



CAMPAIGN TOOLKIT



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Introduction

The purpose of the Mid-Columbia Economic Development District (MCEDD) Everybody Rides project was to develop a marketing campaign to publicize public transportation services (existing, new, and changing) in a manner that involved the entire community. The project created relatable stories and materials, designed to reduce stigmas and preconceived notions about who uses the regional public transportation system in the Columbia River Gorge.

The primary goal of the campaign was to increase awareness of the available regional public transit options, and to ultimately increase ridership for the entire region. The core message of the Everybody Rides campaign was that a robust public transportation system exists in the Columbia Gorge and that it serves all residents.

Marketing materials were designed to highlight the expanding local and regional public transportation services and to point to the gorgetranslink.com website as the central hub for regional transportation information. A redesigned website was launched during the campaign, featuring new tools that allow people to quickly and intuitively navigate information about local transit services and the regional bus system.

The target audience of the campaign was the 5-county region of The Columbia Gorge: Hood River, Wasco, Sherman, Skamania, and Klickitat counties. To reach as many people as possible, printed materials were designed to be accessible to people with Limited English Proficiency (LEP) and low literacy.

About this Document

The Everybody Rides project was led by MCEDD, with the support of an Oregon Department of Transportation Grant. This toolkit is a guide to planning, implementing, and evaluating similar community-led campaigns to promote public transit ridership throughout the state of Oregon.

This toolkit breaks the campaign development process down into five key steps. Each step begins with an overview of what was accomplished in the Everybody Rides project, followed by recommendations, considerations, or lessons learned to inform future campaigns. The steps are as follows:

- 1. SET GOALS**
- 2. LEARN AND PLAN**
- 3. CREATE MATERIALS**
- 4. IMPLEMENT THE CAMPAIGN**
- 5. EVALUATE THE CAMPAIGN**

STEP 1: SET GOALS

Everybody Rides goals

The primary goal of Everybody Rides was to increase awareness of available public transit options and to ultimately increase ridership for the entire region.

Additional goals included:

- Reduce the stigma of using public transportation
- Make transit seem like a desirable mode of travel
- Connect people to resources that make transit easier to use



AWARENESS



INCREASE RIDERSHIP



REDUCE STIGMA



EASY TO USE



STILL FROM "WHITE SALMON ADVENTURES WITH MOUNT ADAMS TRANSPORTATION" VIDEO

Setting your goals

Campaign goals may align with the Everybody Rides goals, but other goals should be identified based on the specific needs of the community. Realistic goals that can be measured with quantitative and qualitative metrics will guide the planning for the rest of the campaign.

Part of understanding the community is understanding community members' access (perceived or actual) to existing transportation options. Researching the target area using census data, market research, or other local data can provide an understanding of existing demographics and transportation services. Research may include:

- The ridership, frequency and number of transit routes
- The presence of individuals with low literacy and/or limited English proficiency (LEP)
- The percentage of zero-car households
- Commute data (how people get to work)
- Community destinations (libraries, recreation centers, parks, etc...)
- Common trip origins and destinations

Sources may include U.S. Census data, including Census Journey to Work data, local, regional, or state sources, and Google Maps or Google Earth. Engaging community organizations, leaders, and members is particularly helpful for gathering information on community destinations and common trips.

A campaign like Everybody Rides relies on engaging with the community through relatable stories and materials. Community outreach, such as a community survey or informational interviews, can offer insight into what the community values, who the local celebrities or influencers are, where the popular destinations or community spaces are, and what may motivate people in the community to try public transportation.

Motivational factors for trying public transportation may include cost savings, convenience, community building, health benefits, flexibility in travel options, and/or environmental factors. Campaign messaging should be crafted to reflect the key motivational factors, values, and preferences of the community. It is important to avoid making assumptions about the type of messaging that is most likely to inspire people.

STEP 2: LEARN & PLAN

Everybody Rides target audience, area, and plan

The target area for Everybody Rides covered five counties in the Columbia Gorge: Hood River, Wasco, Sherman, Skamania, and Klickitat. The target audience of the campaign was the entire community. Printed materials were designed to be accessible to people with Limited English Proficiency (LEP) and low literacy individuals. By creating print materials that were accessible for this audience, they were effective at communicating with a much broader audience in the community.

The Everybody Rides campaign plan involved working with partner organizations to identify a diverse range of community members (of many communities across the five counties, cultures, ages, and abilities) to highlight in marketing materials. The project team contracted with a marketing firm to create professional materials and to distribute them through print, radio, web, and social media channels.

Marketing materials included:

- Campaign branding: logo and style guide for printed materials and social media
- Stylized map of the regional transportation system
- Five videos featuring iconic people and the local flavor of each county (English and Spanish)
- Rack card designed for LEP individuals and to engage all residents (English and Spanish)
- Social Media accounts: Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, Snapchat
- Social Media content and advertising (English and Spanish)
- Spanish Language Radio programs and advertising
- Community Challenge with local prizes

Determining your target audience and area



When implementing a similar campaign, keep in mind that the ultimate goal is to reach as many people as possible within a targeted area. The scale of the campaign is determined in part by the size of the area of focus. While radio, TV and social media can reach a large audience, key partners should be identified to spread messaging to traditionally harder-to-reach communities. These communities include Limited English Proficiency (LEP) populations, low-literacy individuals, and other underrepresented or underserved groups.

The role of community partnerships

Community partnerships can help with many aspects of the campaign, including:

- The development of community-specific messaging for marketing materials
- The distribution of campaign messages through partner social media and other communication channels
- The creation and content through community members' photos and stories.

Community partnerships help to expand the reach of the campaign. Community members are more likely to assist with the creation and sharing of the content if the messaging speaks to them directly. Incorporating and curating community members' photos and stories into campaign materials leads to content that is valued, trusted, and widely shared.



STILL FROM "SASQUATCH SIGHTING WITH SKAMANIA COUNTY TRANSPORTATION" VIDEO

Identifying local characters and stories for the campaign

When developing campaign videos specific to a community, what comes first: the character or the story? The Everybody Rides campaign found that either can work: sometimes starting with a basic idea for a story before identifying who the characters; and sometimes identifying the characters and then working with them to create a story. During the planning phase of the project, start considering what partners, characters, and characteristics may best illustrate the community. It is imperative to give community members the opportunity to control the narrative and tone, particularly in rural communities or communities of color. This will help ensure celebration of culture through this character as opposed to creating a caricature that may be offensive. The following pages include examples of how the Everybody Rides campaign approached the development of their stories:

Starting with the story: Identify key characteristics of each local area and what story may reflect them

Sherman County:

- **Key characteristics:** They are an aging rural county with a growing senior population that value their wheat fields, agriculture, and horses.
- **The Story:** The story formed around the senior shopping bus, because Sherman County Transit wanted to get more riders on their shopping bus.
- **Characters include:** a tractor driver who was a very popular local farmer, and a many-generations resident and transit provider volunteer with an Arabian horse.

Skamania County:

- **Key characteristics:** Their mascot is Sasquatch.
- **The Story:** The mascot participated in the video with the high school cheerleading team, making the video light-hearted and engaging for high schoolers and their families.



STILL FROM "SASQUATCH SIGHTING WITH SKAMANIA COUNTY TRANSPORTATION" VIDEO

Wasco County:

- **Key characteristics:** They are very proud of their community college, where the Gorge Roller Derby hosts their games.
- **The Story:** The Gorge Roller Derby was eager to have the exposure and worked directly with MCEDD to develop the story.

White Salmon/Klickitat County:

- **Key characteristics:** They have a new fixed route service to get residents down to the very popular waterfront park.
- **The Story:** Engaging an established Facebook group of parents made it possible to schedule with kids. The kids already knew each other which increased their motivation to show up.

Hood River County:

- **Key characteristics:** They have a large Latinx population that supports a very popular spanish-language community radio station. The popular middle school Mariachi band was happy to participate.
- **The Story:** The partnership with Radio Tierra led to the creation of a one-hour video/radio broadcast and a bus tour through the Latinx heart of Hood River.
- **Characters include:** Community College president, business owners, a Spanish-speaking mayor, a well-known DJ on Radio Tierra.

Starting with the characters: Choose locally beloved subjects and groups

- The Everybody Rides campaign considered the Gorge Roller Derby, high school mascots, a popular DJ from Radio Tierra, and a very popular politician who believed in the mission.
- At the start, Everybody Rides wanted to highlight the beloved Gorge Roller Derby. The story was developed by sitting down with their rep, talking about the shared mission and vision of the campaign and the Derby (empowering others), and together figuring out how to make a story that included them and the bus.
- Highlighting local bus drivers was a priority for Everybody Rides.
 - » Pictures of people driving a bus can be boring, so Everybody Rides worked with the bus drivers to gain photos of their kids, chickens, puppies, hobbies (kayak videos), etc. to post on Facebook. This helped to make the posts more personal and engaging.
 - » Bus drivers were paid for their time, usually about 4-5 hours, and all drivers were people who enjoyed being part of the video shoot.



SPANISH INTERVIEW WITH THE MAYOR FOR THE "MARIACHI WITH COLUMBIA AREA TRANSIT" VIDEO

Developing partnerships

To develop partnerships, start by connecting with existing partners and community-based organizations: make phone calls and follow up with emails. Explain the purpose of the program and suggest an initial meeting to discuss the potential for collaboration. Conduct exploratory meetings to identify the:

- Needs of the community related to the campaign
- Resources or communication channels that could help spread campaign messages among the community
- Existing interest and capacity of the organizations
- The benefits of participating in the campaign

Defining a campaign plan

A campaign plan should coordinate the activities and resources for all organizations involved, helping to achieve the campaign goals within the budget available. The plan should provide the information needed to create materials and implement the campaign, including:

- Campaign goals and objectives
- Key messages and calls to action
- Communications platforms
- Campaign materials to be created (digital and print)
- Timeline for creation of materials and implementation of the campaign
- Roles and responsibilities for each organization involved

STEP 3: CREATE MATERIALS

Everybody Rides materials

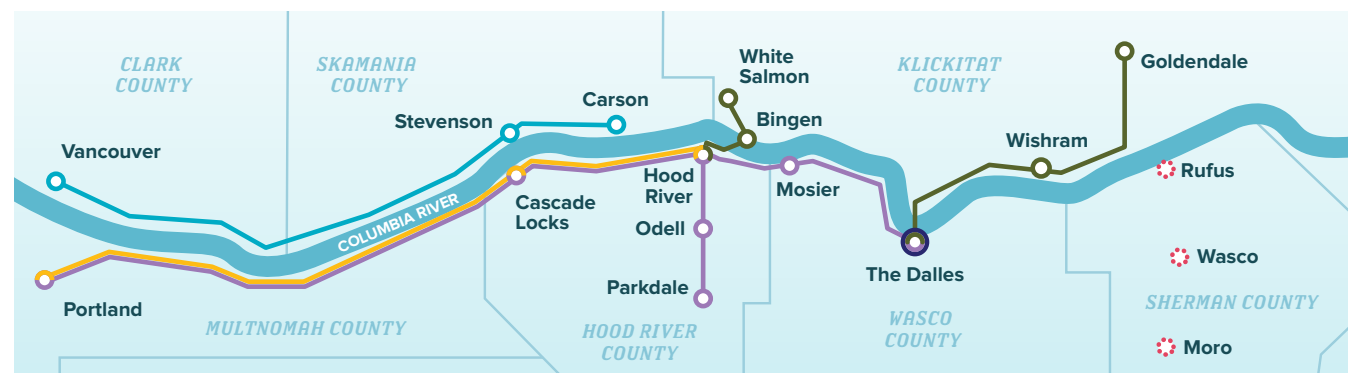
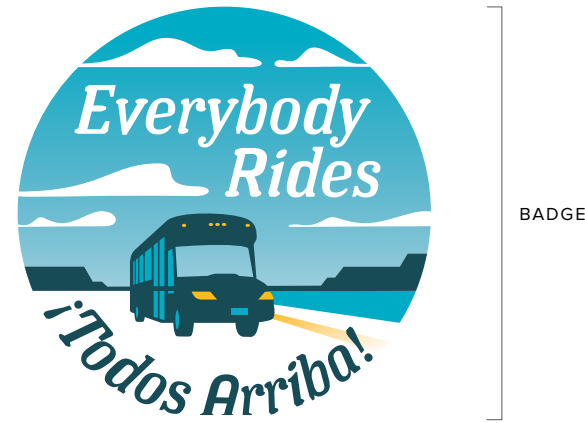
The Everybody Rides campaign created the following materials with the support of marketing and design consultants:

Campaign branding: logo and style guide for printed materials and social media (Appendix 1). All public facing materials and collateral included the full campaign name, Everybody Rides/¡Todos Arriba! (as seen right).

- The campaign branding was developed for use in campaign materials and with the intention of being re-used in ongoing marketing efforts in the Gorge.

A stylized map of the regional transportation system.

- A stylized map was created to provide a high-level illustration of all transit providers serving the Gorge, where one had not existed before. The stylized map below was used on the rack card and a similar map was created for the Gorge Translink website.



STYLIZED MAP

Five videos featuring iconic people and the local flavor of each county (English and Spanish). Each video highlighted a unique characteristic of the community and local community members using local transit.

- 1 White Salmon Adventures with Mount Adams Transportation
A local family decides to take the bus to the waterfront park since their car is in the shop.
- 2 Gorge Roller Girls with Link Public Transportation
Watch The Gorge Roller Derby girls grow up using the bus in the Dalles.
- 3 Mariachi with Columbia Area Transit
Local musicians make the bus ride a little more interesting with some Mariachi flair.
- 4 Shopping Bus with Sherman County Transit
A group of locals get some unexpected ride offers as they await the Sherman County shopping bus.
- 5 Sasquatch Sighting with Skamania County Transportation
Even Sasquatch takes the bus to his adventures in The Gorge.



Rack card designed for Limited English Proficiency (LEP) individuals and to engage all residents (English and Spanish) (Appendix 2). The rack card was designed for the campaign with the intention of having ongoing use beyond the campaign.

Social Media accounts: Facebook, Instagram, You Tube, Snapchat. The social media accounts were launched during the campaign, and continue to be an active platform used by MCEDD.

- Social Media content and advertising (English and Spanish). Content created for the campaign included five rider profiles, 11 posts in a “Who’s Your Driver” series, and 32 display ads that were scheduled bi-weekly. Other types of Facebook posts were published every 1-3 days.

Two Spanish-language radio programs and advertising for Radio Lazer and Radio Tierra, which aired 14 and 6 times, respectively, over the course of two months.

Community Challenge with local prizes: Riders and local businesses submitted photos and comments while they were on the bus for the chance to win prizes. The challenge was promoted on social media and through promotional stickers which were stuck to the back of every bus seat. Prizes were provided by businesses located near existing bus stops.

Collateral considerations

- Each material created for the campaign should have a clear and direct call to action to help people who engage with the campaign take the next step. It may vary depending on the communications platform used and the expected audience.
- For a large (multi-City or County) target area, develop different versions of collateral that are customized or highlight a unique characteristic of each community in the target area.
- Develop local stories using well-known and appealing people and highlight what is most interesting about the community.
- Create accessible outreach materials by making them available in primary languages spoken in the community, and accessible to Limited English Proficiency (LEP) populations and low-literacy individuals (See Appendix 4).
- Avoid including information on print materials that needs to be updated frequently. Instead, point people to a website that can be updated at any time.
- Consider promoting the campaign in conjunction with the statewide Oregon Get There Challenge, and/or develop a unique local Challenge where incentives are offered for use of the system or participation in the campaign.



Jim is a Happy Bus Rider
 Jim Sallie returned home to the Gorge and to Husum to visit this weekend after being gone for 25 years. He lives in the Reno area now, and was able to jump on the Max at Portland International Airport and then catch the Columbia Gorge Express to Hood River. He says his vision is not great anymore, so he doesn't drive and is dependent on public transportation. He goes wherever the bus will take him, and we're really glad that our bus system could bring him back home again.
 Jim has amazing stories to tell about his life here in the Gorge. He says that Hood River used to celebrate St. Urho's Day with a parade and a queen (I think his wife was Queen one year!) and a pizza and beer celebration afterward. Does anyone else remember St. Urho's Day in Hood River? Share your stories if so!



RIDER PROFILE



Who's Your Driver?
 Jeff is your driver if you are taking the bus to Portland from The Dalles or Hood River on Columbia Area Transit-CAT. He loves his job because every day is always different, with new challenges and new rewards--like meeting new riders!
 He has seen the Portland-Hood River commuter bus ridership increase dramatically since the service first launched in October last year. He has also seen the The Dalles-Hood River bus ridership increase just in the last few months with new commuters, college students and faculty, and people connecting to the Portland bus.
 Jeff lives in a tiny house in the Gorge and takes advantage of all the great climbing that the Gorge has to offer.
 Thanks to Sean O'Connor from Story Gorge for the incredible climbing photo!

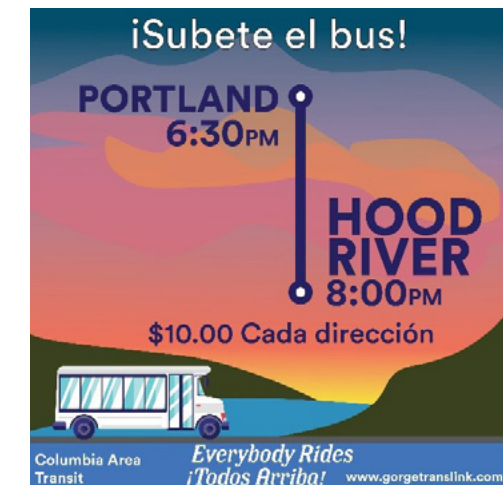


WHO'S YOUR DRIVER



"Emmie and I loved hiking Dog Mountain and taking the shuttle! Highlight was finding my hat after losing it somewhere along the first mile -- someone else tracked it down and put it on a log for me! Go Blazers!"

COMMUNITY CHALLENGE SUBMISSION



DISPLAY ADS



COMMUNITY CHALLENGE STICKER

Photography and Videography Lessons Learned

It's helpful when the individuals or groups are also eager to have exposure, whether to get more support for their organization or just to show off to their friends (kids).

Get photo release forms and contact information from each individual before taking photos or video.

- Consider using ODOT's waiver in addition to a local waiver so that content can be shared broadly with ODOT partners. It can be very hard to contact individuals later, especially if they come to the shoot through a third party.
- Remember: Kids will need parental permission to participate in photo or video shoots.

Keep the videos short! 3 minutes is too long.

- People have very short attention spans. If the video is not watched right when it's shared on social media, it's unlikely people will come back to it. It has to be short enough for someone to easily just click and watch before scrolling on.
- Get your videos on Google ads and keep it short and sweet (consider how long your own tolerance is for watching an ad before your program).
- Consider using the video in presentations to City Council and other groups - anything over a minute likely won't make it in the presentation

Be Flexible: You have to have a film crew who can adapt to the weather, needs of the volunteers, available props, and who can be ready to seize opportunities on the fly.

Consider taking drone footage.

- Get someone out there with a drone, whether it's a friend or someone from a local college. Drone footage adds an important dimension and interest to your work. Be sure to check and comply with Federal Aviation Administration rules and regulations when using a drone.

Video shoots take a lot of time to organize and schedule. Be sure to get what you need while you're there.

- Take advantage of the down time during video shoots to get photos and stories from drivers. Consider having a photographer attend the video shoot to get photos at the same time.

STEP 4: IMPLEMENT THE CAMPAIGN

Everybody Rides Implementation

The Everybody Rides campaign was implemented over the course of 7 months, from December 2018 to June 2019. During that time, the following materials were distributed and promoted in print and digital platforms:

- Facebook.com/GorgeTranslink, with weekly posts including promotion of videos, rider profiles, a "Who's Your Driver" series, and 32 display ads that were scheduled bi-weekly.
- Spanish-language radio programming on Radio Tierra and Radio Lazer, that aired a total of 20 times over a period of two months.
- Rack cards printed and distributed to all transit providers for placement in buses.

How to get the word out

A major success of the Everybody Rides campaign was the social media reach, which was largely due to the videos being extremely popular and engaging within the community. When promoting a similar campaign, develop and share stories, images, video, and radio programming featuring people who are relatable and familiar, and highlight local organizations within the community. Community members and groups are more likely to promote the content if it is personal, engaging, and makes people feel proud of their community.



STILL FROM "GORGE ROLLER GIRLS WITH LINK PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION" VIDEO

STEP 5: EVALUATE THE CAMPAIGN

How to be responsive to the community

Throughout the campaign, there is a responsibility to respond to partners involved with the campaign and residents reached. Regular communications with partners can help to build trust and goodwill, resulting in relationships that can benefit ongoing programs and efforts. Campaign materials should clearly tell residents how they can get more information, and who to reach if support is needed. For example, print materials may include a URL for more information and direct contact information for people to use, should questions arise. With an active presence on social media, it is important to provide a timely response to comments, questions, and concerns that are posted on the page or sent in a private message.

Social Media Considerations:

- Frequent publishing, posting, and promoting are helpful in creating a lasting impact or ongoing program.
- Share videos on YouTube to attract views and make the video more likely to appear in searches.
- Organic posts and ads should be refreshed to reflect up-to-date transit schedules and services.
- Tag as many partners as possible.

Everybody Rides Evaluation

The Everybody Rides campaign identified a number of performance measures to track during program implementation. One of the performance measures to be used was a pre- and post- survey. However, the partner that was going to administer the survey was going through a rigorous regional survey effort, so the timing was not appropriate for a secondary survey.

Another important performance measure outside of the grant period will be in the more intensive Human Services Coordinated

Transportation Plan (HSCTP) updates for Wasco, Hood River, and Sherman counties which will identify if perceptions have changed within those communities. HSCTPs rely upon extensive ridership, community and stakeholder surveys to identify strategies for reducing barriers to using transportation.

Ridership numbers were also used to track progress following the program. However, directly attributing those to any single effort is difficult, especially because a significant portion of the regional fixed route services in the Columbia Gorge were not even launched until well into the grant project period.



BEHIND THE SCENES OF "MARIACHI WITH COLUMBIA AREA TRANSIT" VIDEO



DRONE SHOT OF SHERMAN COUNTY COMMUNITY TRANSIT BUS

Other performance measures used to evaluate the effectiveness of this project are the metrics captured on the social media platforms used. Because the main focus of this campaign was to increase public awareness, it is appropriate to consider the number of residents reached, engagements, impressions, and new followers. Social media engagement includes the number of clicks, comments, likes, and shares the campaign material generates, where impressions measures how many times the content is displayed. The following Facebook metrics were recorded for the Everybody Rides campaign:

<i>Total post impressions:</i>	189,863
<i>Page total reach (unique users):</i>	134,735
<i>Page engaged users:</i>	11,016
<i>Total viral reach: (page shared with others)</i>	86,210

Metrics were also recorded for the individual videos:

White Salmon Adventures with Mount Adams Transportation:
13,000 views, 666 engagements

Gorge Roller Girls with Link Public Transportation:
21,000 views, 1,334 engagements

*Mariachi with Columbia Area Transit:**
1,500 views

Shopping Bus with Sherman County Transit:
10,000 views, 1,996 engagements

Sasquatch Sighting with Skamania County Transportation:
11,800 views, 1,329 engagements

**Originally a 60-minute radio and video broadcast that was later trimmed down to a 3-minute version. The 60-minute broadcast aired multiple times on Radio Tierra.*

How to gather feedback and measure impact

Evaluation is vital to any campaign to learn what strategies were effective, determine whether goals were achieved, decide how to improve future programs, and support the funding and implementation of future campaigns. A campaign can be evaluated using a number of tools and metrics, including:

- **Surveys** - Work with partners to distribute surveys to community members and post an online survey on social media or other online platforms. Before launching a survey, consider what you want to learn and whether a survey is the right tool to achieve that. It is also important to find out what other surveys may be going on in the community at the same time to either combine efforts or avoid overlap.
- **Transit ridership figures** - Ridership numbers are continually and regularly tracked by the transportation providers and changes in ridership can be quantified.
- **Social media metrics** - Facebook provides metrics for people reached, engagements, impressions, and clicks
- **Stakeholder interviews** - Gather testimonials from participating partners and community members
- **Public feedback and comments** - Gather social media comments and feedback from community members throughout the campaign.

CONCLUSION

Creating content that the community can relate to and feel proud of is key for maximizing the reach of a campaign similar to Everybody Rides. To encourage everybody to ride, everybody (or as many people as possible) need to believe that the promotions and materials are made for them, or people like them. Leverage relationships with existing partners and organizations can provide support in campaigns where there is limited capacity, resources, and time. Keep in mind that community members themselves are the best resource for determining which types of materials and messages are effective and meaningful.



STILL FROM "SASQUATCH SIGHTING WITH SKAMANIA COUNTY TRANSPORTATION" VIDEO

APPENDIX

- 1. Everybody Rides brand document**
- 2. Everybody Rides rack card**
- 3. Everybody Rides Final Report**
- 4. Accessibility in Print PDF**
- 5. Everybody Rides Video Recruitment Flyers**

Sherman County Community Transit Drivers

Sherman County Seniors

Roller Derby Athletes