Building a brand around a comeback.

2021 MPTA/WPTA Public Transit Conference
Background

• Summer of 2020
• Had many projects lined up, a little bit retroactive
• Package them into a branded campaign
• Not a rebrand for DTA, but a new value proposition
Learn how we're making our system better for YOU!
BETTER TECHNOLOGY

• New Fareboxes
• MyDTA Mobile Ticketing App
• Transit App
• Transit Signal Priority
• Text “Where’s My Bus?”
MyDTA App & Transit App

- **MyDTA App**
  - Buy and activate fares instantly
  - Buy single ride and all pass types
    - Including youth passes
    - Can buy multiple for groups
  - Purchase and store multiple tickets on your phone for future use
  - Simplify boarding. Just tap your ticket and wait for the beep!

- **Transit App**
  - Plan your trip
  - Real-time bus tracking
  - Step-by-step directions
  - Mobile ticketing
  - First-mile, Last-mile options
  - The “Uber” of transit
Campaign highlights – Bus Wrap

Two “Fusion” bus wraps designed in partnership with Transit and Mesabi were installed in mid June on DTA buses.

These placements complement the more than 150 interior placements throughout the fleet.
A Skywalk campaign was launched to promote the “Better DTA Movement,” which includes key information on Better Bus Stops, MyDTA/Transit, and Better Technology initiatives.
Canopy Advertisements placed in our buses in the canopy area. We’ll be adding even more of these over next week.
Vertical advertising posters placed in DTA facilities, and the information display near the front of each bus (rotated between versions to draw eye-appeal and keep things fresh).
Campaign highlights – Quick Start Guide (Tri-fold)
Social Media campaign featuring engaging Facebook and Twitter Posts, with more scheduled, showcasing how-to videos and links to the new web pages.
MyDTA App Launch Campaign

• Loud Launch took place May 19th, after about two weeks of soft launch status, which gave us a chance to ramp up slowly
• Press release distributed to local, regional, and national media outlets

• TV, Radio, Digital advertisements placed:

  **TV**
  • KBJR (NBC) – TV and Online pre-roll ads
  • KDLH (CW) – TV and Online pre-roll ads
  • WDIO (ABC) – TV and digital ads
  • KQDS (FOX) – TV ads
  • WDSE (PBS) TV endorsements

  **Radio**
  • Sasquatch 106.5
  • B105
  • Kool 101.7
  • Mix 108
  • Kat Country
  • KQDS (Classic Rock)
  • My 95.7

  **Other**
  • Facebook Campaign
  • Twitter Campaign
  • Facility Signage
  • Bus Interior Signage
  • Website Content Update
  • Press Releases
Campaign highlights - Outreach

DTA Director of Planning and Grants Chris Belden chats with DTA riders at the DTC, during an afternoon “MyDTA Launch” event in June.

A series of pop-up educational events to generate questions and promote downloads
The graphic below depicts the Transit App download patterns over the last several months. The Fall spike on new download activity is an encouraging sign that our in-person tabling, and literature distribution have positively impacted the download/adoption rate for our mobile apps. It's important to note that we’ve been promoting the Transit App specifically to college students, as the U-Pass program prevents them from being a target audience for a mobile payment app/solution.
Investments

• 35 bus shelter replacements since 2019
  • Replaced 1970’s/80’s models
• 18 more shelters this year
• 25 bus stop seats
• Piloted 10 solar lights in shelters, more planned.
• Over $2M programmed over next 5 years
Bus Stop Balancing

• 1,700 bus stops
• Spacing best practice = 800-1320 ft
  – Average spacing in DTA Service Area = 664ft
• Consolidation can:
  – Improve travel time and reliability
  – Save on operational costs
  – Less pollution and noise
  – Makes it easier to target and invest in improvements
BETTERBUS
IMPROVING TWIN PORTS TRANSIT
• CTG is the DTA’s consultant
• Technical term – Comprehensive Operations Analysis (COA)
• Deep-dive into current conditions and performance
• Identify strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities
• Gather community input
• Make recommendations for an improved transit network
Guiding Principles

- Equitable
- Attractive to the greatest number of Twin Ports Residents
- Expands Access to Opportunity
- Improves the Passenger Experience
- Resilient
- Scalable
- Deploys Resources Efficiently
- Provides a community-inspired solution
What goes into route planning?

How often does the bus come?

What days does the bus operate?

Where does the bus go?

How far do I have to walk to access the bus?

Can the bus reliably get you to your destination?
Average Daily Ridership

Average Weekday Daily Ridership by Route

Local
Select Period / Express
Key Activity Centers

- **Activity Center Summary (within 1-mile)**

Focus on High Ridership & Employment Areas
Top Regional Trip Patterns: Airsage Location-Based Services (LBS) Data

2019 - Top 10 Combined Trip Volumes

2020 - Top 10 Combined Trip Volumes
Community Survey

DTA ridership will likely rebound to nearly pre-pandemic levels

- 89% of "almost daily" DTA users stated they would continue riding daily.
- Almost 70% of respondents indicated that their transit usage would not change post-pandemic.
Focused Needs & Expected Outcomes

The New Network Should...

- Provide **attractive** and more **reliable** transit service for as many people as possible.

- Be more **adaptable** and **scalable** than today’s network.

- **Improve access** and **travel times** to key destinations and employment areas

- Be more **consistent** for all days of the week
Evaluation Points the Way to Recommendations

Coverage
How well does each concept provide DTA service to jobs and people?

Trip Quality
How efficient is each concept at connecting people to where they want to go?

Equity
Are we making sure our most vulnerable citizens are being served?
# Existing Network Route Frequencies and Spans

### Frequency

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Route Description</th>
<th>Weekdays</th>
<th>Saturdays</th>
<th>Sundays</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10 min</td>
<td>15 min</td>
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<tr>
<td>Grand Avenue Zoo</td>
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<tr>
<td>New Duluth</td>
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<td>Proctor</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ramsey-Raleigh</td>
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<tr>
<td>West to Mall</td>
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<tr>
<td>East Mainline UMD</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>East Mainline Lakeside</td>
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<tr>
<td>LSC-WM-AP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Piedmont Morris Thomas</td>
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<tr>
<td>Duluth Heights Mall</td>
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<tr>
<td>East 8th UMD</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kenwood</td>
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<tr>
<td>E4th-UMD-Woodland</td>
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<tr>
<td>W 4th Blvd</td>
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<tr>
<td>Park Point</td>
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<tr>
<td>Duluth Superior</td>
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<tr>
<td>Superior WI</td>
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<tr>
<td>UMD Boulder Ridge CPH</td>
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<tr>
<td>Port Town Trolley</td>
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<tr>
<td>UMD Circulator</td>
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<tr>
<td>Grocery Route</td>
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### Amended Recommended Draft Network Route Frequencies and Spans

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<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Weekdays</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>60 min</td>
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<table>
<thead>
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<th>Route</th>
<th>Weekdays</th>
<th>Saturdays</th>
<th>Sundays</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>101 Spirit Valley-DTC-UMD</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>102 DTC-Mall</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>103 New Duluth-DTC-Lakeside</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>104 E 4th Local</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>105 E 9th Local</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>106 Kenwood Local</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>107 LSC-Trinity-Mall Local</td>
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<tr>
<td>108 Piedmont-Mall-Airport</td>
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<tr>
<td>109 Proctor-Spirit Valley-DTC</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>110 DTC-Superior-Tower Ave</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>111 Superior Circulator</td>
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<tr>
<td>112 Woodland-UMD-Mall</td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>113 Park Point-DTC-Central Hillside</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>114 Port Town Trolley</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total Population</td>
<td>BIPOC</td>
<td>0 to 1 Vehicle Households</td>
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<tr>
<td>----------------------</td>
<td>------------------</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>---------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Existing</strong></td>
<td>18,461</td>
<td>3,079</td>
<td>1,739</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Draft Recommended</strong></td>
<td>34,727</td>
<td>4,229</td>
<td>2,529</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Improvement</strong></td>
<td>+88%</td>
<td>+62%</td>
<td>+45%</td>
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</table>

**High Frequency Service Pre-BRT Access**

*EQUITY POPULATION ACCESS TO FREQUENT SERVICE INCREASES BY 40% OR MORE*
Net Average Travel Time

Net Average Travel Time Comparison
(Select Points - 7AM to 10 PM)

Weekday
-21 min (-23%)

Saturday
-19 min (-18%)

Sunday
-33 min (-28%)

24% Net System Travel Time Improvement

Only 1.5% of trips experienced significant worsening of travel times
From Downtown Duluth

Weekday

Existing Average Weekday Travel Time
(Downtown Duluth: 7 am to 10 pm)

Draft Recommended Average Weekday Travel Time
(Downtown Duluth: 7 am to 10 pm)

Note: For travel between 7 am – 10 pm measured on weekdays. Average travel time is an evaluation metric and does not always reflect a customer’s actual travel time.
Quality Transit Area

QTA defined as:
Travel between 7a – 10p
From five main activity centers (DTC, UMD, West Duluth, Superior, Miller Hill Mall)
With 75% or better reliability
Measured as area accessed in square miles, with all five areas added together

**Quality Transit Area (QTA) Comparison**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Existing</th>
<th>Draft Recommended Network</th>
<th>Sq Mi Difference</th>
<th>% Increase</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Weekday</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>113</td>
<td>+28 sq mi</td>
<td>+33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saturday</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>+22 sq mi</td>
<td>+31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunday</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>+31 sq mi</td>
<td>+53%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

RIDERS CAN RELIABLY ACCESS MORE LOCATIONS
QTA for Miller Hill Mall

Weekday

Note: For travel between 7 am – 10 pm measured on weekdays. Describes area that can be consistently accessed within 60-minutes to/from defined location.

+8 sq mi

44% increase
BENEFITS OF THE RECOMMENDED DRAFT NETWORK

- ROUTES SIMPLIFIED FROM 33 TO 14
- CONSISTENT NETWORK 7 DAYS/WEEK

98% OF EXISTING RIDERSHIP SERVED

8+ ADDED MILES OF HIGH FREQUENT (PRE-BRT) SERVICE

2 HIGH FREQUENCY ROUTES

16,000 MORE PEOPLE SERVED
14,000 MORE JOBS ACCESSIBLE

EQUITY POPULATION ACCESS TO FREQUENT SERVICE INCREASES BY 40% OR MORE

37% TRIPS WITH SIGNIFICANT TRAVEL TIME IMPROVEMENTS

RIDERS CAN RELIABLY ACCESS MORE LOCATIONS
Sponsoring a set of three posts at intervals throughout the campaign was part of the strategy.

- Resulted in more click-throughs, likes, shares, and views than organic traffic alone.
- Sponsored posts included a campaign kickoff, and two reminders creating urgency to participate in the last 10 days of the campaign.
- Other high-performing posts included Route 110 (DTC-Tower Ave), and the 33>14 Route Simplification infographic.
Campaign highlights – Media Coverage

Our media release efforts around the Better Bus Blueprint with the intention of gaining feedback on the proposed Draft Network were picked up by several local and broader media outlets, including:

**Regional Coverage**

- Duluth News Tribune
- Duluth News Tribune Board “Our View”
- Fox 21 News
- WDIO News
- KBJR News
- CBS 3 News
- Superior Telegram
- KFAN 106.5
- MIX 108
- KOOL 101.7

**Broader Coverage**

- Newsbreak.com
- Minnesota Public Transit Association
- Planetizen
- Governing
- Yahoo News
- AP Newswire
Lessons Learned

• Packaging initiatives into a branded campaign can feel complex but is worth the effort.

• Lean into generating stakeholder feedback. Great ideas come from everywhere.

• Leverage owned assets and trade partnerships to get the word out.

• Consider timelines – launch pieces together or staggered.

• The right third-party vendor can make all the difference.

• Research and learn from others, borrow ideas.

• There is something for everyone, but not every component will benefit every user. Deploy campaigns accordingly.

• With changes comes objections. Try to educate and clearly explain benefits.