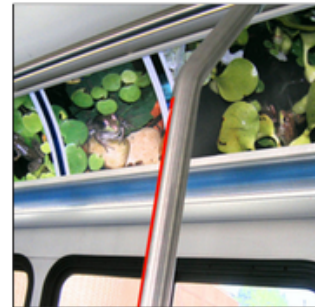
The murals and buses could use similar themes, letting the story offered be told from different perspectives: on building walls, at shelters and stations and stops, in the bus. Purposeful art that depicts cultural forms and language works as a community hub for pride and trust.

THREE   EXPERIENCE

CREATE A MESSAGE AND USER EXPERIENCE TO ENGAGE AND DELIGHT RIDERS, MAKING THE EASTSIDE EXPERIENCE INNOVATIVE AND A MODEL FOR OTHER PDX AREAS AND TRANSIT SYSTEMS.

Develop a robust TriMet Cloud offering.

This might include:

TriMet playlists downloadable and mixed with local artists

TriMet playlists on Spotify that art part of culture

Downloadable ebooks for free

Downloadable language tutorials and recipe exchange for different neighborhoods

A synchonized app for bus and Max schedules

In bus offerings on screens of 30-second films

TOOLBOX

Develop a language-based campaign using all languages of the Eastside in a celebratory way. Channels would include bus shelter and inside bus and Max cars, t-shirts, murals, bus wraps, and maps.

Consider what happens if TriMet facilitates real communication, better understanding, family pride. Language posters could become basis for food gatherings and music or poetry gatherings.

A language map could be an interesting cultural artifact that serves to connect people as the design shows lines blurring. Language maps like the one below for New York should be purposeful curated and connective offerings.

Create content and stories around bus drivers and Max conductors. Show the drivers as ambassadors and partners, personalities.

Building content around your best ambassadors is a good way to build community and connection. In our trip along the Powell-Division corridor, we witnessed many times where the bus driver was the heroic helper, where patrons called thank you to the driver by name, where riders turned to the driver for help and received it.

By building stories in a stratgic way around drivers, goodwill and community is fostered.

This might include:

Photo collections.

Gallery exhibits in schools and community centers.

In-place posters about the driver.

Short film contests around drivers and their day.

Joel James Devlin

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Continue a strong social media presence. Build on new apps such as Stellar for storytelling and use old favorite Vine for quick and positive stories.
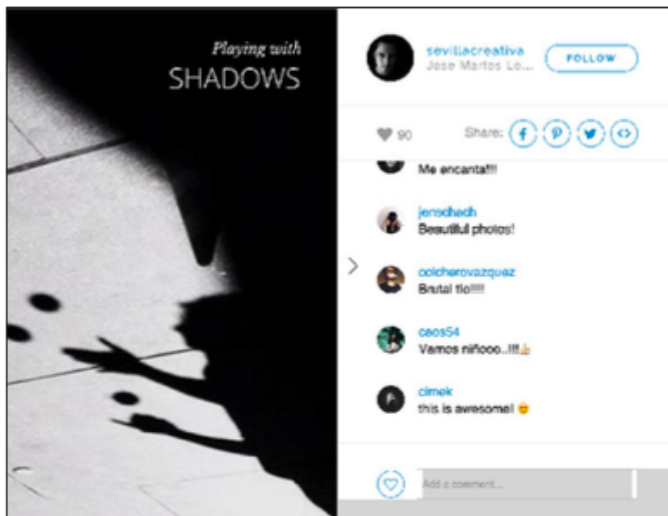
Stellar is a quick and elegant way to share pho-
to stories on social media. Connecting this to
@Trimettiquette and @TriMetDiaries is a good
way to build more social capital, find humor and
humanity.

Design the last of the paper tickets to be collectors' items, dated and crafted with local art. These might highlight stops, celebrated bus drivers, community leaders, or history of the area in authentic ways.

TOOLBOX

Driving Richmond: Stories and Portraits
http://drivingrichmond.net/

Heartwarming Portraits of Bus Drivers
http://www.fastcodesign.com/3024706/exposure/heartwarming-por-
traits-of-london-bus-drivers

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FOUR WHAT IF?

CREATE COMMUNITY BY PARTNERING WITH COMMUNITY EXPERTS AND PROFESSIONAL STUDIOS TO GROW EXPERIENCE AND OPPORTUNITY FOR EASTSIDE RIDERS.

Co-sponsor food gardens safely near stations. Plan and help community members manage them as part of a healthy community.

With the reality of food deserts plaguing much of the Eastside experience, TriMet could act heroically to co-sponsor and develop tracts to be used as community gardens and urban farms. As a strategic tool, this action communicates that TriMet is an anchor institution dedicated to community.

As a smart and human action, food gardens develop pride in the area around what is done together. They foster shared identity. As an anchor institution, TriMet should be part of community partnerships.

The Transit Garden of Brooklyn, for example, is owned by MTA and tended and managed by community activists.

Images from Tel Aviv, Denver, Atlanta, Brooklyn.

TOOLBOX

"The Role of Community Gardens in Sustaining Healthy Communities"
http://designinghealthycommunities.org/role-community-gardens/

Urban Garden Project Research
http://ljlawson.rutgers.edu/html/UrbanGardenResearch.html

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Re-invent the trend toward co-working spaces by bringing creative workers, job seekers, and entrepreneurs to the Gresham Transit Center and its immediate location.

The trend of co-working spaces continues to increase across the nation and in Portland each year.

The Gresham Transit Center (GTC) is sited next to a set of buildings that could hold a working space dedicated to the co-working experience. Two main audiences might work in this space: the first is Gresham area community members looking for a workspace for job seeking, creative work, studying. The space would include desks and wifi and some amenities. The second major audience are those creative entrepreneurs now renting space in Portland. At least 5 co-working spaces exist in Portland, two have moved eastward.

The Gresham Transit Center and the downtown Gresham area could become a vibrant community based on entrepreneurism. This would bring coffee shops, food carts, small businesses to the GTC site. It would also be a hub for the different sections of Gresham to converge rather than stay disconnected.

Portland is consistently named as one of the most entrepreneurial and creative cities: creative workers and artists, freelancers, educators, and makers thrive here, many who need dedicated office space. Gresham could offer lower prices than the downtown PDX co-working spaces. Buildings around the Gresham Transit Center could be used as co-working space, sponsored in part by TriMet. Partners such as Portland Incubator Experience (PIE) and established co-working organizations such as Tenfold and WeWork could be instigators for this initiative.

The GTC co-working space could provide:
    • lower cost work space than those in downtown Portland
        • partner with Mt Hood Community College
        • space for digital tutorials, job banks, as well space for makers and entrepreneurs who live in different sections of Portland but want affordable space
        • community garden space across from the GTC and co-working space
        • beacon for food carts, small businesses in the area

TriMet has absolute connection to this initiative. TriMet becomes an economic driver in the area, a community builder. Pride and trust are inherent. TriMet acts heroically.

CO-WORKING SPACES ARE ECONOMIC AND CREATIVE DRIVERS

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TOOLBOX

THE
TEAM

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NICK AHRENS // PROJECT MANAGER

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NATASHA GURETSKIY // STRATEGIST
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Thanks for this opportunity. We
learned so much and appreciate
the work, challenges, and
opportunities you face.

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APPENDIX A-2

SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE

Start of Block: Consent form and screener questions

This study is being conducted by researchers at the University of Oregon and Drake University. This nationwide study seeks to understand attitudes about transportation and livability. Your input is important, and will help city planners and other officials better understand your opinions and communicate effectively with people like you to help make cities more livable.

The survey should take no more than 10-15 minutes to complete. All information you provide will be kept anonymous. Your participation is voluntary. You may quit the survey at any point. We will not ask any information that could identify you or use any information that would make it possible for anyone to identify you in any presentation or written reports about this study.

This study presents no more than minimal risk of harm or discomfort beyond what you are used to in everyday life. There are no expected benefits to you either. Any compensation is handled between you and Qualtrics directly and is not handled by the researchers.

The researchers conducting this study are Autumn Shafer, Deborah Morrison and David Remund. For questions or more information concerning this research you may contact Autumn Shafer at 541-346-7641. If you have any questions about your rights as a research subject, you may contact: Research Compliance Services, University of Oregon at (541) 346-2510 or ResearchCompliance@uoregon.edu.

You may save or print a copy of this form for your records.

Please click whether you would like to agree to or decline participation below.

○   I agree to participate, check here and hit the next button to begin (1)

○   I decline to participate, check here and hit the next button to close this survey (2)

Skip To: End of Block If = I decline to participate, check here and hit the next button to close this survey

City Please indicate which city you live in.

○   Portland, OR (1)

○   Seattle, WA (2)

○   Las Vegas, NV (3)

○   Denver, CO (4)

○   Dallas, TX (5)

○   Detroit, MI (6)

○   Milwaukee, WI (7)

○   Oklahoma City, OK (8)

○   Memphis, TN (9)

○   Baltimore, MD (10)

○   I don't live in any of the cities listed above (11)

Skip To: End of Block If = I don't live in any of the cities listed above

Age Please indicate your age?

○   Under 18 years old (1)

○   18 years old or over (2)

Skip To: End of Block If = Under 18 years old

Race What do you consider to be your race or ethnicity (check all that apply)

☐   African American/Black (1)

☐   American Indian/Alaska Native (2)

☐   Asian (3)

☐ Hispanic/Latino (4)

☐ Pacific Islander/Native Hawaiian (5)

☐ Caucasian/White (6)

☐ Other (please list:) (7) _____

In the past month, how often have you ridden public transportation (a bus or light rail)?

○ 0 times in the past month (1)

○ 1 time in the past month (2)

○ 2-5 times in the past month (3)

○ 6-10 times in the past month (4)

○ More than 10 times in the past month (5)

Skip To: End of Block If = 0 times in the past month

End of Block: Consent form and screener questions

Start of Block: Main questions

Livability

How important is it to you, personally, that your city offers each of the following?:

	Not at all important (1)	Slightly important (2)	Moderately important (3)	Very important (4)	Extremely important (5)
Ability to walk or bike to neighborhood schools, parks, shops, restaurants, etc. (1)	○	○	○	○	○
Affordable housing (2)	○	○	○	○	○
Short commute times (3)	○	○	○	○	○
Well-maintained streets for commuting (4)	○	○	○	○	○
Public gathering spaces, such as outdoor parks and indoor community centers (5)	○	○	○	○	○

Ample street parking (6)	○	○	○	○	○
Bicycle paths and/or bike commuting lanes (7)	○	○	○	○	○
Public transit in the form of buses (8)	○	○	○	○	○
Public transit in the form of light rail (9)	○	○	○	○	○
Good opportunities for employment (10)	○	○	○	○	○
Protection from crime (11)	○	○	○	○	○
Protection for the environment (12)	○	○	○	○	○

People often make trade-offs between housing and transportation, such as accepting a longer and/or more expensive commute in order to live in a lower-priced home on the fringes of a city. Did this kind of trade-off factor into your decision about where you currently live?

○ Yes, please provide a brief explanation: (1)

_____

○ No (2)

What is your primary form of transportation for getting to and from work? (If you use more than one, please check the one you use most often)

○ Driving a car (1)

○ Riding in a car as a passenger (2)

○ Riding a bicycle (3)

○ Taking public transit (bus, light rail, etc.) (4)

○ Hiring a taxi or pooled driver (Uber, Lyft, etc.) (5)

○ Walking (6)

○ I'm not currently employed (7)

○ Other, please describe: (8)

_____

When you think about public transit (e.g., bus, light rail) in your city, what perceptions come to mind?

	1	2	3	4	5	
Easy to use (1)	○	○	○	○	○	Confusing to use
Noisy (2)	○	○	○	○	○	Quiet
Clean (3)	○	○	○	○	○	Dirty
Inefficient (4)	○	○	○	○	○	Efficient
Spacious (5)	○	○	○	○	○	Crowded
Negative (6)	○	○	○	○	○	Positive
Designed well for my needs (7)	○	○	○	○	○	Designed more for other people's needs
Good for the environment (8)	○	○	○	○	○	Bad for the environment
Makes traffic worse (9)	○	○	○	○	○	Cuts down on traffic
Isn't an option where I live (10)	○	○	○	○	○	Is an option where I live

How well do the following statements reflect your opinions about public transit?

	Does not describe my feelings (1)	Slightly describes my feelings (2)	Moderately describes my feelings (3)	Mostly describes my feelings (4)	Clearly describes my feelings (5)
I rely on public transit (1)	○	○	○	○	○
Other people, besides me, rely on public transit (2)	○	○	○	○	○
Public transit is a good thing for other people, besides me (3)	○	○	○	○	○
Public transit mostly benefits the people who ride it (4)	○	○	○	○	○
Public transit also benefits people who don't ride it (5)	○	○	○	○	○
If you are reading this, please select "Slightly describes my feelings" (6)	○	○	○	○	○

Skip To: End of Block If How well do the following statements reflect your opinions about public transit? != Other people, besides me, rely on public transit.

Please select the dot closest to your position on each statement:

	Negatively affected (1)	Slightly negatively affected (2)	Unaffected (3)	Slightly positively affected (4)	Positively affected (5)
If my city spent LESS money on public transit, my quality of life would be... (1)	○	○	○	○	○
If my city spent MORE money on public transit, my quality of life would be... (2)	○	○	○	○	○

How many times have you used public transit (e.g., bus, light rail, etc.) in the city where you live?

○   0, never   (1)

○   1-2 times   (2)

○   3-10 times   (3)

○   More than 10 times   (4)

Display This Question:

If How many times have you used public transit (e.g., bus, light rail, etc.) in the city where you l... != 0, never

How would you rate your overall experience using public transit in your current city?

○   Extremely negative   (1)

○   Somewhat negative   (2)

○   Neither positive nor negative   (3)

○   Somewhat positive   (4)

○   Extremely positive   (5)

How much do any of these reasons apply to your decision not to use public transit more often?

	Does not describe my feelings (1)	Slightly describes my feelings (2)	Moderately describes my feelings (3)	Mostly describes my feelings (4)	Clearly describes my feelings (5)
Public transit is not convenient for me (1)	○	○	○	○	○
Public transit is too slow (2)	○	○	○	○	○

Public transit is too crowded (3)	○	○	○	○	○
Public transit is too noisy (4)	○	○	○	○	○
Public transit is too dirty (5)	○	○	○	○	○
Public transit doesn't seem safe (6)	○	○	○	○	○
Another reason (please describe): (7)	○	○	○	○	○

How would you rate your support for public transit as a system? Meaning you support it and think positively of it regardless of whether you use it or not.

○ Extremely unsupportive (1)

○ Somewhat unsupportive (2)

○ Neither supportive nor unsupportive (3)

○ Somewhat supportive (4)

○ Extremely supportive (5)

Display This Question: If How would you rate your support for public transit as a system? Meaning you support it and think... = Extremely supportive

What makes you supportive of public transit (e.g., bus, light rail, etc.)? This support could be for yourself to use it or more general support of the system--even if you don't plan to use it?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Display This Question: If How would you rate your support for public transit as a system? Meaning you support it and think... != Extremely supportive

What could make you more supportive of public transit (e.g., bus, light rail, etc.)? This support could be for yourself to use it or more general support of the system--even if you don't plan to use it?

_____
_____

_____
_____
_____

Do you have any close friends or family members who **regularly** use public transit?

○ Yes (1)

○ No (2)

○ I'm not sure (3)

How aware are you of decisions being made by city officials regarding public transit (e.g., proposed expansions, route changes, etc.)?

○ Not aware at all (1)

○ Slightly aware (2)

○ Moderately aware (3)

○ Mostly aware (4)

○ Very aware (5)

How likely are you to provide input to city officials about public transit?

○ Extremely unlikely (1)

○ Somewhat unlikely (2)

○ Neither likely nor unlikely (3)

○ Somewhat likely (4)

○ Extremely likely (5)

If you did want to provide input to city officials about public transit, what would be your preferred method of doing so?

	Do not prefer (1)	Prefer slightly (2)	Prefer a moderate amount (3)	Prefer a lot (4)
Sending an email (1)	○	○	○	○
Making a phone call (2)	○	○	○	○
Attending a public meeting (3)	○	○	○	○

Making comments on a city's social media post (4)	○	○	○	○
Texting comments to a city phone number (5)	○	○	○	○
Adding anonymous comments on a city website (7)	○	○	○	○
If you are reading this please select "Prefer a moderate amount" (8)	○	○	○	○
Other (please describe): (6)	○	○	○	○

Skip To: End of Block If you did want to provide input to city officials about public transit, what would be your method of doing so... != Attending a public meeting

How likely are you to pay attention to messages about public transit?

○ Extremely unlikely (1)

○ Somewhat unlikely (2)

○ Neither likely nor unlikely (3)

○ Somewhat likely (4)

○ Extremely likely (5)

What type of topic, language, wording, issue, or message could make you more interested in hearing about public transit?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Imagine you wanted to get more information about public transportation in your city, where would you go for that information? (check all that apply and then please fill in the related information)

☐ Search online via Google or some other search engine (what search terms would you type in?) (1) _____

☐ Make phone call (to whom?) (2) _____

☐ Check social media (which ones and how would you find them?) (3) _____

☐ Ask someone (who?) (4) _____

☐ Go to a specific website (which one?) (7) _____

☐ Other (please describe): (6) _____

End of Block: Main questions

Start of Block: Demographics

Gender Please select your gender
○ Male (1)
○ Female (2)
○ Transgender/other (3)

What is your current age (in years)?

_____

What is your highest level of education?
○ Less than high school (1)
○ High school graduate (2)
○ Some college (3)
○ 2 year degree (4)
○ 4 year degree (5)
○ Graduate or professional-level degree (6)

What is the income range that best matches your household annual salary?
○ Under $30,000 (1)
○ $30,000 to $50,000 (2)
○ $50,000 to $80,000 (3)
○ More than $80,000 (4)

End of Block: Demographics

APPENDIX A-3

CREATIVE BRIEF

Who are we talking to?

The people of Portland and the greater metro area; those who currently believe livability could increase in Portland. More specific:

1. A person who believes that their situation could be improved greatly by a more convenient city.
2. People who survive but do not thrive with the current features of a city regarding livability.
3. Those who are currently in livable areas. The low of life slows beyond their location.

What do they currently know/think?

Portland is changing and growing rapidly. There are many positive aspects to this growth, but it also generates angst. Traffic out of control. Neighborhoods that used to be quiet are bustling.

- Homelessness - Portland has a problem to deal with here.
- Rising cost of living - primarily manifests in lack of affordable housing.

Currently unaware of the opportunities livable cities could produce. Disparities by neighborhood. Think the Pearl juxtaposed against deep SE.

The agencies and officials tackling these changes are dealing with a range of messaging challenges, internal and external. They must:

- Craft messages that reach broad, diverse audiences.
- Tackle widespread but untrue public perceptions.
- Convey to people who don't feel represented that their voices are heard.
- Adjust public expectations about what types of change are achievable.
- Address fear of change.

Single most important thought?

(Owning your path) Agencies must convey to publics their own power to make the city more livable.

Support for that thought?

- Find a stat on how engagement/feeling heard increases motivation to make change/be involved.
- Find a stat on community role in community improvement.
- Find stats that demonstrate how more livable areas improve quality of life.
  - Conversely, find stats that show how lack of livability degrades quality of life.

How do we reach them?

- First, craft and solidify messages that empower individuals and organizations alike.
- POSSIBILITY: 2 sets of messages, one that directly confronts the public, empowering individuals to take livability into their own hands.
    - A second set which wields the voice of authority about what these agencies - OHA, City of Portland (BPS), Metro - are doing and planning to do to alleviate concerns about growth and a lack of livability. Take the side of the ones most affected, walk along side of the audience.
    - Stay away from the "we are an organization that has a solution" and rather take the stance more towards, "we know the issues, we will walk alongside of you and be a guiding force." (Note: these people know the issues, they feel as though they know the solutions. They do not need to be told them by an state organization that may be untrustworthy)
- Where? - On transit? Bus stations? Sidewalks? Schools? Bridges? Events?

How do we keep the conversation going?

- Social media is a tool we can use to our advantage.
    - We want to encourage participation in an ongoing dialogue.
    - Twitter seems like a good place to start.
        - Hashtag?
        - Need a place that people can share their thoughts, concerns and feelings about livability.
- Events: Bridge walk.
- Infrastructure awareness: show actual infrastructure aimed to increase livability (generate buzz about Tilikum bridge)
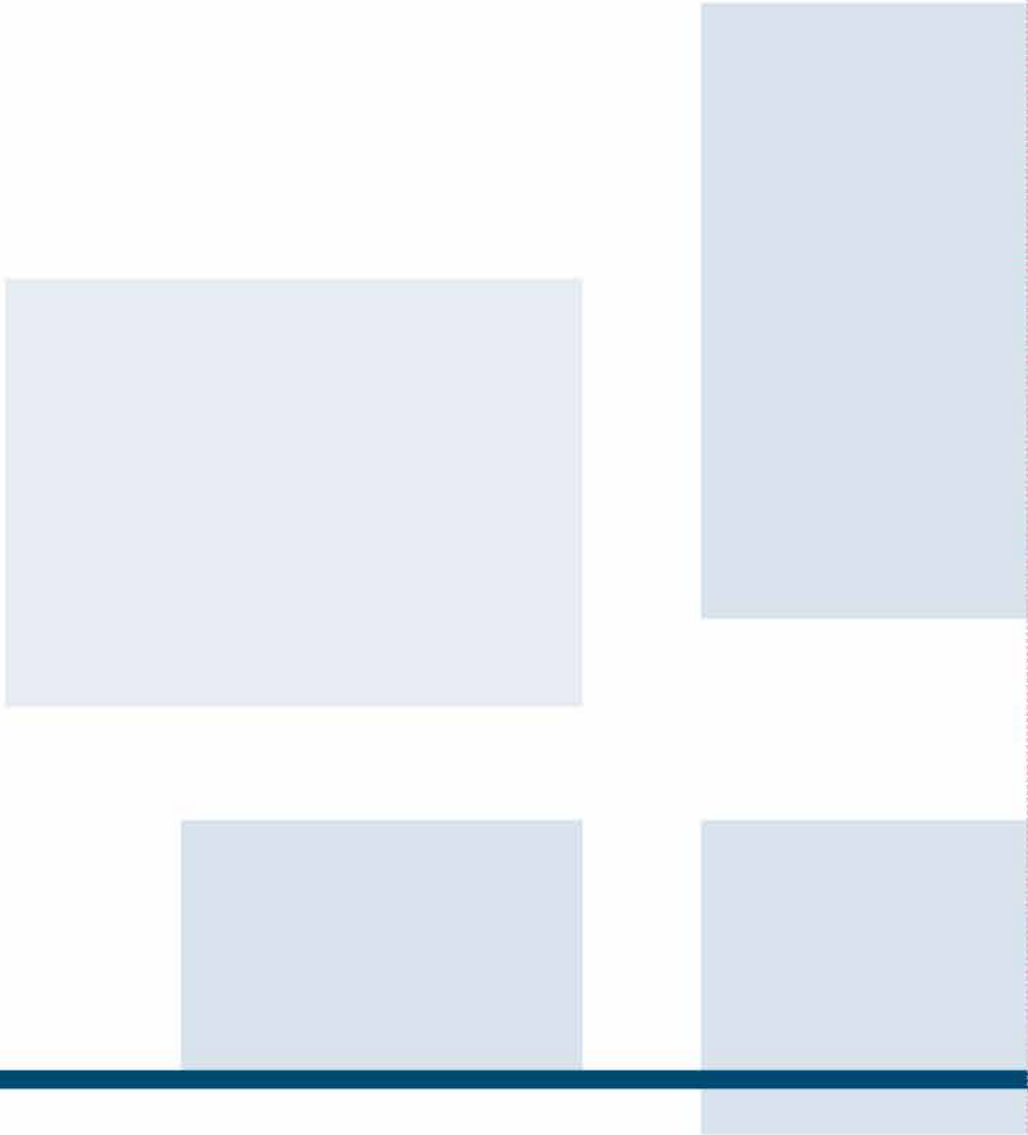
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