

LOW COST & CREATIVE WAYS TO BOOST RIDERSHIP

APTA Emerging Leaders



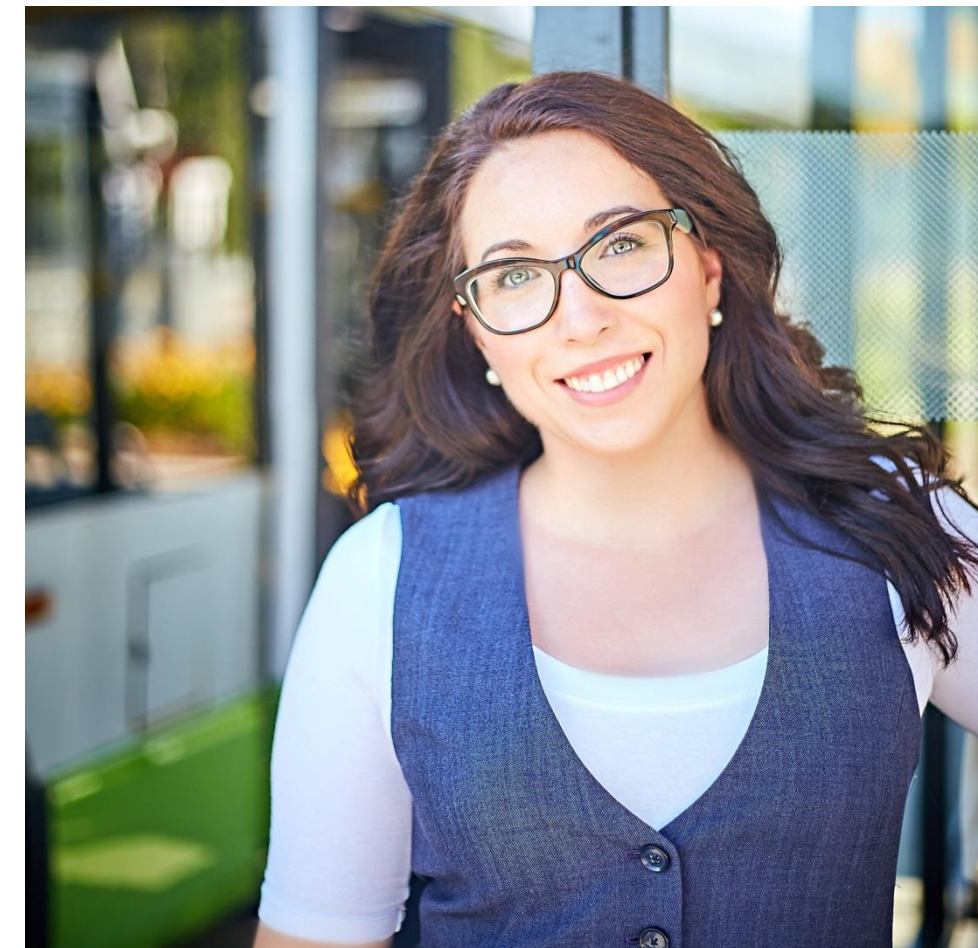
OUR TEAM



Jose Barreda
Superintendent
Baltimore, MTA



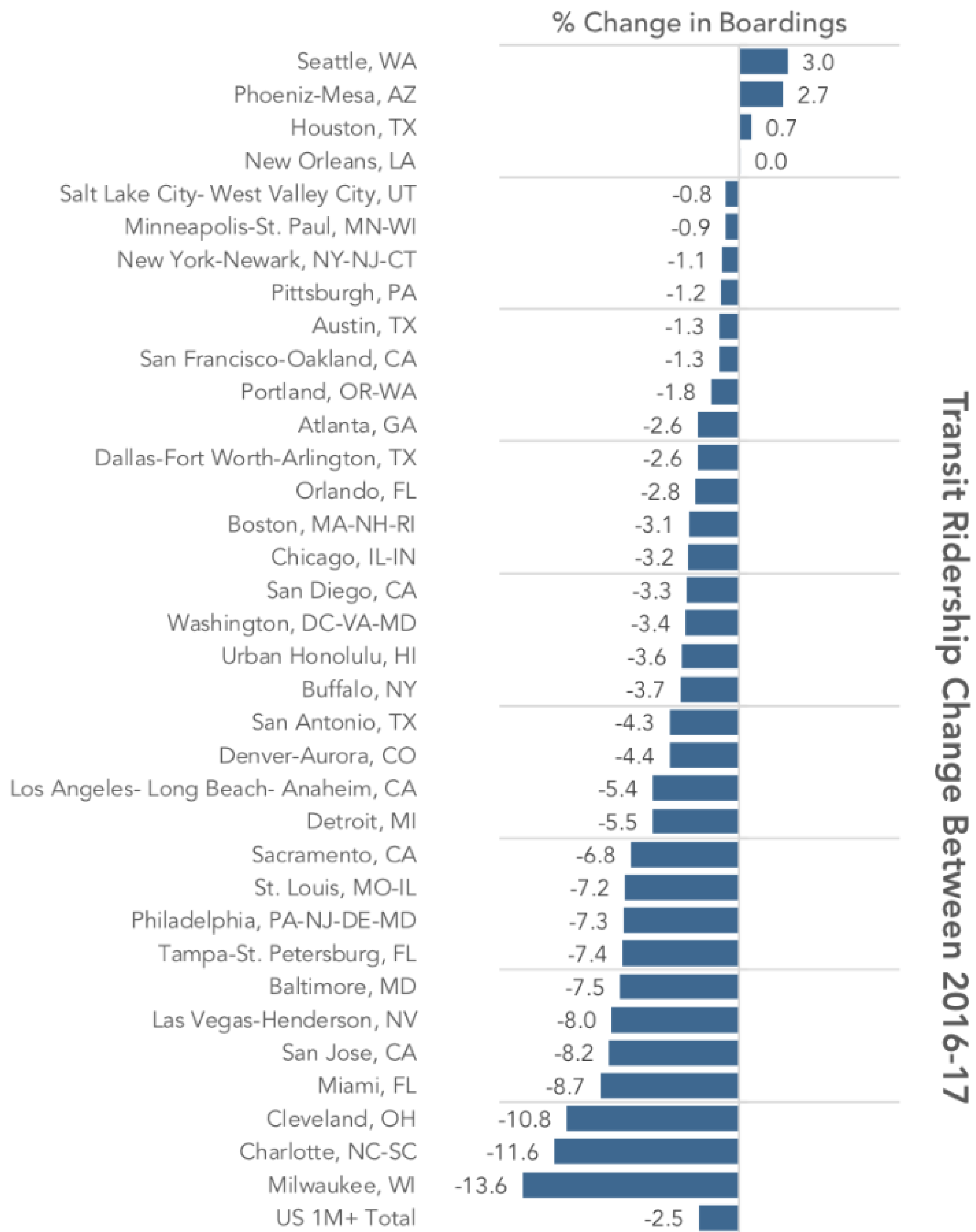
Kyle Gebhart
Deputy Director, SBS
New York City DOT



Alicia Leite
Transportation Planner
Connecticut DOT



Spring Worth
Transportation Planner
DC DOT



BACKGROUND

- In most US cities, transit ridership has fallen in 2017. Outliers have invested heavily in service increases or network redesigns
- Many theories behind the cause of the decline including:
 - frequency of service and unreliability
 - gas prices
 - income level and unemployment rate
 - TNCs

Source: NTD, APTA 2017 Q4 Ridership Report

Mythbusting Ridership Decline Causation Theories



Leadership APTA Class of 2017

Low Riders Team:

Holly Arnold
Joe Coker
Kimberly Fragola
Francis Julien
Lucas Olson

BACKGROUND

- Besides funding, “there are several other creative ways to impact ridership that cost little to no money.”
- Key takeaway- “transit agencies should look for ways to improve their transit system without an infusion of funds.”



METHODOLOGY

- Conduct interviews with transit agencies with low-cost or creative programs to increase ridership
- Core research questions:
 - What programs exist at the agency?
 - Are low-cost and creative incentive programs effective at increasing ridership?
 - What are the programs' goals beyond increasing ridership?

AGENCY INTERVIEWS

Large Agencies (>100M annual trips)	Medium Agencies (>10M annual trips)	Small Agencies (<10M annual trips)
CTA (Chicago, IL)	Metro Transit (St. Louis, MO)	MTA (Nashville, TN)
MARTA (Atlanta, GA)	Capital Metro (Austin, TX)	CATA (State College, PA)
King County Metro (Seattle, WA)	CTtransit (Hartford, CT)	DDOT (Washington, DC)
MTA (Baltimore, MD)	Foothill Transit (West Covina, CA)	Intercity Transit (Olympia, WA)
	STA (Spokane, WA)	SARTA (Canton, OH)
		MATBUS (Fargo, ND)

**“annual trips” are defined as unlinked passenger trips as reported by the National Transit Database*

AGENCY CASE STUDIES

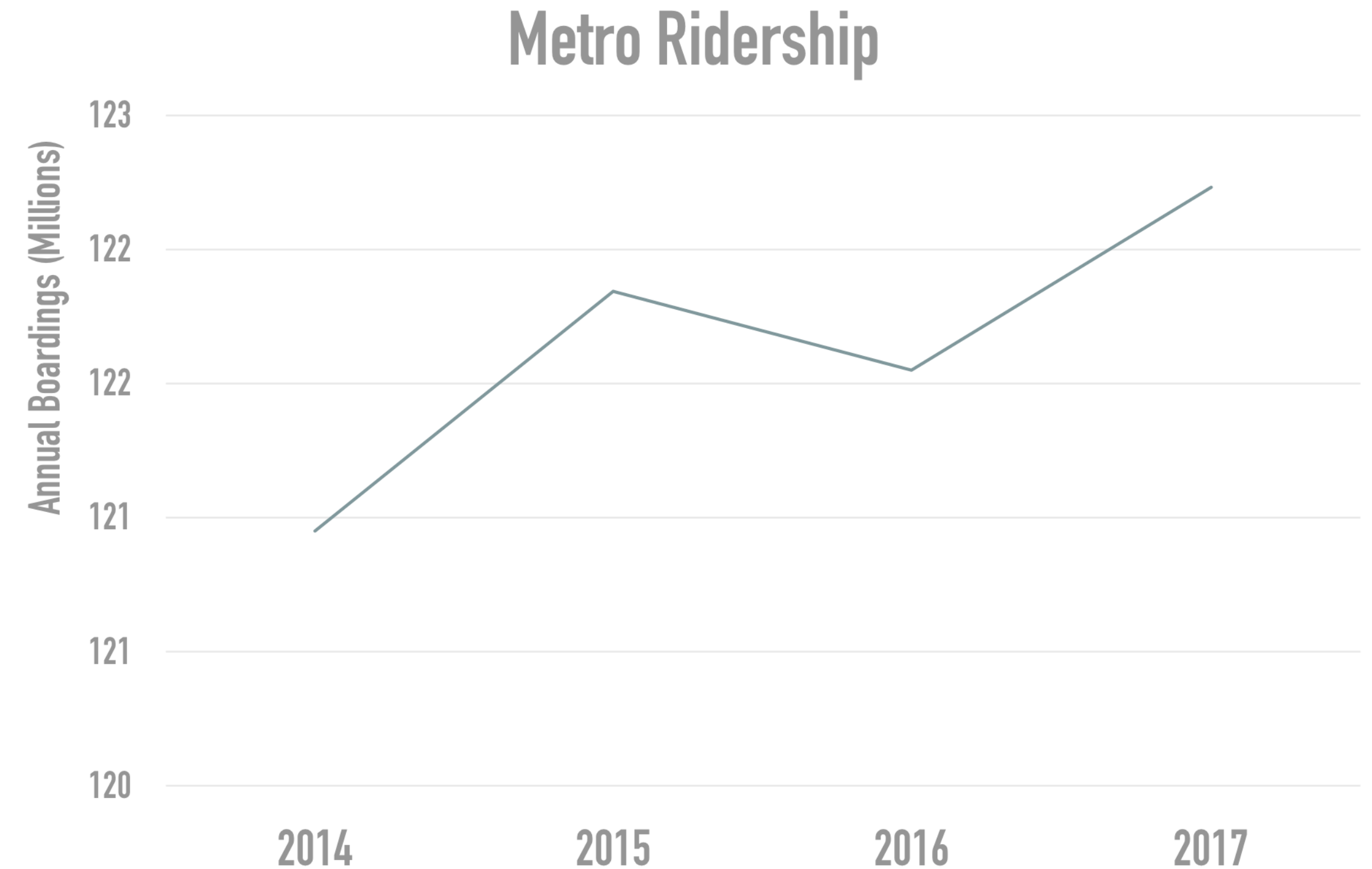
KING COUNTY METRO (SEATTLE, WA)

- Aggressive, multi-pronged TDM approach
 - ORCA Business Passport (employer pass program)
 - U-PASS (University of Washington pass)
 - Just One Trip (mode shift incentive program)
 - In Motion (partnership with CBOs)
 - TDM partnerships with cities (Seattle, Redmond, Bellevue)



KING COUNTY METRO (SEATTLE, WA)

- Impact on ridership?
 - Bulk pass programs do definitively increase ridership
 - Other programs are more challenging to measure and isolate variables
 - Ultimate goal is to provide mobility for county, agnostic of mode



Metro's ridership up 0.6% from 2016

Total ridership on KCM-operated services increased 3.2% over 2016

Seattle are had second highest transit growth of all large U.S. metros in 2017 and the highest in 2016



LESSONS LEARNED

- Metrics can be challenging to develop but critical for continuing programs
- Currently relies heavily on grants; operating funds would be more ideal
- Support from the top is a must for a successful program



CAPITAL METRO (AUSTIN, TX)

- Aggressive, multi-pronged TDM approach
 - MetroWorks (bulk purchasing plan for business, higher education, and government)
 - Try Transit
 - Marketing at events
 - One-on-one trip planning
 - Transit adventures (group transit trainings)
 - SmartTrips partnership with city (travel choice marketing)



CAPITAL METRO (AUSTIN, TX)

- Impact on ridership?
 - SmartTrips
 - 5.9% increase in transit trips
 - 8.6% in active modes
 - Other programs are difficult to measure direct ridership increase
 - New tax law may impact business participation in MetroWorks

Highlights

- ➔ **\$1,272,734**
MetroWorks revenue, an increase of 13% over 2015.
- ➔ **67**
MetroWorks memberships, an increase of 63% over 2015.
- ➔ **11,189**
MetroWorks 31-Day Pass sales, an increase of 73% over 2015.

Total Boardings by Mode

Mode	Aug-16	Aug-17	Aug 16 to Aug 17	YTD 2016	YTD 2017	YTD Change
Total Fixed Route	1,921,703	1,787,102	-7.0%	20,328,188	20,083,015	-1.2%
Total Special Events	155	505	225.8%	206,525	154,804	-25.0%
Total MetroAccess	58,326	59,226	1.5%	616,922	616,637	0.0%
Total UT Shuttle	170,832	71,618	-58.1%	2,903,001	2,178,329	-25.0%
Total Rideshare	40,644	40,701	0.1%	393,116	423,243	7.7%
Total MetroRail	64,292	61,973	-3.6%	737,885	755,343	2.4%
Total MetroRapid	222,595	297,690	33.7%	2,457,182	3,034,543	23.5%
Total System	2,478,547	2,318,815	-6.4%	27,642,819	27,245,913	-1.4%



LESSONS LEARNED

- Newer affluent residents need transit training
- Choice ridership vs. core ridership
- Fare discounts can be controversial
- Agency support for entrepreneurial staff is key

MARTA (ATLANTA, GA)

- Campaigns: Dump the Pump, Airport Campaign, We Care Campaign
- Partnerships: universities, businesses & residents, third parties
- Programs/Events: concessions, scavenger hunts, Uber& Lyft, Super Bowl
- Outreach: service changes, positive messaging, social media



MARTA (ATLANTA, GA)

- Impact on ridership?
 - Extensive outreach attracting new/choice riders
 - Hard to measure direct impact
 - New opportunities- Atlanta Streetcar, Super bowl, public/private partnerships





LESSONS LEARNED

- ▶ Transit agency leadership and collaboration are vital
- ▶ Funding- MARTA Referendum & Fare Stabilization help stabilize ridership
- ▶ Positive messaging goes a long way

MATBUS (FARGO, ND)

- Back to School promotion (directed towards returning students and focuses on the U-Pass program, TapRide, and MATBUS app)
- 90-Day Youth Pass (replaced the 30-day Youth Pass)
- iGOEco Challenge (promotes residents to replace solo car trips with prize incentives)



IT'S SMART TO TAKE THE iGOEco CHALLENGE
March 26-April 29, 2018

- Leave the vehicle at home just once a week.
- Walk, bike, carpool, rollerblade or MATBUS it instead!
- Log your SMART Swap each week for a chance at weekly smart tech prizes valued \$100-\$400!
- Grand Prize - Samsung 55" 4KUHD Smart TV & Blu-Ray Player!
- Register starting March 19 - first 200 get a water bottle!

IGOEcoCHALLENGE.COM

Logos at the bottom include: Gate City Bank, Moorhead, Fargo, BIG 98.7, 96.9 HITS fm, BOB 95.1, 105.1 ROCKS, and m DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION.



TapRide
Now available on
NDSU Main Campus!
8:00 p.m. - 11:15 p.m.
Skip the walk - just tap!

Available on the **App Store** | GET IT ON **Google play**

MATBUS (FARGO, ND)

- Impact on ridership?
 - Back to School Promotion:
 - 1.17% on NDSU campus
 - 13.89% increase on Route 1 (Concordia)
 - 16.99% increase on Route 2 (MSUM)
 - 24.97% increase on Route 5 (M|State)
 - 90-Day Youth Pass:
 - 40% increase in Youth Pass purchases with ridership increase of 41% January 2018



The advertisement features a dark blue background with a light blue header. In the top left, the MATBUS logo (a white 'M' on a blue square with 'matbus' in white on a green bar below) is next to the text '90-Day Youth Pass!' in white. Below this, a grey banner reads 'unlimited rides just \$26!'. Four circular photos of diverse children are arranged in a cluster, connected by colorful lines. At the bottom, the text 'ON SALE NOW!' is in large yellow letters, followed by '90 Days for \$26.00' and 'Visit matbus.com for more information.' in white. A thin blue line at the very bottom contains the text 'school • movies • public library • extracurriculars' in white.

M matbus **90-Day Youth Pass!**

unlimited rides just \$26!

ON SALE NOW!

90 Days for \$26.00
Visit matbus.com for more information.

school • movies • public library • extracurriculars



LESSONS LEARNED

- Goal is to try to change the mentality and assumptions around transit
- Promote transit as a safe, cheap, good for the environment and warm on those cold days
- Youth and student pass programs are an investment in the future
- Providing good service should be the focus

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Bulk pass programs can be very effective.
- Interagency coordination is critical.
- Marketing and incentive programs are not always valued by leadership at transit agencies. Yet, support from the top is imperative for program success.
- Successful programs have focused on mobility management and not just ridership.
- Educating non-transit users about the importance of transit, through transit campaigns and outreach, is becoming more critical.
- While service quality is critical, knowing of, knowing how and understanding the value of the service creates ridership opportunities.