



Let's Talk Transit Fares:

Lessons and Takeaways on Public Engagement from TransLink's Transit Fare Review

Andrew Devlin
Manager, Policy Development
andrew.devlin@translink.ca

IAP2 Canada August 2018 Webinar

TransLink is Metro Vancouver's regional transit and transportation authority. Every day we move over 400,000 people on our transit system.





The problem:

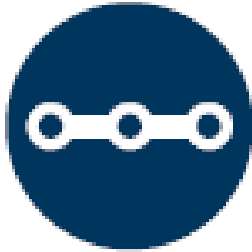
Current fare structure largely unchanged since the mid 1980's and created issues for many riders.

The opportunity:

New possibilities to move towards a fare system that can work better for more people with Compass smartcard payment system.



Through the project, we wanted to review all the ways we price transit



Distance Travelled:

the price you pay depending on how far you travel



Service Type:

the price you pay depending on what mode of transit you use



Time of Day:

the price you pay depending on what time of day you travel



Fare Products:

the type of ticket or pass you purchase based on frequency of travel



Discounts:

the reduced fares available to riders based on defined eligibility criteria



Transfer Time:

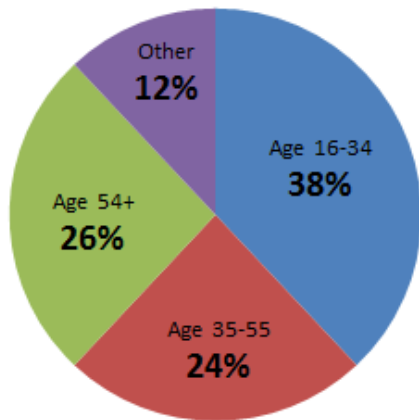
how many minutes you can travel on a single fare

We engaged the public in all phases of the project

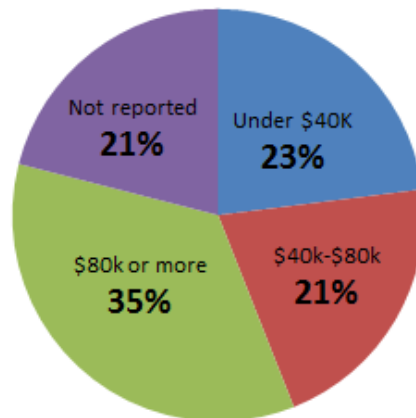


Our ridership and customer-base is diverse...

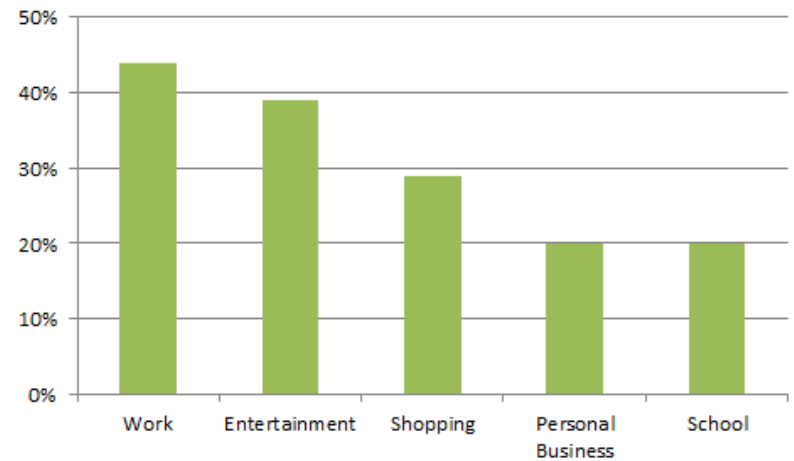
Age



Income



Trip Purpose



Source: Customer Service Performance (CSP) Tracking survey (Q1 2017)

...So, we needed to use a diversity of engagement activities and materials to reach as many different types of people as possible

Common activities:

- On-line surveys
- Stakeholder forums and community workshops
- Public information sessions
- On-line discussion forums

Key support materials:

- Information Videos
- Discussion Guides
- Technical Backgrounders

By the numbers: we reached more people than we ever had before

66,000 on-line survey responses over entire project

5 elected official forums attended by elected officials representing Metro Vancouver constituents from all levels of government

7 stakeholder forum attended by representatives from community organizations from across the region with wide-ranged interests

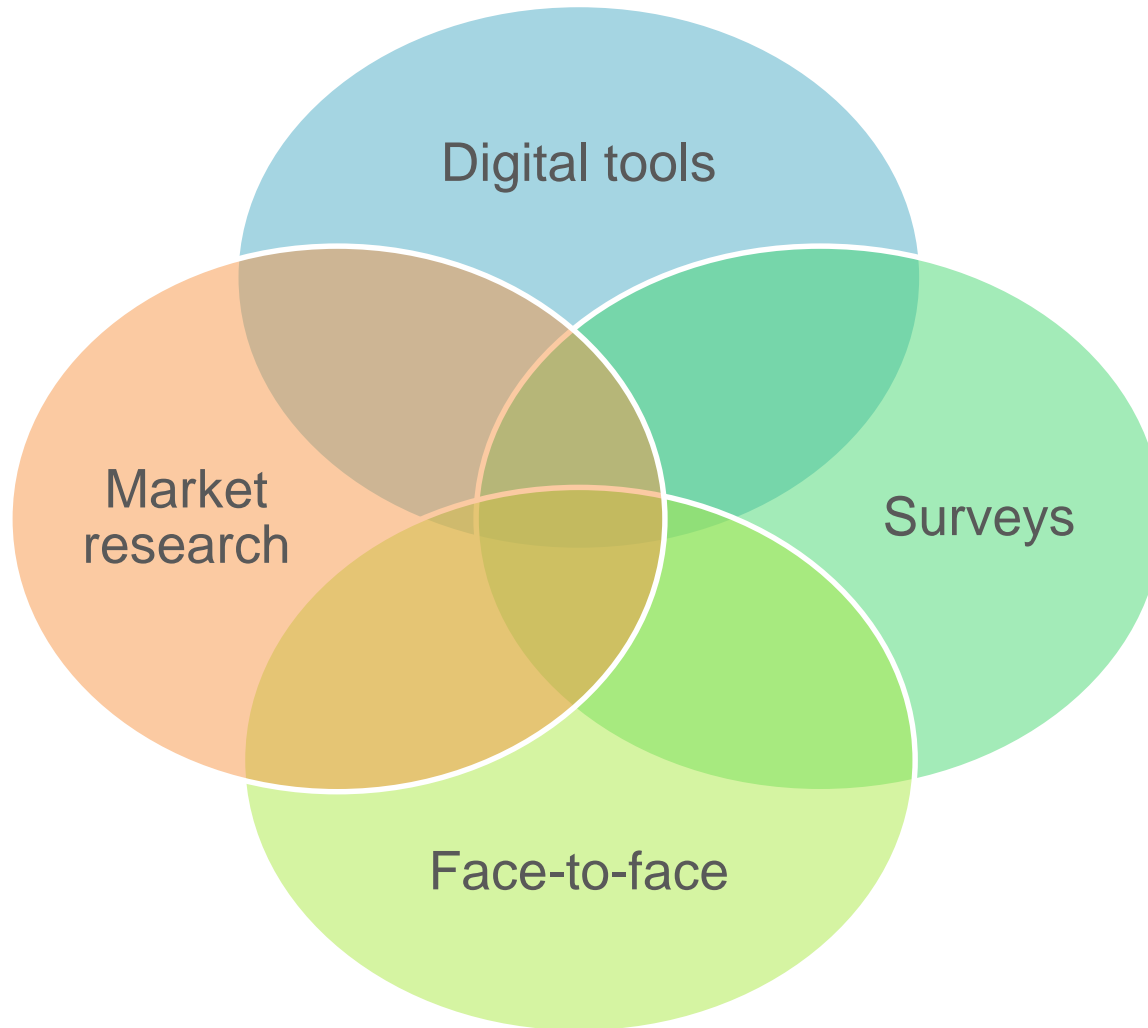
6 public information sessions with approximately **640 individual interactions** held at community events and transit locations across the region

14 community workshops co-hosted by different organizations and tailored to each organization's unique audience.

Lessons learned, from the planner's perspective

1. Balance your engagement activities
2. Go to the people, instead of always making them come to you
3. Strike an appropriate degree of complexity with the information you provide
4. Trade-offs are inevitable; avoid pitting groups/interests against each other
5. Tell people what you heard them say and how you used it
6. Split it up – but not too much!

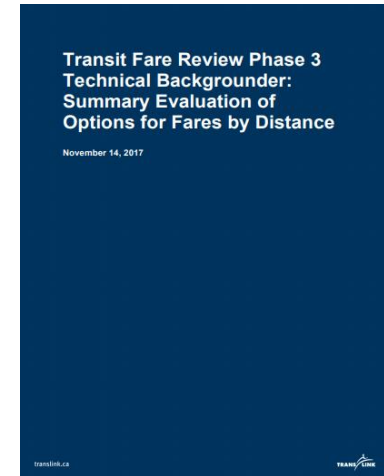
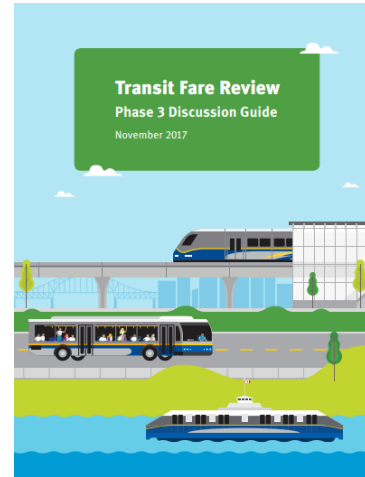
1/ Balance your engagement activities



2/ Go to the people, instead of always making them come to you



3/ Strike an appropriate degree of complexity with the information you provide



Information Videos

60-90 second videos of “need to know” information embedded in surveys

Videos in the survey were watched from start to finish 93-99% of the time

Discussion Guides

10 page summary of options

Around 70% of survey respondents read this material; 90% of those who read it found it useful

Technical Backgrounders

20+ page summary of evaluation of options, key impacts, outcomes, etc.

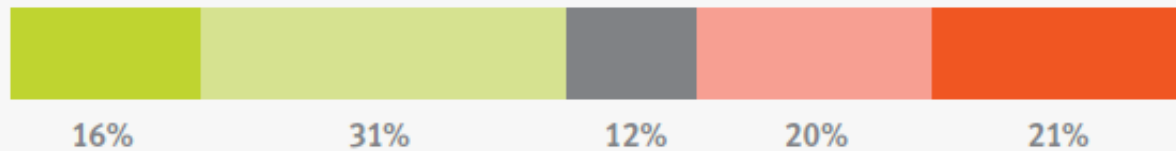
4/ Trade-offs are inevitable; avoid pitting groups or interests against each other

Do you support or oppose increasing fares to pay for discounts to low-income individuals?

Weighted TransLink Listens Survey
(1,142 Respondents)

47% Support

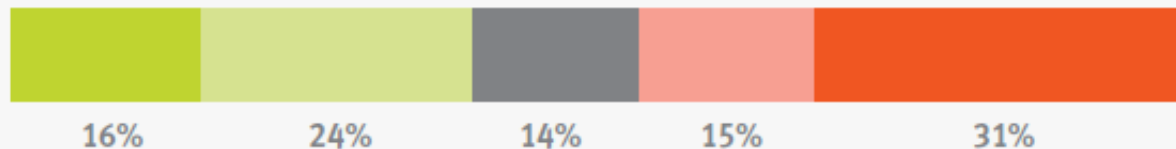
41% Oppose



Unweighted Public Survey
(12,879 Respondents)

40% Support

46% Oppose



Strongly Support

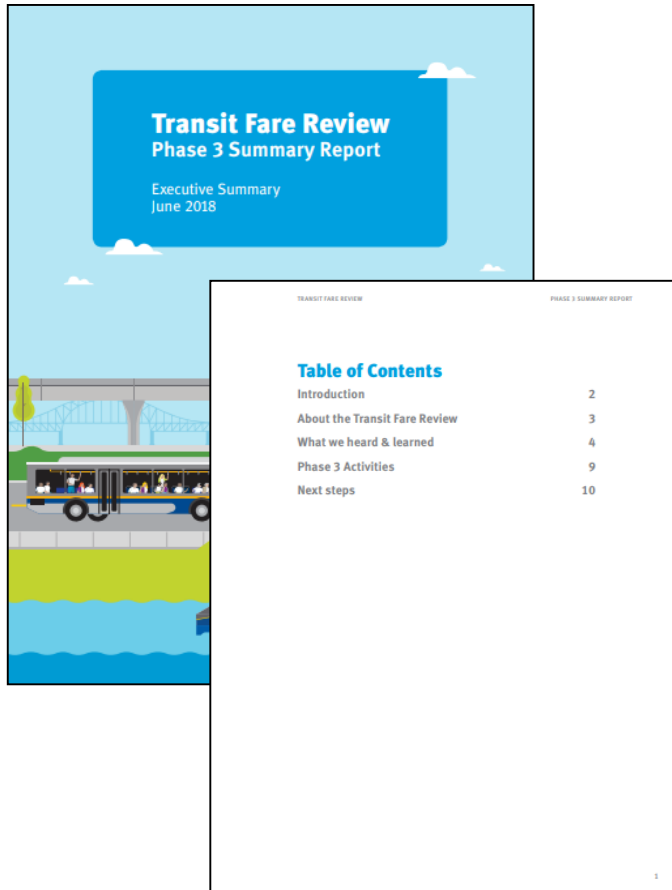
Somewhat Support

Neutral

Somewhat Oppose

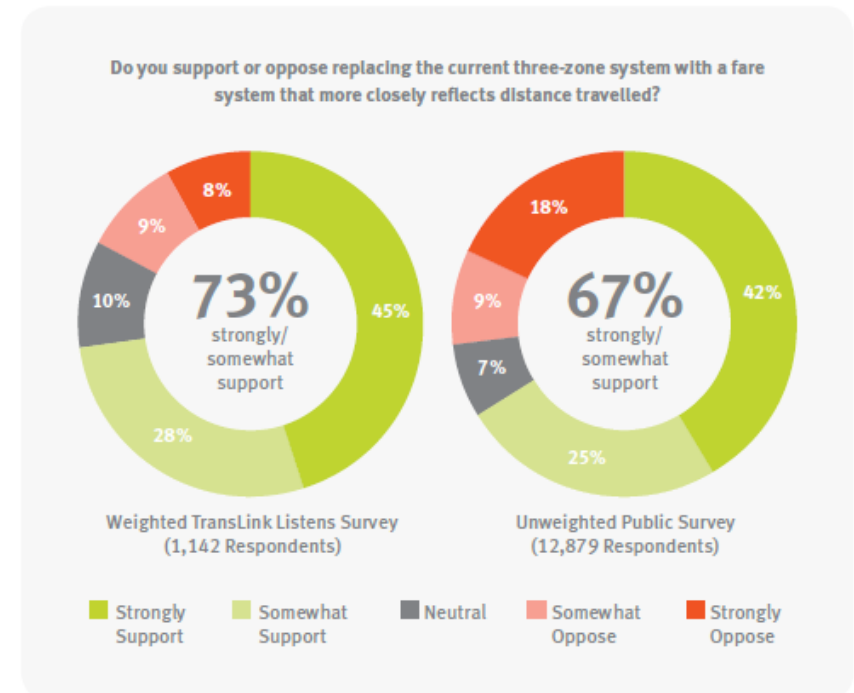
Strongly Oppose

5/ Tell people what you heard them say and how you used it



We published summary reports after each phase

Support for replacing the current three-zone fare system has consistently increased throughout the three phases of the Transit Fare Review, increasing to 73% in Phase 3.



We outlined what we heard and contrasted this to what we learned through technical work

6/ Split it up – but not too much!



STEPHEN QUINN

What more does TransLink need to know about fares?

- Complex topics mean you should consider breaking up engagement into 'manageable' phases
- Don't go overboard – can create burn-out and may start to lower people's propensity to participate

More information on the Transit Fare Review project is available at:

www.translink.ca/farereview

