

STAFF REPORT

SUBJECT: 2025 Marketing Plan Preview
FROM: David Mark, Director of Customer Experience
DATE: January 6, 2025

Action Requested

Informational only.

Summary

The 2025 Marketing Plan (Plan) has been developed to guide strategies and tactics in support of LAVTA's agency objectives for the upcoming calendar year. LAVTA's on-call marketing contractors Circa Now and Ben-Her were issued a task order to complete the plan, which will be presented to the Board during the meeting.

The Plan is submitted to the Board of Directors as an 85% draft to allow any Board to be incorporated into the Plan strategies. The Plan will be finalized by January 31, 2025.

Background

The Marketing Plan (Plan) has been constructed using a traditional marketing GOST (Goal, Objectives, Strategies, Tactics) structure. It is fluid and can be changed throughout the year depending on the needs of the agency. This could be due to extreme changes in the rider environment like a pandemic pivot, or minor changes to update marketing channels as new options become more efficient or cost effective.

While the research supporting this plan is thorough, and the audience personas are comprehensive within our service area, not all are actionably incorporated. Marketing efforts, while robust, are resource constrained and therefore strategies with the greatest impact and rider reach have been selected.

Discussion:

The draft Plan is included as Attachment 1. The plan strategic objectives are:

1. Increase ridership
2. Grow Tri-Valley recognition of Wheels as a quality transit server provider
3. Develop support for Wheels as an essential service

The Plan outlines supporting marketing strategies throughout 2025 included as campaigns or community relations with supporting tactics including advertising, community outreach

(education) or events. It does not include creative concepts or media recommendations for campaigns, which are implemented separately through individual task orders.

As noted in the plan timeline, the first initiative is creation of a comprehensive brand and style guide to ensure all future work is consistent in agency representation and so that updates to existing assets can be completed, finalizing work previous started but paused during the pandemic.

The first half of 2025 will consist of campaigns and programs focused on increasing ridership. This will include a media campaign, and an outreach program focused on business and industrial parks, with a specific focus on areas serviced by underperforming routes.

The second half of 2025 will focus on gaining community support of Wheels as an essential service, focused on transit dependent riders including retail, hospitality, and essential workers.

Circa-Now's advertising work on the 2024 LAVTA holiday advertising campaign provides an example of their creative work. "Elves Commute Too" received universal praise and the creative and project management process from this effort will be applied moving forward.

Fiscal Impact

Creation of the marketing plan is included in the FY25 budget. All initiatives identified in the plan will be executed in line with the approved budget.

Recommendations

None – Information Only.

Attachments

1. Draft 2025 Marketing Plan

DRAFT

LAVTA

2025 Marketing Plan
January 2025



CIRCA

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CIRCA



TABLE OF CONTENTS

Overview	4
S.W.O.T. Analysis	9
Objectives	13
Audience Personas	14
Strategies	23
Budget	34
Timeline	35





BACKGROUND

The Livermore Amador Valley Transit Authority (LAVTA) provides access to a variety of safe, reliable and affordable public transit choices, increasing mobility and improving quality of life for those who live, work, and visit within the Tri-Valley area. Operated by LAVTA, Wheels plays a vital role in providing transportation and mobility options, including those who do not drive, either by choice or necessity. Wheels connects people to work, school, medical appointments and recreational opportunities.

Wheels fixed route services include primary routes (including Rapid), neighborhood feeders, express services, and school trippers. Wheels provides connections to Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART), Altamont Commuter Express (ACE) and County Connection. It's main transit hubs are two BART stations in Dublin / Pleasanton and the Livermore Transit Center where LAVTA customer service is located.

The joint venture between Circa-Now (Circa) and Ben-Her was initiated by LAVTA in 2024 to create and implement a marketing plan for calendar year 2025. Experienced in the transit sector, Circa uses consumer insights and industry data to make informed marketing recommendations that support client objectives.

STRATEGIC APPROACH

Primary Research

In October 2024 Circa conducted three LAVTA employee interviews and one interview with a bus driver employed by operations contractor MV Transportation. The report of findings shared employees' knowledge, opinions, and marketing ideas.

Secondary Research

Circa reviewed LAVTA-provided documents including the Short Range Transit Plan (SRTP), government reports, media articles, and industry studies.



OVERVIEW

SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS

Transit ridership in the Bay Area is down significantly since the 2020 pandemic, with BART ridership at only 40% of pre-pandemic numbers. According to a 2023 Bay Area Council poll, two issues are at play: **Working from home means fewer people are commuting to workplaces, and BART riders feel that BART is neither clean nor safe.**

“BART riders and others who have stopped using the system or reduced their use dramatically say **they would return in significant numbers if crime, safety and cleanliness issues are addressed... Concerns about crime far outweigh remote work as the reason they are not riding.**¹

Financially, BART especially is suffering, as much of its funding comes from fares, which have dramatically decreased.² While federal relief funds provided a significant stop gap, MTC (Metropolitan Transportation Commission) anticipates that these funds will be exhausted within the next two fiscal years for most transit operators.³

Still, there are signs of recovery, with 2024 ridership increasing about 6% from 2023, YOY.⁴

BART Ridership						
The average weekday BART station exits.						
	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
January	395,860	388,910	43,012	85,463	134,140	151,854
February	407,337	404,552	47,665	105,374	151,390	162,186
March	409,515	166,574	51,596	124,094	151,150	162,459
April	414,397	25,136	57,886	132,181	159,696	163,267
May	412,165	29,878	64,934	135,824	159,918	168,356
June	413,521	40,979	75,963	140,564	158,361	164,743
July	401,465	45,633	85,291	133,858	154,825	159,220
August	410,854	46,020	92,402	144,008	166,637	165,764
September	426,755	48,838	105,997	161,902	172,051	184,248
October	420,277	53,255	109,781	159,099	171,277	
November	411,183	52,198	112,282	150,242	165,802	
December	376,551	45,893	102,993	130,283	144,070	

¹ [Bay Area Council Poll 2023](#)
² 2024 Stakeholder Interviews
³ LAVTA FY24SRTP
⁴ [MTC](#)





OVERVIEW

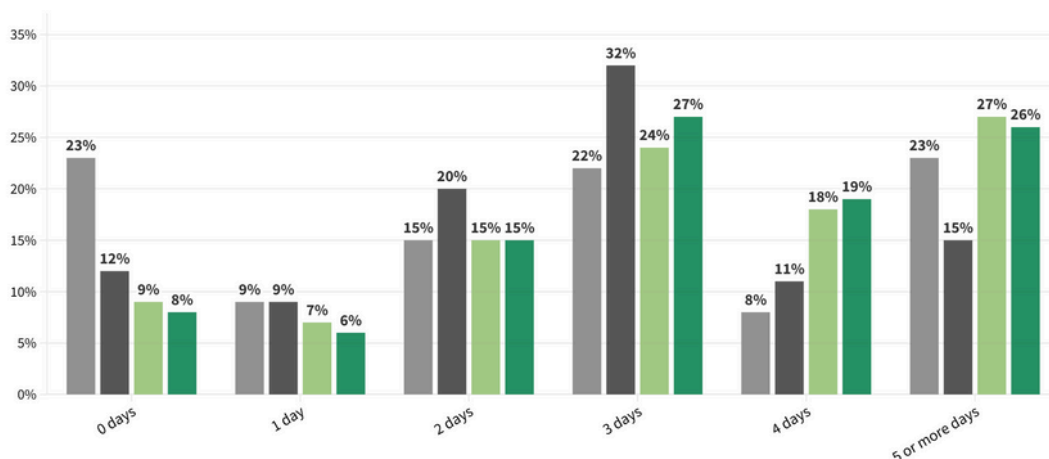
Why does this matter? BART commuters in the Tri-Valley area use LAVTA as feeder transportation, providing important first and last mile connectivity. Additionally, BART’s struggles could predicate tax woes for LAVTA, as BART could be given access to LAVTA’s budget if voters reject upcoming ballot measures for transit.⁵

A positive sign for all transit -- **the number of days Bay Area workers are coming into the workplace is steadily increasing.** Year over year, weekly frequency of workers coming in 5+ days has increased 3 - 4% and 4 or more days 10 -11%, while workers coming in 0 days a week is down 8 - 9%.⁶

What is your best estimate of the frequency your Bay Area workforce comes to the workplace each week?

Percentages are averaged across responses.

■ May 2023 (1 year ago) ■ March 2024 (Last survey) ■ May 2024 (Current) ■ In 6 months (November 2024)



While transit ridership is down across the Bay Area, LAVTA has fared better than most transit agencies due to its agility and success with non-commuter riders. Before the COVID-19 Pandemic, Wheels primarily served BART commuters. Post-pandemic, the service has transitioned to over 50% students, as well as non-traditional commuters and essential workers, weekend riders, and shoppers. Population growth in the Tri-Valley area has also been a factor.

LAVTA’s survival relies on being an integral part of the Tri-Valley community – with healthy ridership and community support of Wheels as an essential service.

⁵ 2024 Stakeholder Interviews

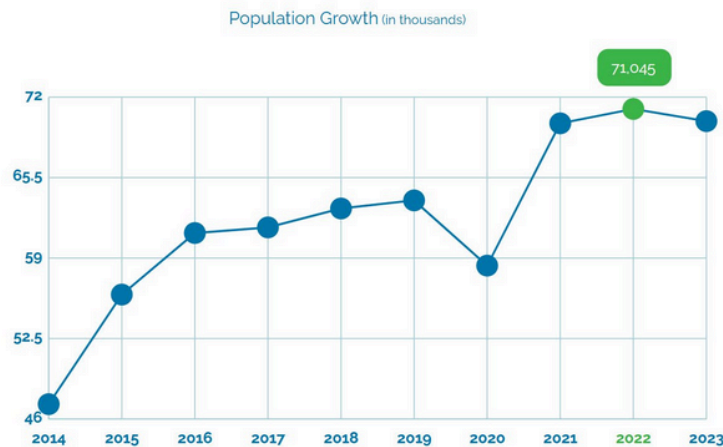
⁶ [Bay Area Council May 2024 Survey](#)



In recent years, the Tri-Valley area has seen significant population growth, which provides the opportunity to expand the service to new riders, **especially in Dublin.**⁷

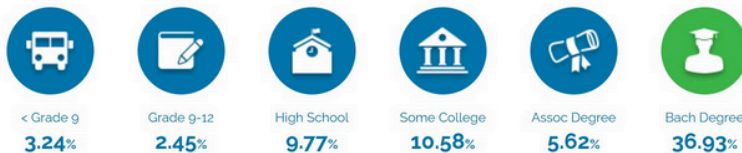
From 2010 to 2020, Dublin grew its population from 46,000 to nearly 73,000.

- Dublin is densely populated, in places where larger numbers of people live and/or work in close proximity, transit demand is higher
- Most of Dublin's population growth came from its Asian immigrant population. In 2021, 53% of Dublin's population identified as Asian, making Dublin a majority-Asian community⁸
 - Mandarin Chinese and East Indian are largest, followed by Korean and Filipino (Tagalog)
- Asian homes are often multi-generational, including non-car owning family members (youth, elderly)
- Immigrants from Asia show higher propensity to use public transit
- Dublin residents have higher household income levels (avg \$200K/annually) and higher education levels, which typically equates to lower usage of public transit⁹



Educational Attainment

73.96% of the population in Dublin have an associate's degree or higher. 68.34% have a Bachelor's degree or higher.



⁷ 2022-2027 SRTP

⁸ SF Chronicle 2/23


⁹ <https://www.dublin.ca.gov/1811/Demographics>

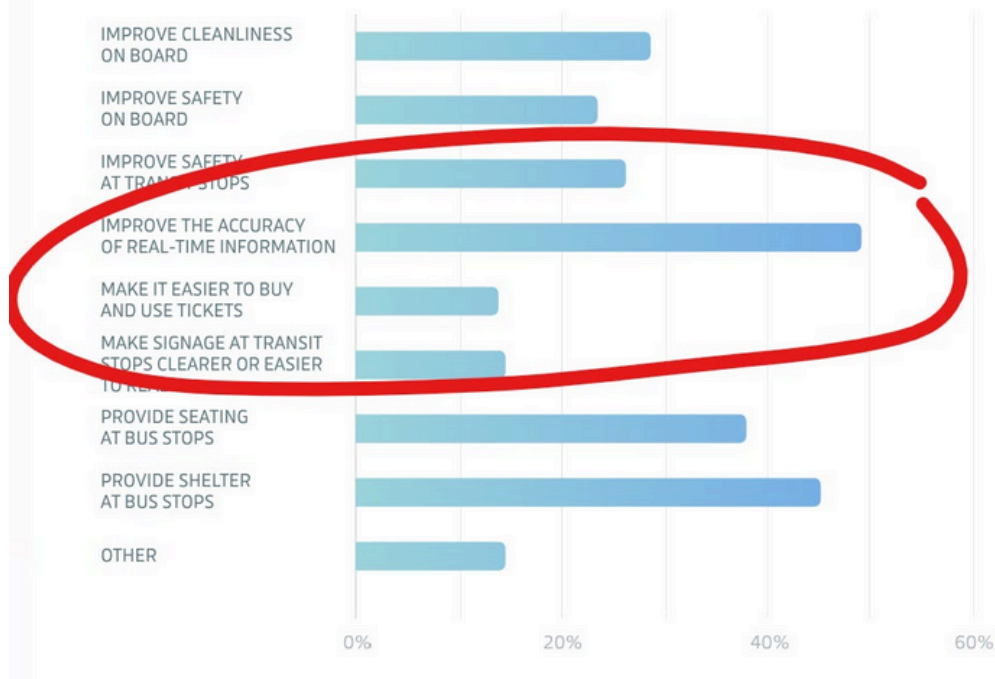


While increasing new ridership is critical, it's also important to retain existing riders and to increase their frequency of ridership.

Existing U.S. transit riders reported that the number one way to get them to ride more is to **improve the accuracy of real-time information**, a significant development indicating the Transit App is a valuable tool for increasing rider frequency.¹⁰

IMPROVEMENT PRIORITIES

 Top 3 things your transit agency could do to get you to ride more.



¹⁰ [Transit App Rider Happiness Benchmark Report Spring 2024](#)



S.W.O.T. ANALYSIS

Marketing strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats:

STRENGTHS

- Riders are very satisfied with Wheels services. They feel safe on the bus, find the drivers to be friendly, and feel the buses are clean and well-maintained ¹¹
- Ridership is at 80% of pre-pandemic numbers, an increase of 18% from the prior fiscal year
- The service is well-connected to other transit services throughout the Tri-Valley
- Real Time Passenger Info (RTPI) is available via the highly rated Transit App
 - The app is white label branded for Wheels
 - The app provides trip planning with an estimate of when to leave for the departure bus stop, when the destination is approaching, and multi-modal connections ¹²
 - The app supports Spanish

WEAKNESSES

- Many Tri-Valley residents will not ride the bus – they are high income, own cars, find parking to be plentiful, and may have negative perceptions about transit
- Driver turnover and lack of bus drivers limits route & service expansion and affects customer service
- Student riders account for 55% of ridership, disproportionately affecting resources
- Negative perceptions about transit abound: it's not needed, riders are lower-income, homeless, dirty; buses aren't safe
- People associate LAVTA with BART or AC Transit
- Limited multilingual drivers are available in a service area with diverse ridership
- Operating costs are increasing, while ridership remains below the system-wide service standards laid out in the 2022 – 2027 SRTP

¹¹ 7.1_SR_FR-Passenger-Satisfaction-Survey-2023.pdf

¹² TransitApp.com, Google Play, Apple App Store, PC Mag



S.W.O.T. ANALYSIS

OPPORTUNITIES

- Focusing on equity and inclusion to acquire new resident riders coming from other countries
- Tri-Valley area population growth, especially Dublin, offers opportunities to expand the ridership base
- Transit App rider adoption
- Bay Area Commuter Benefits Program necessitates businesses with over 50 employees to provide a subsidy (Hacienda Business Park – largest in CA and Livermore Industrial area)
- Commuters' return to work is slowly increasing, ultimately affecting Wheels ridership to and from BART
- Increasing ridership on BART could further increase Wheels ridership
- Clipper 2 will offer open payments (tap to pay)
- Clipper Bay Pass will provide access to all 27 agencies in the Bay Area and could increase ridership

THREATS

- Transit's decline in the Bay Area and BART's financial struggles
- Driver shortages
- Long wait times, excessive ride times, or service denials could limit ridership
- Low bus frequency means rider planning is required
- Decreasing on-time performance
- Potential failure of the upcoming transit tax ballot measure (2026) could severely cut funding
- Decreasing gas tax will negatively impact tax revenue
- The state-mandated transition to Zero Emission Buses (ZEB) is very expensive - the agency estimates replacing the fleet will cost an estimated additional \$61.8 million in bus and infrastructure costs between 2021 and 2034

¹³ [LAVTA ZEB Bus Rollout Plan 2022](#)



TRI-VALLEY MEDIA LANDSCAPE

ADVERTISING OPPORTUNITIES AVAILABLE IN THE TRI-VALLEY

The Tri-Valley has a modest population of 226K residents (US Census). Following are paid media outlets that are available to marketers within the area. While not all of these options will be appropriate or cost-effective for LAVTA’s marketing needs, subsets will be utilized to reach Wheel’s various personas and mapped to messaging nuances as required.



ESTIMATED COST PER MONTH / AVAILABILITY & REACH/SCALE

Traditional Media

- Out of Home | \$10K-\$30K / Low, High Reach
- Radio | \$5K-\$10K+ / High, High Reach
- Linear TV | TBD / Moderate, Moderate Reach
- Newspaper / Magazines | \$3K-\$6K / Moderate, Low Reach

Digital Media

- Search Engine Marketing | On Average <\$5K / Low, Scalable
- Paid Social | Avg. <\$5K / High, Scalable
- Programmatic | Avg. <\$5K / Moderate, Scalable
- Local News Display | Avg. <\$5K / Moderate, Scalable
- Sponsored Emails/Newsletters | \$1K-\$2K per Month /Moderate
- Streaming Audio/Podcasts | Avg. <\$10K / Moderate, Scalable
- YouTube | Avg. <\$10K / Moderate, Scalable



“Owned” vs. “paid” media content is published without directly paying for placement.

- **Bus Wraps**
- **Shelter and Transit Hub**
- **Social Media**
- **Digital Advertising**
- **Website - wheelsbus.com**
- **On-Bus Signage and Collateral**
- **Transit App Messaging**
- **Email / Newsletter (NEW!)**
- **Executive Blog - Behind the Wheel**



OBJECTIVES

1

INCREASE WHEELS RIDERSHIP

- Recruit new riders
- Retain existing base of riders
- Increase frequency of rides

2

GROW TRI-VALLEY COMMUNITY RECOGNITION OF WHEELS AS A QUALITY TRANSIT SERVICE PROVIDER

- Clean, safe, and reliable
- A point of pride for the community

3

DEVELOP SUPPORT FOR WHEELS AS AN ESSENTIAL SERVICE

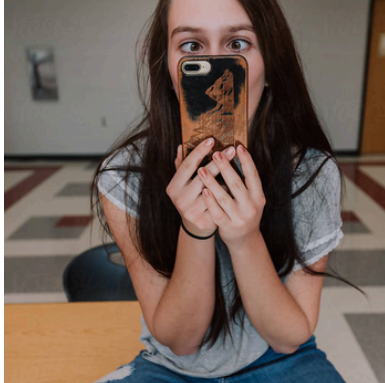
- Keeps communities running
- Creates transportation equity for residents
- Provides freedom of access for lowest income, disabled and most vulnerable
- Is critical to growing and maintaining financial support

AUDIENCE PERSONAS



TWEENS, TEENS AND SCREENAGERS

Sizing: 30.5K (Census)



Cassidy Valera is a sophomore at Amador Valley High School in Pleasanton. She can't wait for her 16th birthday this spring, and her driver's license, which should come not long after. She's hoping for a car of her own. In the meantime, her mom has been wanting her to take Wheels to school, and she's thinking about it, since a lot of her friends do. It just seems like a bit of a pain, and it's totally new and different to her.



Dylan McWilliams (age 13) is in 7th grade at Livermore's William Mendenhall Middle School. He and his friends are good kids at heart, but do a lot of stupid, rambunctious things. His parents both work and he's too young to drive, so he takes Wheels to school most of the time. He doesn't get in TOO much trouble on the bus... just a little. He's never taken Wheels outside of going to and from school.



Bella Rameriz is "16 going on 30," as her mom likes to say. She's a hard worker, getting good grades, is on the cheer squad, and already has her first part-time job. She's been taking Wheels to school but to-date, hasn't figured out the route to get to her job. It's a bit intimidating, and her parents are concerned about weirdos on the bus, especially at night.

HOW DO THEY THINK AND FEEL?

There's quite a mix of demographics among teens and tweens in the Tri-Valley area. Some come from families with plentiful disposable income and multiple cars in the home. Others come from multi-generational and/or immigrant families who are trying to get a foothold. Today's high school students are often described as feeling highly stressed, pressured to excel academically, deeply engaged with social media, concerned about their future, and sometimes disengaged from the traditional classroom. They may also report feeling tired and bored in school, with a significant portion expressing concerns about mental health issues like anxiety and depression.

Middle school students are typically characterized by a strong focus on fitting in with peers, navigating complex social dynamics, experiencing rapid physical changes, developing their own identity, and often grappling with increased academic expectations while being highly tech-savvy and comfortable with digital tools.

HOW DO WE REACH THEM?

- Owned: Social Marketing, bus shelters, on-board AVL system & signage
- Direct school outreach
- Media: TikTok, Spotify, Meta/Instagram, Snapchat, YouTube, Programmatic (Mobile Gaming), Bus Shelters/Wraps

MESSAGING OPPORTUNITIES

- Just because you're not old enough to drive doesn't mean you can't get where you need to go
- Life is stressful, but getting there doesn't have to be
- Our transit app gives you real-time info about the bus, just how you like it - on your phone

AUDIENCE PERSONAS



COMMUNITY COLLEGE STUDENTS ON THE MOVE Sizing: 8,500 students enrolled, ~650 faculty/staff



Maddie Gonzales (19) and AJ Dorrance (20) may not be going to a big university, but they're bound and determined to have as much fun going to a commuter school as they can. By doing two years at a community college, they'll be saving a whole lot of money and getting the college credits that could take them to a four year school. Both live at home with their parents and rely on public transit when they can't get a ride otherwise.



Gio Lopez (26) wasn't sure what to do with his life after high school, working several low-paying, no benefit jobs. He recently decided he'd like to develop his interest in computers and work as a web developer or computer programmer, and enrolled in JC. He's half-way to his Associates Degree, and looking forward to a high paying job with health benefits. In the meantime, money is tight, and he and his girlfriend only have one car between them. Since he's also working at Chipotle 3 days a week, it's tough to get around.



Elena Campbell (33) shares custody of her young daughter with her ex-boyfriend. She's been making ends meet at various jobs over the years, but has decided to pursue a more stable long-term career as an ultrasound technician. With more time at school, less time to work, and childcare to pay for, there's not a lot of extra money. She's living with her mom to make ends meet and sharing one car, which is more than a little complicated, but she's grateful for the help. She's got a fairly flexible part-time job as a receptionist at a hair salon, which helps pay the bills.

HOW DO THEY THINK AND FEEL?

These students aren't rich in money at the moment, but all of them are rich in hopes and aspirations for the future. They've been through some stuff, good and bad, and are working hard on their studies, which they hope will bring them success and well-being. All are working part-time jobs, and it's not easy getting to classes, getting to work on time, and finding time for their studies while having a social life and personal relationships. While Maddie and AJ are hoping to make as many friends as possible (not always easy at a commuter school), Gio and Elena are trying to be as focused as possible on getting the credits they need to get their Associates Degrees and launch their new careers.

They're part of a very politically progressive generation, and are likely to support LGBTQ rights, environmental causes, and racial and gender equity. They're also skeptical of corporations and government agencies and don't easily believe marketing messages. They are almost always exposed to mobile devices, high speed Wi-Fi, social media, and an internet landscape that allows for constant connectedness. They're empathetic, progressive, and values-driven. Driving is great because you have control of when and where - but riding the bus saves a ton of money and gives them time to study or catch up on texts and emails instead of focusing on the road.

HOW DO WE REACH THEM?

- Owned: Social Marketing, bus shelters, on-board AVL system & signage
- Direct school outreach
- Be real: Authentic, modern messaging and branding that they can believe
- Media: TikTok, Spotify, Meta/Instagram, Snapchat, Programmatic (Display), Bus Shelters/Wraps

MESSAGING OPPORTUNITIES

- Save over \$12,000 a year - take the bus (AAA)
- Great technology/introducing the Transit App: Real time info on your phone, just how you like it
- Peer reviews: Don't take our word for it - check out these real reviews and quotes from riders

AUDIENCE PERSONAS

ESSENTIAL WORKERS

Sizing: 14K (LinkedIn)



Kayla Velasquez (age 19) has a good restaurant job but no car. She can sometimes get a ride to her job from her parents, but they work too, and it gets really complicated trying to get to and from work on time.



Alex Rivera, 21, works retail at the Livermore Outlets. He's doing pretty well but at this point owning his own car is still out of reach.



Gabriel Santos works as a line cook at a restaurant in Pleasanton. His car broke down last month and it doesn't make sense to repair it. His wife has been driving him to work but it's really complicated. The bus could be a good option - but he heard frequency isn't that often.

HOW DO THEY THINK AND FEEL?

Kayla, Cayson, and Gabriel have a relatively low household incomes (less than \$50k) and owning their own car is out of reach. They're aware of the bus, but following a bus schedule is tough.

Also, safety is a concern. Gabriel used to live in Oakland - he took the bus from time to time but after seeing a few altercations with homeless people, he didn't feel it was the safest bet. Kayla's parents are a little concerned about her riding the bus alone at night.

At the same time, they have a genuine need for transportation, and if they could play games, scroll social media, or just relax while commuting, that would be nice.

They do pretty much everything with their smart phones, and usually go to Tiktok and YouTube for info and entertainment. They haven't used the Transit App. They tend to be cynical about what marketing and advertising promises - they're a lot more likely to take recommendations and advice from a real person or peer review.

HOW DO WE REACH THEM?

- Owned: Social Marketing, bus shelters, on-board AVL system
- Direct employer outreach
- Media: Meta, LinkedIn, Programmatic (CTV, Display, Mobile Gaming) ; YouTube, Spotify, iHeart, Audacy; Bus Wraps/Shelters

MESSAGING OPPORTUNITIES

- Wheels is safe, clean, and reliable
- Great technology/ introducing the Transit App: Real time info on your phone, just how you like it
- Peer reviews: Don't take our word for it -- check out these real reviews and quotes from riders
- Save over \$12,000 a year - take the bus (AAA)

FAMILIES IN MULTI-GENERATIONAL HOMES (CHINESE/TAIWANESE)

Sizing: ~35-45K All Ethnicities Tri-Valley (Census)



WHO ARE THEY, AND HOW DO THEY THINK AND FEEL?

Breadwinner: When Phil Lee was recruited to be a developer for NVIDIA, he, his parents, wife, and daughter decided to leave their native China to move to Dublin. Phil is working hard at a stressful job. At the same time he feels responsible for not only for his family's financial well-being, but their personal well-being.

Spouse: Ying isn't working at the moment in order to help the family transition into their new country, but she's also an accomplished software developer and will likely go back to work soon. She does have a car but when she goes back to work, grandparents will be stuck at home.

Grandparents: They don't drive, and don't speak English well. They did use public transit in China, but it's hard to learn new things and get somewhere when the bus driver doesn't even speak their language. Living without transportation can be boring and lonely at times.

Child: at this point she's too young to have much influence, but will want to get around in a couple of years.

Family holds a central place in Chinese society, deeply influencing traditions, values, and everyday life. The importance of family extends beyond immediate relatives, shaping how people interact, celebrate, and support each other. There's a tradition of respecting elders and an emphasis on filial piety.

HOW DO WE REACH THEM?

- Use simplified Chinese characters in collateral
- Owned: Social Marketing, bus shelters in Dublin area, on-board AVL system and signage
- Door knocking in Dublin
- Media: Programmatic (CTV, display, Mobile Gaming); Local News, Jeopardy, Wheel of Fortune; Meta; Local Newspaper / Magazines; In-Language Radio, Bus Shelters/Wraps
- Direct mail to Dublin apartment complex addresses

MESSAGING OPPORTUNITIES

- Wheels respects people from all cultures and provides the same great customer service to all
- Ease of Use: You don't have to be homebound - traveling on Wheels is easier than you think, and there's a world out there that doesn't require a car
- Peace of mind: Your relatives don't have to be homebound
- The bus is great for seniors just like you (share examples of people like them taking the bus)
- Highlight family-oriented values

AUDIENCE PERSONAS

FAMILIES IN MULTI-GENERATIONAL HOMES (INDIAN)



WHO ARE THEY, AND HOW DO THEY THINK AND FEEL?

Breadwinner: Indira recently relocated from India with her husband, father, mother, and two daughters. As a computer systems analyst for Apple, her job is intense and stressful, with long hours. At the same time, as the main breadwinner, she feels a lot of pressure to be there for her family emotionally and financially.

Spouse: Mayukh works from home for a software company back in India. They're shopping for a second car at the moment. Money isn't a problem, but first, he must get a driver's license, etc.

Grandparents: They don't drive, and don't speak English well. They did use public transit in India, but it's hard to learn new things and get somewhere when the bus driver doesn't even speak their language. Living without transportation can be boring and lonely at times.

Children: The oldest (6th grade) been taking Wheels to school but haven't ventured to take it beyond from home to school and back.

The family is an important institution that plays a central role in the lives of most Indians. The interests of the family usually take priority over those of the individual, and decisions affecting one's personal life – such as marriage and career paths – are generally made in consultation with one's family. Education and career excellence, especially in the fields of science, are very important to them. **The Indian community in the US reports relatively high levels of discrimination.**

HOW DO WE REACH THEM?

- English is widely spoken, but using Hindi or other Indian languages can resonate deeply.
- Cultural References: Incorporate Indian cultural references, festivals, and traditions into campaigns
- Direct mail to apartment complex addresses
- Door knocking in Dublin
- Media: Programmatic (CTV, display, Mobile Gaming); Local News, Jeopardy, Wheel of Fortune; Meta; Local Newspaper / Magazines; In-Language Radio, as available, Bus Shelters/Wraps

MESSAGING OPPORTUNITIES

- Wheels respects people from all cultures and provides the same great customer service to all
- Ease of Use: You don't have to be homebound - traveling on Wheels is easier than you think
- Peace of mind: Your relatives don't have to be homebound
- Get out of the house: There's a world out there that doesn't require a car
- The bus is great for seniors just like you (share examples of people like them taking the bus)

AUDIENCE PERSONAS



SENIORS IN ALL LIVING SITUATIONS Sizing: ~3-4K (Retirement Communities in Geo)



Barbara Jusko, 76, came to the US from Poland when she was 8 years old, settling with her family in Pennsylvania, and later moving to California. She lost her husband a few years ago and is currently living in a retirement home, where there's more socializing.



Shirley Davidson, 81, was a school teacher in Pleasanton for 42 years, and she's lived in the same home for 47 years. A Stanford graduate, she loves smoothies, neighborhood walks, and long phone conversations. She supports and cares for 3 feral cats along with the resident squirrels and birds that she feeds from her feeder.



Al and Nancy Johnson, late 70s, have been together since their wedding in 1969. A lot has changed since then! For one, between them, they take 12 different daily medications. She plays Sudoku to keep her mind fit, while he likes to do crossword puzzles and watch Price is Right, Fox News, and other day-time TV. They've had a few fender benders lately and their children are telling them not to drive.

HOW DO THEY THINK AND FEEL?

Today's senior citizens are increasingly active and engaged, often seeking to maintain a healthy lifestyle through travel, new hobbies, and physical activity, while also facing potential challenges like managing chronic health conditions, dealing with memory concerns, and navigating social isolation

- Some seniors are very healthy and active, while others may deal with chronic health issues that affect their mobility and daily routines
- Many prioritize comfort, social interaction, and meaningful activities over strenuous physical pursuits
- Maintaining connections with family and friends is important for many older adults
- Their life experiences often provide a wealth of knowledge and perspective
- Many are comfortable using technology to stay connected and access information. Others find it overwhelming

HOW DO WE REACH THEM?

- Social Marketing
- Radio/Audio
- Community center outreach
- Onboard signage and AVL system
- Media: Programmatic (CTV, Display, Mobile Gaming); TV Local News, Jeopardy, Wheel of Fortune; Meta; Newspaper / Magazines; Bus Shelters/Wraps

MESSAGING OPPORTUNITIES

- Ease of Use: You don't have to be homebound - traveling on Wheels is easier than you think, and there's a world out there that doesn't require a car
- The bus is great for seniors just like you (share examples of people like them taking the bus)

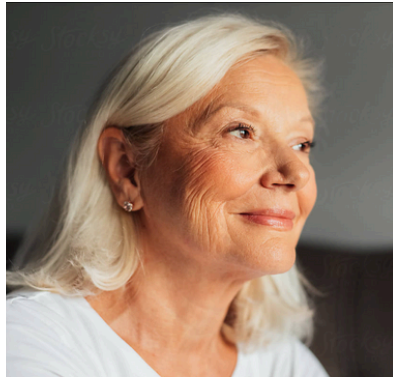
AUDIENCE PERSONAS



THE DEDICATED DRIVERS Sizing: 106K (Census, % HH over \$100K, 2 adults on avg)



Justin Christensen (48) is an architect who lives in Pleasanton. He works hybrid between home and his office in San Francisco, to which he commutes 2-3 times a week in his Range Rover. If traffic got really bad, and if BART got cleaned up, he'd consider taking BART, but for now he's delighted with his car.



Linda Schwartz (67) lives in a beautiful custom home overlooking a vineyard in Livermore. She enjoys shopping, bridge club, interior design, and travel. She has a great community in Livermore and feels blessed to enjoy her golden years there. She loves her Mercedes and while she wouldn't take the bus, her grandchildren take Wheels to school.



Jenna Lee (39) grew up in Pleasanton and is so happy to be raising her own family there. Her part-time job as an HR professional keeps her busy, and when she's not on Zoom calls, she's driving the kids to school, sports, music lessons, friends' houses, and back home again. She couldn't live without her SUV that's always overflowing with sports gear, backpacks, and kids.

HOW DO THEY THINK AND FEEL?

- With a lot of disposable income and multiple cars in the home, these middle-high income Tri-Valley residents are wedded to their way of life -- behind the driver's seat
- They're good citizens - they care about the well-being of their community and like to see the residents doing well. They recycle, compost, vote, and support social justice
- They have varying degrees of commitment to equity and equality, but are supportive in general of taking care of the unhoused and providing support to those who need it
- They care about the environment, understand that public transit reduces greenhouse gases, and appreciate having clean, well-run public transit for those who need it
- It's too bad BART has gone downhill - it's great to have public transit for getting in and out of the city. Generally speaking, they have no reason to take the bus

HOW DO WE REACH THEM?

- Portray Wheels' services and riders in a respected and empathetic light
- Media: Meta, LinkedIn; Programmatic (CTV, Display); Iheart, Audacy, Pandora, Spotify; 580 Bulletin; Local Newspaper / Magazines

MESSAGING OPPORTUNITIES

- For those with less, we provide an essential service (so everyone has a ride)
- We're making the community better - getting people where they need to go, while reducing traffic and emissions
- As the Tri-Valley population grows, we're building towards the future (better buses, transportation time, and technology that will keep our roads congestion-free and our skies more free of pollution)



ADDITIONAL CURRENT RIDERS

Because not all riders will be directly targeted in marketing campaigns, full personas for each weren't developed. This page acknowledges those current riders who will not be targeted with paid advertising, but who Wheels continues to support.

THE TRANSIT-DEPENDENT RIDER



Rodrigo and Maria Hernandez don't have a car or license, and rely on Wheels for errands and visits.



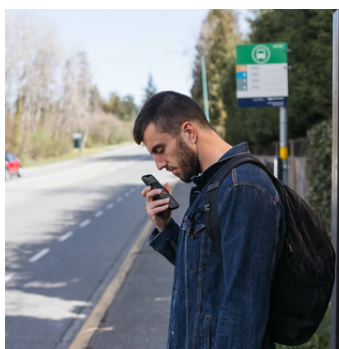
These riders rely on Wheels almost completely for transportation.

BART COMMUTERS



Some current commuters are saving \$5 a day taking Wheels to the BART station; they prefer reading and working on the train over sitting in a car in traffic.

THE DISABLED COMMUNITY



Many disabled people in the Tri-Valley area (those capable of using fixed route services) rely on Wheels as their only way to get where they need to go.





1

INCREASE WHEELS RIDERSHIP

- Recruit new riders
- Retain existing base of riders
- Increase frequency of rides

2

GROW TRI-VALLEY COMMUNITY RECOGNITION OF WHEELS AS A QUALITY SERVER PROVIDER

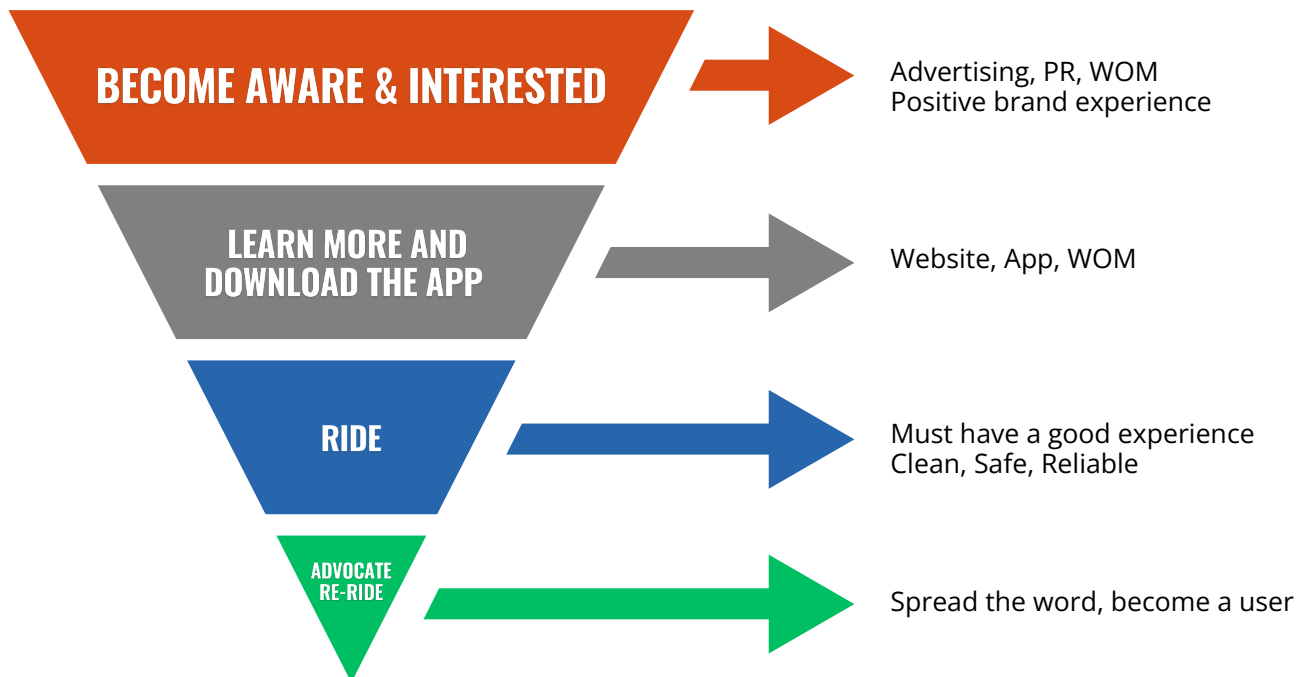
- Clean, safe, and reliable
- A point of pride for the community

3

DEVELOP SUPPORT FOR WHEELS AS AN ESSENTIAL SERVICE

- Keeps communities running
- Creates transportation equity for residents
- Provides freedom of access for lowest income, disabled and most vulnerable
- Is critical to growing and maintaining financial support

PATH TO RIDERSHIP & ADVOCACY



STRATEGY LEGEND

A key to understanding the structure and info in the plan initiatives.



Supports Objective X: Identifies which objective the strategy will help achieve

BENEFITS

Benefits are the advantages the agency and rider receive through successful implementation of the strategy

- Benefit A
- Benefit B
- Benefit C

TACTICS

Tactics are all the marketing methods to be used within the strategy and include initiatives like advertising, publicity, community outreach and events, and public relations.

- Tactic A
- Tactic B
- Tactic C

TARGET PERSONAS

Personas are created to understand who the regional audience is and what matters to them derived from info about existing riders of LAVTA and other Bay Area transit options, secondary research into their demographic, findings from existing LAVTA data, interviews, and anecdotal knowledge. This information creates a mix of fictional personas that closely resemble real people.

THE DEDICATED DRIVERS



CHINESE AND INDIAN FAMILIES IN MULTI-GENERATIONAL HOMES



STRATEGY: BRAND IMPLEMENTATION & STYLE GUIDE



Supports All Objectives

BENEFITS

- Consistent aesthetic across all marketing materials
- Consistent tone of voice across all marketing materials
- Build brand/style guidelines to apply across all assets

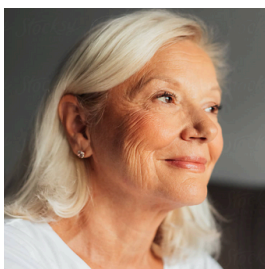
TACTICS

- Complete implementation of 2018 rebrand (suspended during pandemic)
- Build brand/style guidelines to apply across all assets
- Develop messaging frameworks by persona, providing go-to messaging for each audience.

TARGET PERSONAS

All residents of the Tri-Valley community, (whether riders or not) including:

THE DEDICATED DRIVERS



CHINESE AND INDIAN FAMILIES IN MULTI-GENERATIONAL HOMES





STRATEGY: DEVELOP A “DOWNLOAD THE APP” CAMPAIGN

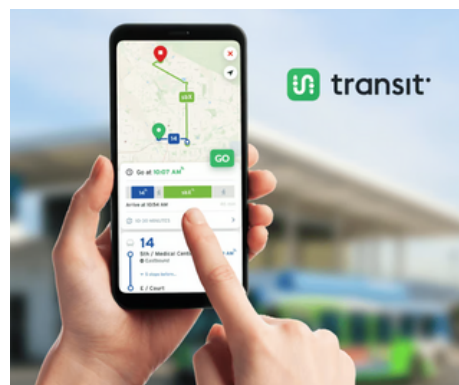
Supports Objective 1: Increase Ridership

BENEFITS

- Agency communication through rider alert push notifications
- Efficient time usage for rides with arrival estimates
- Ease of multi-modal trip planning

TACTICS

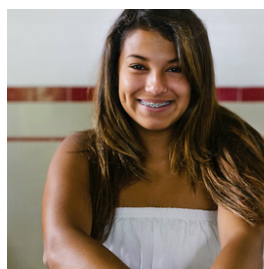
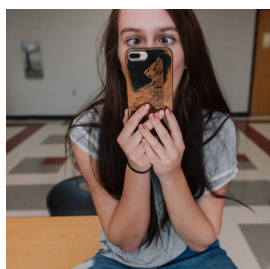
- Increase app downloads
- Advertise out of home and on bus
- Digital advertising



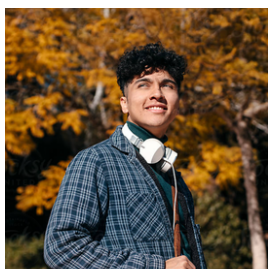
TARGET PERSONAS

All riders and potential riders, **with a special focus on:**

TWEENS AND TEENS



COMMUNITY COLLEGE STUDENTS ON THE MOVE



“People don’t know the transit app exists. Most of the buses have a little thing but people don’t see it...we should tell people exactly which app to download and how to use it.

Once they have it, I hear that lot of people love the app – the trip planner is nice.”

- Angela, bus operator

STRATEGY: CAMPAIGN TARGETING ASIAN MULTIGENERATIONAL HOMES



Supports Objective 1: Increase Ridership

BENEFITS

- Introduce Wheels to potential riders in multigenerational homes
- Provide a cost effective, group movement of hospitality and retail service workers
- Reach the workers in the technology industry for San Francisco return to work mandates

TACTICS

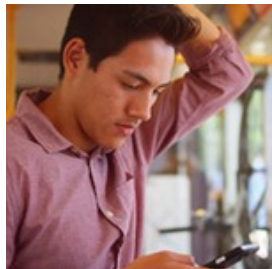
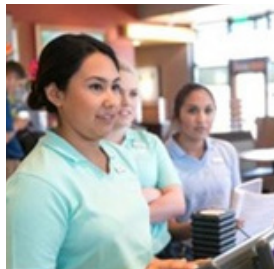
- Develop messaging to convey Wheels' quality, safety, and inclusiveness, with themes around family values and success in their new community
- Translate into Hindi, Mandarin on radio and possibly others
- Paid Media Plan: Geotarget Dublin with TV/CTV/Streaming Video Social Marketing Audio & Podcast OOH Newspaper/Magazine Glass bus shelters

TARGET PERSONAS

CHINESE AND INDIAN FAMILIES IN MULTI-GENERATIONAL HOMES



ESSENTIAL WORKERS



STRATEGY: INCREASE BUSINESS AND INDUSTRIAL PARK RIDERSHIP



Supports Objective 1: Increase Ridership

BENEFITS

- Enrollment in Bay Area Commuter Benefits Program, the employee subsidy required for all Bay Area employers with 50 or more employees through HR onboarding
- Clipper electronic fare conversions from “flash” passes
- Increase in ACE and BART transfer usage
- Bay Pass trial referrals to MTC

TACTICS

- Business canvassing
- Distribution of B2B Wheels Introductory Kits
- Distribution of ACE Train schedule and connections
- Onsite seminars for employees
- Employee onboarding packages and collateral
- Bay Pass trial education
- Clipper C2 institutional account onboarding support (Q3 '25)

TARGET PERSONAS

TRANSIT DEPENDENT RIDER



BART COMMUTER



DEDICATED DRIVERS



ADDITIONAL B2B DECISION MAKERS

- Hacienda Business Park and Livermore Industrial Area
- Business Owners
- Human Resource Professionals



STRATEGY: CONDUCT COMMUNITY OUTREACH



Supports Objective 1: Increase Ridership

BENEFITS

- Education on available services and subsidies
- Targeted support of dependent audiences
- Early onboarding at schools creates an expected amenity

TACTICS

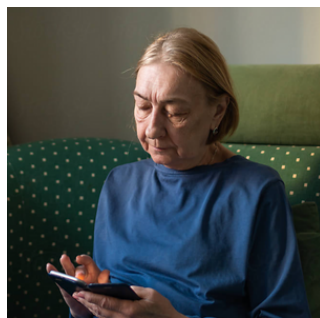
- Conduct travel training at senior and community centers
- Conduct annual school administrator level meetings to determine student needs and ridership
- Promote Class Pass
- Participate at tabling at STPP* participating school orientation
- Tabling at start of school at Las Positas college
- Provide a new student transit kit for educational institutions
- Conduct developmentally challenged student training and field trips

TARGET PERSONAS

TWEENS AND TEENS



SENIORS



*Alameda County Transportation Commission (ACTC) Student Transit Pass Program (STPP)
ACTC STPP is a pilot program supporting the traveling needs of Alameda County students with fully subsidized transportation and promotes efficient, cost-effective transit options. The program works with Clipper® Youth cards, provided free of charge. In the Wheels service area, Livermore students have universal acceptance and Dublin and Pleasanton students are registered after a household income evaluation.

STRATEGY: ATTEND COMMUNITY EVENTS



Supports Objective 2: Grow recognition of Wheels as a quality server provider

BENEFITS

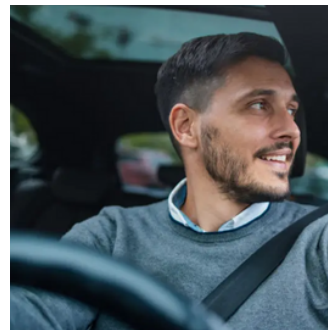
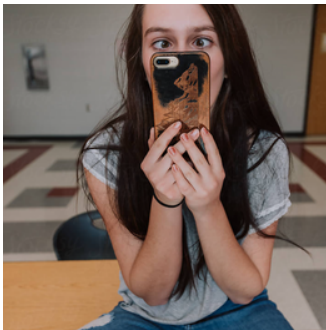
- Convey the value and benefits of Wheels services
- Reinforce Wheels image as a quality service
- Keep public transit as a consideration when residents need a temporary or supplemental transit option
- Support positive relationships with board of director interests and the public

TACTICS

- Vehicles in parades
- Sponsoring tables at festivals
- Partnering with charities

TARGET PERSONAS

ALL



EVENTS

- Dublin St. Patrick's Day
- Livermore Wine Festival
- Pacific Bus Museum
- Dublin Splatter
- Dublin Trunk or Treat
- Farmer's Markets
- Holiday Parades
- Holiday Stuff A Bus



STRATEGY: 40TH ANNIVERSARY INITIATIVE



Supports Objective 2: Grow recognition of Wheels as a quality server provider

BENEFITS

- Show Wheels' longevity and dedication to the community through a 9-month initiative celebrating 40 years of service
- Highlight the high quality nature of Wheels through brand and messaging
- Underscore Wheels' value to the community as an essential service

TACTICS

- Create a visual theme, including logo "bug" to be used in websites, marketing materials, and advertising
- Place graphics on bus shelters, collaterals, on-bus signage, event signage, etc.
- Create a themed bus wrap
- Develop social media advertising campaign (paid and owned) describing Wheels milestones
- Create lapel pins and other premium items for employees and partners



TARGET PERSONAS

ALL



STRATEGY: ESSENTIAL WHEELS CAMPAIGN



Supports Objective 3: Wheels as an essential service

BENEFITS

- Create awareness for the service and the brand, inspiring new ridership
- Demonstrate Wheels' essential role supporting basic services
- Demonstrate Wheels enablement of amenities in restaurants, retail, and hospitality
- Demonstration of equity and inclusivity
- Shows how essential funding public transit is

TACTICS

- Produce an evergreen :30 second video
- Advertising including digital, print, and social media

TARGET PERSONAS

ALL



This campaign will target all residents of the Tri-Valley area, including existing riders, future riders, and dedicated drivers

STRATEGY: EQUITY AND INCLUSION INITIATIVE



Supports Objective 3: Wheels as an essential service

BENEFITS

- Ensures Title VI compliance
- Extends information to a unacknowledged audiences
- Provides recognition and appreciation to specific communities beyond ethnicity and language
- Informs communities of how to participate in the feedback process and the channels available

TACTICS

- Create additional brand messaging for all aspects of marketing
- Offer information and services in multiple languages to cater to meet Title VI requirements
- Employ clear visuals, such as maps, diagrams, and infographics, to convey information effectively
- Public Hearings: gather input from diverse communities
- Advisory Committees: to provide ongoing feedback and guidance



STRATEGY: HOLIDAY CAMPAIGN



Supports Objective 3: Wheels as an essential service

BENEFITS

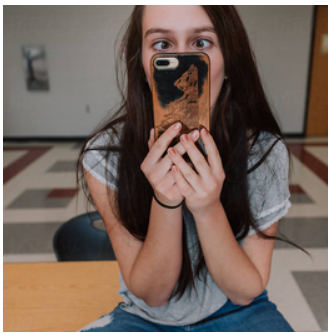
- Demonstrates the agency's commitment to give back to the community
- Shows empathy for the sacrifices of service workers

TACTICS

- Conduct Stuff-a-Bus campaign or charitable equivalent
- Participate in holiday parades
- Holiday themed advertising campaign including print and radio and and social media

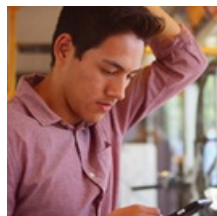
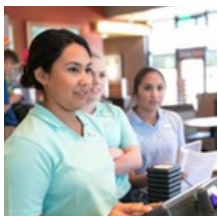
TARGET PERSONAS

ALL

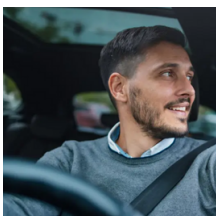


FOCUS PERSONAS

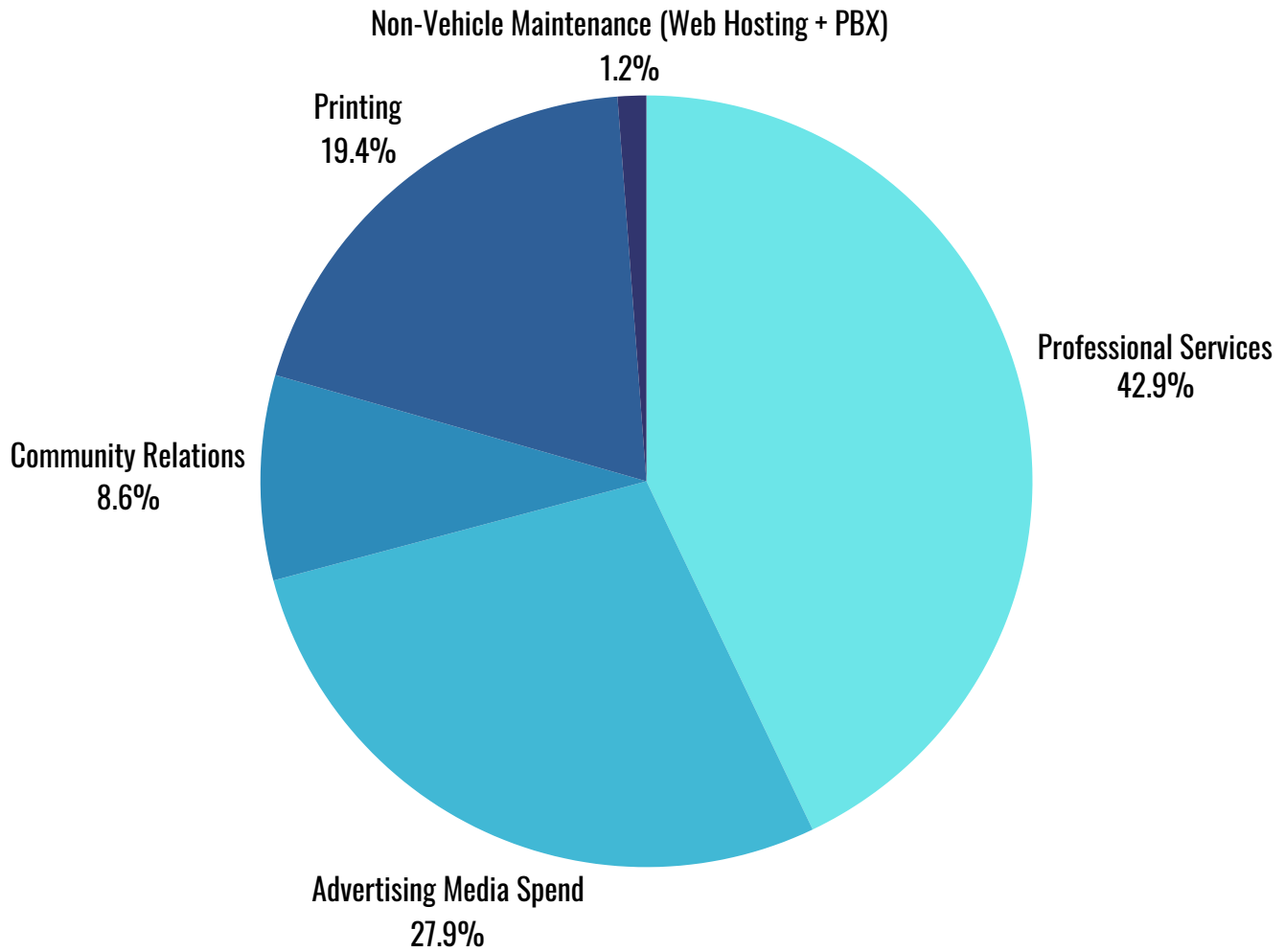
ESSENTIAL WORKERS



DEDICATED DRIVERS



2025 BUDGET BREAKDOWN



Professional Services	\$215,000
Advertising - Media Spend	\$140,000
Community Relations	\$43,000
Printing	\$97,000
Non Vehicle Maintenance (Website Hosting + PBX Hold Box)	\$6,000
Total Expenditure	\$501,000

2025 TIMELINE



FYQ3

40th Anniversary Asset Development & Implementation

Brand Guidelines Development

Brand Guidelines Finalized

Multigenerational Campaign Development

Dublin St. Patricks Day Event

Business and Industrial Park Toolkit Development

FYQ4

Multigenerational Campaign Live

Livermore Wine Festival

Essential Wheels Campaign Development

Business and Industrial Park Outreach

FYQ1

Essential Wheels Campaign Live

App Campaign Development

App Campaign Live

Dublin Splatter

Holiday Campaign Development

FYQ2

Dublin Trunk or Treat

Holiday Campaign Live

Holiday Parades
Holiday Stuff A Bus

2026 Marketing Plan Finalized

Note: Community Outreach is ongoing throughout the year