

PROGRAM

Research to Practice Transit Symposium

October 24-26, 2023



Hosted by:



SYMPOSIUM OVERVIEW

The central theme for the symposium is “translating transit research into practice.” As the transit industry is poised to take advantage of the largest transit and rail investment in our lifetimes, the symposium will be a platform where transit experts share insights on how evidence-based research is being or can be, used to make the most of these opportunities in a changing environment. In addition to discussions on transit research and practice in the US, a group of international speakers will be invited to share transit insights from non-US contexts. The Symposium will focus on the following topics:

This year’s topics included:

- Future of transit
- Fare equity
- Innovation in fare structures and collection
- Infrastructure costs
- Data into practice
- Passenger counts and passenger origin/destinations
- Bus stop spacing
- Research in transit: Advancing research at public transit agencies
- Women in transit
- Disability in transit

PROGRAM AT A GLANCE

Tuesday, October 24 | Transit Planning and Operations

12:00 PM - 1:00 PM (EDT) **Opening Plenary: Transit Leader's Perspective on the Future of Transit**

Moderator: Chad Riding

Speakers:

- Kari Watkins
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1:00 PM - 1:15 PM (EDT) **Break**

1:15 PM - 2:00 PM (EDT) **Fare Equity Programs**

Moderator: Kari Watkins

Speakers:

- Kayleigh Campbell
 - Alyssa Huberts
 - Caroline Rodier
 - Avital Shavit
 - Roxanne Oroxom
-

2:00 PM - 2:15 PM (EDT) **Break**

2:15 PM - 3:00 PM (EDT) **Zero-fare Transit: Pros & Cons**

Moderator: Kevin Spiker

Speakers:

- Abubakr Ziedan
 - Ehab Ebeid
-

3:00 PM - 3:15 PM (EDT) **Break**

3:15 PM - 4:00 PM (EDT) **Infrastructure Costs**

Moderator: Andy Furillo

Speakers:

- Eric Bruun
- Eric Goldwyn

PROGRAM AT A GLANCE

Wednesday, October 25 | Data in Transit

12:00 PM - 1:00 PM (EDT)

Data into Practice

Moderator: Chad Riding

Speakers:

- Brendon Hemily

1:00 PM - 1:15 PM (EDT)

Break

1:15 PM - 2:00 PM (EDT)

Passenger Counts and Passenger Origin/Destinations

Moderator: Chad Riding

Speakers:

- Jim Allison
- Harsh Verma
- Tolu Oke

2:00 PM - 2:15 PM (EDT)

Break

2:15 PM - 3:00 PM (EDT)

Bus Stop Spacing

Moderator: Jacob Yan

Speakers:

- Saipraneeth Devunuri
- Shirin Qiam
- Ayush Pandey

3:00 PM - 3:15 PM (EDT)

Break

3:15 PM - 4:15 PM (EDT)

Research in Transit: Advancing Research at Public Transit Agencies

Moderator: Michael Eichler

Speakers:

- Anne Gineapp
- Michael Berman
- Avital Shavit
- John Levin
- Martha Koch

PROGRAM AT A GLANCE

Thursday, October 26 | Transit Equity

12:00 PM - 2:00 PM (EDT)

Women in Transit

Moderator: Hilary Nixon

Speakers:

- Kayleigh Campbell
- Meghna Khanna
- Awad Abdelhalim
- Emily Gris 
- Keiko Porath
- Genevi ve Boisjoly
- Daniela Shuman
- David Cooper

2:00 PM - 2:15 PM (EDT)

Break

2:15 PM - 3:00 PM (EDT)

Disability and Transit (Panel)

Moderator: Mark Barry

Speakers:

- Judy Shanley
- Al Benedict
- Alex Kurzhanskiy
- Joshua Meng

3:00 PM - 3:15 PM (EDT)

Break

3:15 PM - 4:00 PM (EDT)

Closing Plenary

Moderator: Chad Riding

Speakers:

- Christof Spieler

4:00 PM - 4:15 PM (EDT)

Closing Remarks

PROGRAM SCHEDULE

OCTOBER 24 | TRANSIT PLANNING AND OPERATIONS

12:00PM - 1:00 PM (EDT) **Opening Plenary: Transit Leader's Perspective on the Future of Transit**

Moderator: Chad Riding

Speaker:



Kari Watkins

Associate Professor, Civil and Environmental Engineering
University of California, Davis

Dr. Kari Edison Watkins is an Associate Professor in Civil and Environmental Engineering at the University of California at Davis. Her teaching and research interests center in the use of technology and design to enable sustainable multi-modal transportation. After a decade long career in transportation consulting, Watkins obtained a PhD at the University of Washington, where she co-created the award-winning OneBusAway program to provide transit rider information tools and assess their impacts on riders. She then began a faculty position at Georgia Tech focusing in part on understanding and reacting to transit ridership changes. At UC Davis, Watkins is the Co-Director of the Transit Research Center at the Institute of Transportation Studies at Davis, where our research explores what will enable policy makers, communities, and transit agencies to support transit use, improve perceptions of transit and transit users, and allow transit in the US to thrive. This talk will include research done while Watkins served as the Director of T-SCORE, a USDOT University Transportation Center on the subject of Strategic Implications of Changing Public Transportation Travel Trends.

1:00 PM - 1:15 PM (EDT) **15-Minute Break**

1:15 PM - 2:00 PM (EDT) **Fare Equity Programs**

Moderator: Kari Watkins

Speakers:



Kayleigh Campbell

Strategic Planning Advisor, Office of Planning
Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA)

Kayleigh Campbell (she/hers) is a Strategic Planning Advisor in the Office of Planning at the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA). She leads analysis and communication of data and evidence that informs decision making. She has a PhD from Columbia University. Her research explores how transportation shapes cities and the lives of people in cities. Her current projects include measuring the impact of a low-income fare subsidy, understanding WMATA's place in the regional mobility market using location-based services data, and evaluating gender equity in service and fares.

PROGRAM SCHEDULE

OCTOBER 24 | TRANSIT PLANNING AND OPERATIONS *continued*



Alyssa Huberts
Social Scientist
The Lab @ DC



Caroline Rodier
Researcher
University of California, Davis



Avital Shavit
Senior Director
LA Metro

Avital Shavit is a Senior Director at LA Metro where she focuses on shaping policies and implementing projects that leverage behavioral science and technology to nudge LA County towards more equitable and sustainable modes of transportation instead of driving alone. She has two decades of experience in transportation and land use planning and previously worked in Metro's Planning department launching and managing the Metro Bike Share program. A daily transit and bike rider with a flair for "cycle chic" fashion, Shavit holds a Master's degree in Urban Planning from UCLA.



Roxanne Oroxom
Social Scientist
The Lab @ DC

Roxanne Oroxom is a Social Scientist with The Lab @ DC. She helps design and carry out evaluations of local policies and programs. Her current projects focus on public health and transit. Prior to joining the Lab, Oroxom supported health research at the World Health Organization, the World Bank, and the Center for Global Development. She also supported education research as a Research Assistant for the Georgetown University Initiative on Innovation, Development and Evaluation. Oroxom earned a Master of Public Policy degree from Georgetown University and a Bachelor of Arts degree in Economics from the University of Maryland, College Park.

2:00 PM - 2:15 PM (EDT) 15-Minute Break

PROGRAM SCHEDULE

OCTOBER 24 | TRANSIT PLANNING AND OPERATIONS *continued*

2:15 PM - 3:00 PM (EDT) **Zero-fare Transit: Pros & Cons**

Moderator: Kevin Spiker

Speakers:



Abubakr Ziedan
Transportation Planner
CDM Smith

Abubakr Ziedan is a Transportation Planner at CDM Smith. He has a PhD in Civil Engineering from the University of Tennessee, a Master of Science in Civil Engineering from the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga, and a Bachelor of Science in Civil Engineering from the University of Khartoum. He has also gained a wide and diverse professional experience in transit planning, including working in different transit agencies in the United States and Sudan. His research interests include exploring the latest transit ridership trends, transit planning and operations, transit fare policy and technology, and transit equity. He is the recipient of the 2022 William W. Millar Paper Award for the best paper in the area of public transportation presented by the Transportation Research Board (TRB). He is also the recipient of the 2023 Volunteer of Distinction at the University of Tennessee for students who have exhibited outstanding academic performance, and the recipient of the 2018 Donald C. Hyde Memorial Essay Scholarship presented by the American Public Transportation Foundation.



Ehab Ebeid
Transportation Planner / Data Scientist
Foursquare ITP

Ehab Ebeid is a Transportation Planner and Data Scientist at Foursquare ITP. As a member of Foursquare ITP's Transportation Data Science Team, he creatively manipulates, analyzes, and visualizes datasets, deriving actionable insights that guide policy and planning processes. His Foursquare ITP projects include the WMATA Bus Network Redesign, JTA Health Assessment and GTFS Review, and the WMATA Fare and Service Model. Trained as an urban planner and transportation engineer with a background in history and urban studies, Ebeid has a penchant for interdisciplinary work. He enjoys creating and applying innovative solutions to each new project.

Prior to joining Foursquare ITP, Ebeid worked on a variety of transportation research projects at the MIT Transit Lab, including an equity assessment of WMATA Metrorail's distance-based fare system using passenger-level datasets and a study of ride hailing platforms in developing contexts. In prior public sector experiences, Ebeid made legible complex transportation datasets, produced digestible intelligence, and built tools tailored for planners, decision-makers, and the public. His public sector experience gives him a deep appreciation for the needs and priorities of his transit agency and municipal government clients. A native of Giza, Egypt, Ebeid also grew up or lived in Quebec, Hong Kong, Italy, New York, Massachusetts, and DC.

3:00 PM - 3:15 PM (EDT) **15-Minute Break**

PROGRAM SCHEDULE

OCTOBER 24 | TRANSIT PLANNING AND OPERATIONS *continued*

3:15 PM - 4:00 PM (EDT) **Infrastructure Costs**

Moderator: Andy Furillo

Speakers:



Eric Bruun

Transportation Systems Analyst / Author

Eric Bruun is an expert in public transportation, logistics systems analysis, and continuing education. He is the author of *Better Public Transit Systems* (2ed, Routledge) and co-author of *Intro to Sustainable Transportation* (Earthscan/Routledge). Bruun has served as a visiting professor at Aalto University School of Engineering, adjunct faculty at University of Pennsylvania, and Assistant Director of National Transit Institute at Rutgers University. He was also a senior consultant or project manager at numerous international engagements.

Bruun earned a Ph.D in Systems Engineering – with a focus on transportation systems – from the University of Pennsylvania, and a Master of Science and a Bachelor of Science in Mechanical Engineering from the University of Washington.



Eric Goldwyn

*Professor / Director of the Transportation and Land-Use Program
NYU Marron*

Eric Goldwyn is a professor and director of the transportation and land-use program at NYU Marron. His team recently published its *Transit Costs Project* final report, which identified the key drivers of transit project costs in the United States, and identified ways to reduce costs.

Based on this work, he has worked with transit agencies, advised elected officials, and collaborated with advocates and researchers to improve project delivery. His writing has been featured in academic and popular press outlets.

PROGRAM SCHEDULE

OCTOBER 25 | DATA IN TRANSIT

12:00 PM - 1:00 PM (EDT) **Data into Practice**

Moderator: Chad Riding

Speakers:



Brendon Hemily

Senior Advisor, Transit Analytics Lab (TAL)
University of Toronto Transportation Research Institute

Dr. Brendon Hemily serves as Senior Advisor for the Transit Analytics Lab (TAL) of the University of Toronto Transportation Research Institute. He is an independent consultant with 38 years of experience of working with the transit industry in both Canada and the U.S.A. specializing in transit policy, planning, management, and technology issues. He provided support to USDOT from 2007 to 2018 related to Transit ITS, use of ITS data and mobility on demand, and worked earlier in his career for 15 years at the Canadian Urban Transit Association (CUTA), where he was responsible for all research and technical activities. He is past Chair and Emeritus Member of TRB's Public Transportation Planning and Development Committee and is the current Chair of TRB's Public Transportation Group.

1:00 PM - 1:15 PM (EDT) **15-Minute Break**

1:15 PM - 2:00 PM (EDT) **Passenger Counts and Passenger Origin/Destinations**

Moderator: Chad Riding

Speakers:



Jim Allison

Manager of Planning, New Capital/Service Projects and Planning Studies
Intercity Passenger Rail Service, Capitol Corridor Joint Powers Authority (CCJPA)

Since October 2000, Jim Allison has been with the Capitol Corridor Joint Powers Authority (CCJPA) management entity for the Intercity Passenger Rail service operating in Northern California. In that capacity, Allison is the Manager of Planning for new capital/service projects and planning studies along the route. In addition to traditional railway project planning, Allison leads CCJPA's technology transformation projects including the wireless/wired network that forms the basis for network enabled applications. He is an avid bicyclist and also developed and is implementing CCJPA's innovative Bicycle Access Plan. He is active in the San Francisco Bay Area's sea level rise adaptation task force and incorporating those adaptation strategies through CCJPA's long-term Vision Plan Update process. He is also advancing refinements to air quality models, GHG reduction, and incorporation of renewable diesel for California's passenger rail services. Prior to joining the CCJPA, for ten years Allison worked for the Bi-State Tahoe Regional Planning Agency in current planning, and later in transportation and as the Air Quality Program Manager.

PROGRAM SCHEDULE

OCTOBER 25 | DATA IN TRANSIT *continued*



Harsh Verma
Consultant, Transport Team
World Bank Group



Tolu Oke
Founder
Odara Mobility, LLC

Tolu Oke is the founder of Odara Mobility LLC, a transportation consulting firm. She also works part time with the Pioneer Valley Transit Authority (PVTA) on transit research projects. She has over 13 years of experience applying innovative and quantitative techniques to generate insights about transportation initiatives and their impacts on travel behavior, planning, and policy decisions. Her expertise is in data analytics for transportation planning, impact and equity assessment, demand modeling, and behavioral research. She has worked on more than 42 projects with over 25 public and private sector clients. Between 2020 and 2022, Oke authored 15 federal and state grant applications that awarded PVTA with over \$70 million in research and project grants. These include the 2020 FTA Accelerating Innovative Mobility (AIM) challenge grant, the 2020 FTA Helping Obtain Prosperity for Everyone (HOPE) grant, the 2021 MassDOT Intercity Bus grant, and the 2022 Areas of Persistent Poverty grant. These grants opened avenues for academic research collaborations at PVTA. Oke has collaborated on research projects at the University of Massachusetts Amherst, Western New England University, Mount Holyoke College, and Augsburg University.

2:00 PM – 2:15 PM (EDT) 15-Minute Break

2:15 PM – 3:00 PM (EDT) Bus Stop Spacing

Moderator: Jacob Yan

Speakers:



Saipraneeth (Praneeth) Devunuri
Interdisciplinary Researcher / PhD Student
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Saipraneeth (Praneeth) Devunuri is an interdisciplinary researcher applying Data Science, NLP, and Economics principles to the Transit and Ridesharing disciplines. He obtained his Bachelor of Technology from IIT Madras and Master of Science from Texas A&M University. Devunuri is currently pursuing his doctoral degree from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. He is enthusiastic about Transit Data accessibility and is working on the applications of Large Language Models (LLMs) to this domain as part of his dissertation. Devunuri's research has been recognized and published in esteemed journals such as *Transportation Research Part A*, *Research in Transportation Economics*, and *Expert Systems with Applications*. He presented his work at notable conferences including the Transportation Research Board (TRB), the European Conference on Computer Vision (ECCV), and Illinois Transportation and Highway Engineering (T.H.E.) Conference.

PROGRAM SCHEDULE

OCTOBER 25 | DATA IN TRANSIT *continued*



Shirin Qiam

PhD Student

University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Shirin Qiam is currently pursuing her PhD at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. She holds a Bachelor's degree in Civil and Environmental Engineering from Isfahan University of Technology and a Master's degree in Transportation Engineering from Sharif University of Technology. Her research focuses on transportation engineering, with a current project using economics to study bus stop spacing and its connection to socioeconomic factors.



Ayush Pandey

PhD Student

University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Ayush Pandey is a PhD student in Civil Engineering at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. His research interests lie in the intersection of transportation engineering, transport economics and urban economics.

3:00 PM – 3:15 PM (EDT) 15-Minute Break

3:15 PM – 4:15 PM (EDT) Research in Transit: Advancing Research at Public Transit Agencies

Moderator: Michael Eichler

Speakers:



Anne Gineapp

Research Team Lead

King County Metro

Anne Gienapp leads the Research team at King County Metro in Seattle, WA. The KC Metro Research team is engaged in data collection, analysis, and product development primarily to spotlight transit customer perceptions and experiences with transit. Her team strives to help KC Metro staff and leaders better articulate the “so what” of agency programs and investments and supports evaluation of multiple programs and initiatives to guide innovation as well as understanding of progress toward key agency goals of safe, equitable, and sustainable mobility. Her team also supports KC Metro staff and leaders to interpret and apply data to make confident and strategic decisions. The Research team is one of several KC Metro teams with data and analytic functions.

A life-long transit rider and enthusiast, Anne entered the transit industry relatively recently. She joined KC Metro in 2022 after a long consulting career where she designed and led applied research, evaluation, and strategy planning projects with a organizations in the governmental, private, and philanthropic sectors. Though Anne has lived in Seattle for over 30 years, that's apparently not long enough to be called a Seattle native. Originally from the Chicago area, Anne graduated from St. Olaf College (Northfield, MN) with degrees in History and Anthropology, and holds a master's degree in public policy from the Evergreen State College in Olympia, WA. An avid cyclist, Anne is currently planning her next multi-day bike trip. She also loves to cook, do puzzles of any kind, and read.

PROGRAM SCHEDULE

OCTOBER 25 | DATA IN TRANSIT *continued*



Michael Berman

Deputy Director of Research and Innovation
Sound Transit

Michael Berman is a transportation professional with over 25 years of experience in the public and private sector. Currently, he is the Deputy Director of Research and Innovation at Sound Transit in Seattle, WA and is passionate about using data to improve Sound Transit's performance. The research program is responsible for the agency's rider surveys and rider panels, and also works to align internal metrics with the passenger experience as shown through our passenger research. The innovation and Passenger Facing Technology program proposes and tests new projects and programs to improve the passenger experience and internal agency performance. Michael has been at Sound Transit for over ten years. In addition to his current position in the Passenger Experience Department, he has also worked in the planning department and IT.

Prior to Sound Transit, Michael worked as a consultant, and was also the first Program Manager for the 511 Traveler Information project at the Metropolitan Transportation Commission in the San Francisco Bay Area. Before becoming a transportation professional, he was a litigation associate at a Chicago law firm. He has a master's degree in city planning from the University of North Carolina, a law degree from the University of Michigan, and a bachelor's degree in English literature from the University of Illinois.



Avital Shavit

Senior Director
LA Metro

Avital Shavit is a Senior Director at LA Metro where she focuses on shaping policies and implementing projects that leverage behavioral science and technology to nudge LA County towards more equitable and sustainable modes of transportation instead of driving alone. She has two decades of experience in transportation and land use planning and previously worked in Metro's Planning department launching and managing the Metro Bike Share program. A daily transit and bike rider with a flair for "cycle chic" fashion, Shavit holds a Master's degree in Urban Planning from UCLA.



John Levin

Director of Strategic Initiatives
Metro Transit

John Levin is Director of Strategic Initiatives for Metro Transit. Levin has been with Metro Transit for 26 years and his team is focused on effective use of data and technology to improve the safety, quality, and efficiency of the agency's bus and rail services. Over his career at Metro Transit, Levin has worked on long range system planning, route planning, service analysis, scheduling, and data collection.

PROGRAM SCHEDULE

OCTOBER 25 | DATA IN TRANSIT *continued*



Martha Koch

*Director of Strategic Research, Office of Performance Management and Innovation (OPMI)
Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority / Massachusetts Department of
Transportation*

Martha Koch is the Director of Strategic Research in the Office of Performance Management and Innovation (OPMI), a shared department across the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority and the Massachusetts Department of Transportation. OPMI's Strategic Research team conducts values-driven, data-informed research to understand how transportation service and infrastructure relate to travel behavior and the built environment. We focus on answering questions that deepen nuance and understanding to support our colleagues in policy development work, and are particularly interested in work that advances social, environmental, and economic resiliency. Koch also teaches critical cartography as adjunct faculty in the Landscape Architecture Department at the Rhode Island School of Design (RISD) and is the recent recipient of a Rhode Island Humanities grant to conduct archival research into zoning and informal land use in Providence, RI.

PROGRAM SCHEDULE

OCTOBER 26 | TRANSIT EQUITY

12:00 PM - 2:00 PM (EDT) Women in Transit

Moderator: Hilary Nixon

Speakers:



Kayleigh Campbell

Strategic Planning Advisor, Office of Planning
Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA)

Kayleigh Campbell (she/hers) is a Strategic Planning Advisor in the Office of Planning at the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA). She leads analysis and communication of data and evidence that informs decision making. She has a PhD from Columbia University. Her research explores how transportation shapes cities and the lives of people in cities. Her current projects include measuring the impact of a low-income fare subsidy, understanding WMATA's place in the regional mobility market using location-based services data, and evaluating gender equity in service and fares.



Meghna Khanna

Senior Director, Mobility Corridors Department
LA Metro

Meghna Khanna is a Senior Director with the Mobility Corridors Department at LA Metro. She manages and oversees environmental clearance and design of various Light Rail Transit Projects including West Santa Ana Branch. As a previous member of the LA Metro's Women and Girl Governing Council, she led the Understanding How Women Travel Study – the first of its kind by a transit agency in the United States - and managed the Gender Action Plan for LA Metro.



Awad Abdelhalim

Urban Mobility Researcher
Massachusetts Institute of Technology

PROGRAM SCHEDULE

OCTOBER 26 | TRANSIT EQUITY *continued*



Emily Grisé

*Assistant Professor, School of Urban and Regional Planning
University of Alberta*

Dr. Emily Grisé is an Assistant Professor in the School of Urban and Regional Planning at the University of Alberta. She is a forward-thinking transport researcher with specializations in the areas of transport & land use planning, customer satisfaction & loyalty with public transit, and public transit planning & operations. As of recently, her research has pursued two primary topics. First, to gain an understanding of the public transit needs of women and persons with disabilities, and find opportunities to apply this knowledge to public transit system planning and policy. Second, to assess the performance and cost-effectiveness of battery-electric bus adoption in Canadian cities. These distinct research topics converge to support public transit agencies through the realization of the dual benefits of the transition to net zero transit fleets – lowering emissions through replacing single occupancy vehicles and reducing emissions from diesel fuel. Benefits that are only realized if residents choose public transit over their private vehicles.

Dr. Grisé's research stands at the intersection of academic inquiry and practical application, with a strong emphasis on collaboration and real-world impact. Her work has entailed close partnerships with numerous local and regional transportation agencies, where she actively engages with stakeholders to directly address their concerns and challenges. This hands-on approach has enabled her to bridge the gap between theory and practice, effectively utilizing her transport expertise to inform and enhance the strategies of these agencies.



Keiko Porath

*Business Research and Discovery Developer
Güil Mobility Ventures*

Keiko Porath has a diverse 7+ year background in business research, urban transportation, and strategic development and has dedicated the better part of her career to leading meaningful advancements within the urban mobility sphere. She is currently a business researcher and discovery developer at Güil Mobility Ventures, diving into urban transport markets and translating complex data into actionable strategies. Her involvement in project and startup management and startup has helped to bring sustainable mobility visions to life. She is also in the midst of ongoing master's research in Transport Economics, further fortifying her overall industry knowledge.

Prior to her role at Güil Mobility Ventures, Porath worked with the Transport and Telecommunications Ministry of Chile and Subus, where she gained expertise in urban transport system design, bus systems, business operations, private operator tenders, and sustainable urban planning. Apart from career advancement, she aims to leverage strategic innovation and urban development knowledge for tangible societal benefits, especially in the social, political, and gender contexts.

Through her roles in business research, strategy consultancy, data analytics, and academic research, Porath brings deep insights and understanding of transportation challenges to the forefront. Her published works on fare evasion dynamics and female travel patterns, highlight her commitment and dedication to driving improvements in this sector.

PROGRAM SCHEDULE

OCTOBER 26 | TRANSIT EQUITY *continued*



Geneviève Boisjoly
Assistant Professor
Polytechnique Montréal



Daniela Shuman
Graduate Student, Computer Science and Statistics
Harvard University

Daniela Shuman (she/hers) is currently pursuing her B.S. and Master's in Computer Science & Statistics at Harvard University. Shuman spends time considering how to design livable, dense urban environments. Her current research focus at the MIT Mobility Lab is on gender-aware public transportation policy. Previously, Shuman has worked in partnership with MBTA, exploring socioeconomic inequities in public transportation convenience. She also runs the Harvard Undergraduate Urban Sustainability Lab. She is from Seattle, WA, where she is a local Climate Reality Leader. In her free time, Daniela enjoys long backpacking trips in the Pacific Northwest.



David Cooper
Principal, Leading Mobility Consulting Partner
Collab Legacy Projects

2:00 PM - 2:15 PM (EDT) 15-Minute Break

PROGRAM SCHEDULE

OCTOBER 26 | TRANSIT EQUITY *continued*

2:15 PM – 3:00 PM (EDT) Disability and Transit (Panel)

Moderator: Mark Barry

Speakers:



Judy Shanley

*National Director of Mobility, Transportation, and Youth Transition
Easterseals*

Judy Shanley, Ph.D. is the National Director of Mobility, Transportation, and Youth Transition at Easterseals and serves as the Director of several US Department of Transportation projects funded by the Federal Transit Administration and the National Science Foundation, including the National Center for Mobility Management. She manages projects and multi-million-dollar budgets, conducts research, and provides technical assistance regarding human services coordination, mobility management, and building a continuum of accessible mobility options.

As the Easterseals lead for two research projects funded by the National Science Foundation, Shanley's work focuses on conducting research to develop strategies to collect and utilize sidewalk accessibility data consistent with ADA requirements. Judy is currently the outgoing Secretary of the APTA Access Committee and the Co-Chair of the TRB Committee on Accessible Transportation and Mobility (AME50). Prior to Easterseals, Shanley worked at the US Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs. She earned her Ph.D. in Special Education from the University of Florida and an M.B.A. and a Master's in Rehabilitation Counseling, both from Syracuse University.



Al Benedict

*Director, Learning Center and Accessibility Programs
Shared-Use Mobility Center (SUMC)*

Al Benedict is responsible for managing several national projects to evaluate opportunities and economic and environmental benefits related to shared mobility and integrated transportation systems. He leads the creation and maintenance of SUMC's interactive Mobility Learning Center —which includes a 1,000+ entries on mobility examples and best practices and supporting tools. Al also helped manage research for SUMC' low-income EV carsharing pilot and provides technical support for the FTA's mobility innovation pilots. Benedict also leads several national working groups to bring a diverse group of industry leaders together to address universal mobility and mobility interoperability solutions.



Alex Kurzhanskiy

*Researcher, Partners for Advanced Transportation Technology (PATH)
University of California, Berkeley*

PROGRAM SCHEDULE

OCTOBER 26 | TRANSIT EQUITY *continued*



Joshua Meng

*Associate Researcher, Partners for Advanced Transportation Technology (PATH)
University of California, Berkeley*

Dr. Joshua Meng is an Associate Research Engineer at the University of California, Berkeley, California Partners for Advanced Transportation Technology (PATH), which he joined in 2015. He has led a number of Federal and State transportation projects focused on dynamic transit operation systems, ECO-driving vehicles at intersections, and digital assistant for travelers with disabilities. Currently, his research areas encompass demand-responsive transit operation, automated vehicles, sensor network systems, and AI-powered transit systems. Meng has published over 100 academic papers in the field of statistical signal processing, sensor fusion for perception, and intelligent transportation systems. He has been a senior IEEE member since 2014.

Prior to his role at PATH, Meng was an Associate Professor of Electronic Engineering at Tsinghua University. He is a subject matter expert in statistical signal processing, intelligent transportations systems, and intelligent decision support systems. He earned his PhD in Electronic Engineering from Tsinghua University in 2004.

3:00 PM – 3:15 PM (EDT) 15-Minute Break

3:15 PM – 4:00 PM (EDT) Closing Plenary

Moderator: Chad Riding

Speaker:



Christof Spieler

*Director of Planning
Huitt-Zollars*

Christof Spieler, PE, AICP, LEED AP is the Director of Planning at Huitt-Zollars. His recent work includes reimagining regional rail in Philadelphia, bus transformation in Boston, bus network redesign in Fort Worth, a rail station in Austin, alternatives to a proposed freeway expansion, a community vision for Galveston, commuter rail planning in Albuquerque, greenways in Houston, street design manuals for Dallas, and flood resilience in Houston.

Spieler teaches at Rice University and served on Houston METRO's board from 2010 to 2018, spearheading the redesign of the bus network. His book *Trains, Buses, People: An Opinionated Atlas of US Transit* was published in 2018; a second edition that included Canada was published in September 2021. As a member of the American Public Transit Association's Sustainability and Urban Design Working Group, he has helped draft national standards on transit and urban design and he was a contributor to NACTO's Transit Streets Design Guide. Christof holds a B.S. and M.S. in Civil Engineering from Rice University. He lives in Downtown Houston and relies on transit and walking for most of his daily trips.

4:00 PM – 4:15 PM (EDT) Closing Remarks

SESSION MODERATORS



Mark Barry

Senior Transportation Planner
California Department of Transportation (Caltrans)



Michael Eichler

Strategic Planning Advisor, Data Lab
Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA)

Michael Eichler is a Strategic Planning Advisor with the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority. Michael leads a new team called Data Lab focused on data innovation and governance, quantitative research, and developing data products to promote data-informed decision making at the Authority. Eichler is originally from Schenectady, NY and grew up in Dover, DE. He graduated from the George Washington University with a BS in Systems Analysis and Engineering, and holds a dual master's degree in City and Regional Planning and Transportation Engineering from UC Berkeley. He has worked at the intersection of transit and research for the past 10 years at WMATA. His most recent journal article is entitled, "Linking Incidents to Customers (LINC): An Algorithm for Linking Incidents to Rail Customer Delays Inspired by Traffic Flow Theory," published in the Transportation Research Record in October of 2021. When not trying to save the world through public transportation he enjoys cycling, hikes with his dog, and playing bridge and bocce.



Andy Furillo

Associate Governmental Program Analyst
California Department of Transportation (Caltrans)

SESSION MODERATORS



Hilary Nixon

Deputy Executive Director
Mineta Transportation Institute (MTI)

Dr. Hilary Nixon has served as Deputy Executive Director for MTI since 2018. Previously, she served as MTI's Director of Research and Technology Transfer. Nixon is an active researcher and educator specializing in transportation and environmental planning and policy. Her research focuses primarily on the factors that influence pro-environmental behavior, transportation finance, and the relationship between transportation and the environment. She has served as Principal Investigator (PI), co-PI, or project team member on over 50 research grants totaling over \$9.4 million.

In her roles at MTI, Nixon led or collaborated in the publication of 70 research reports and articles on a wide variety of critical transportation issues, including sustainability, livability, economic impacts of public transportation, women's representation in the field, and more. Nixon's individual research has been published in highly-ranked international and peer-reviewed transportation and environment journals such as the *Journal of Sustainability Education*, the *Journal of Public Transportation*, the *Journal of Environmental Management*, the *Journal of Environmental Planning and Management*, and many others.

Prior to joining MTI, Nixon spent 12 years as faculty in the Department of Urban & Regional Planning at San José State University (SJSU), where she held positions as Graduate Advisor, Associate Chair, and Department Chair. Nixon has been recognized with numerous awards and commendations, including Advisor of the Year in 2015, Outstanding Advisor Award in 2009, and both the Award for Academic Excellence and the Award for Planning Achievement by the American Planning Association 2008.

Since 2018, Nixon has served as Director of the Research and Education Division, of the American Road & Transportation Builders' Association. A strong proponent of advancing women in academia, research, and transportation, Nixon regularly advocates for women's interests in her professional service roles. She served as Vice President of the Faculty Women's Interest Group (FWIG) of the Association of Collegiate Schools of Planning from 2013-2015 and currently serves as chair of the Transportation Research Board AME20 Standing Committee on Women and Gender in Transportation.



Chad Riding

Senior Transportation Planner, Division of Planning and Modal Program Management
California Department of Transportation (Caltrans)

Chad Riding is a Senior Transportation Planner at the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) in its Division of Planning and Modal Programs Management, with 14 years of planning experience at Caltrans. Chad works on strategic management, legislative coordination, and research coordination for Caltrans. A chief focus of his work is building better connections in the planning practitioner and researcher communities. Chad's interests in planning are in finding ways to bring diverse groups of stakeholders together and find common ground to implement change. Chad has a Master of Arts in Urban and Regional Planning from the University of Florida.

SESSION MODERATORS



Kevin Spiker

*Associate Governmental Program Analyst
California Department of Transportation (Caltrans)*



Kari Watkins

*Associate Professor, Civil and Environmental Engineering
University of California, Davis*

Dr. Kari Edison Watkins is an Associate Professor in Civil and Environmental Engineering at the University of California at Davis. Her teaching and research interests center in the use of technology and design to enable sustainable multi-modal transportation. After a decade long career in transportation consulting, Watkins obtained a PhD at the University of Washington, where she co-created the award-winning OneBusAway program to provide transit rider information tools and assess their impacts on riders. She then began a faculty position at Georgia Tech focusing in part on understanding and reacting to transit ridership changes. At UC Davis, Watkins is the Co-Director of the Transit Research Center at the Institute of Transportation Studies at Davis, where our research explores what will enable policy makers, communities, and transit agencies to support transit use, improve perceptions of transit and transit users, and allow transit in the US to thrive. This talk will include research done while Watkins served as the Director of T-SCORE, a USDOT University Transportation Center on the subject of Strategic Implications of Changing Public Transportation Travel Trends.



Jacob Yan

*Assistant Professor, Department of Civil and Coastal Engineering
University of Florida*

Dr. Xiang (Jacob) Yan is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Civil and Coastal Engineering at the University of Florida, where he leads the Just&Green Transportation Lab. His work focuses on using data science and artificial intelligence (machine learning) to make transportation more equitable and sustainable. Bridging transportation engineering, data science, and urban planning, he takes an interdisciplinary approach to transportation research that connects technological innovations with community needs. He works closely with public agencies and industry partners to develop intelligent decision-support tools that can help them better plan for and manage public transit systems and new mobility services (e.g., ridesharing, bikesharing, and scootersharing).