

Project Milestone 2- Is the U.S. Public Transportation System Struggling?

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Is the U.S. Public Transportation System Struggling?

What is the problem being Addressed?

In this project, the problem being addressed is to combat the media's claims that U.S. public transportation is facing a slow death. The Media has been portraying public transportation badly, stating that public transit funding must be reduced and that it is not worth the investment.

Approach for this Milestone

In this milestone, the summary of findings from the earlier analysis is prepared and presented to the Executive Committee. As the audiences are experts in the area, the visualizations are chosen carefully to represent the summaries and percentages. For this reason, bar charts, Donut charts, Pie Charts, and Maps are used. Also, Annotations with an overview of the findings are included in each slide the key takeaways at the end of the presentation are discussed so the critical messages are communicated clearly.

Overall Findings

Analysis of the passenger traffic and revenue trends over the past few years suggests that public transportation in the U.S. is struggling overall, except for regions like New York City, Washington D.C., and Boston. The Pandemic accelerated the decline due to the social distancing measures and the fear of the virus spreading. However, as the Pandemic is now in the rear, passenger traffic and Fare revenue are recovering slowly post-pandemic. ***To summarize, public transit is struggling post-pandemic and making a recovery, but it is not dying like what the media is trying to project.***

Also, there are many compelling reasons why investing more in public transit is essential. The number of seniors, who are significant users of public transit, is expected to increase by 70% in 2060. As the already crowded Urban cities keep growing, traffic congestion may be a huge problem. The federal

funding budget for Public transit has been historically low compared to infrastructure funding. For instance, the public transit budget is about one-tenth of the highway funding in states like Florida and Texas. Without enough funding, the public transit system may continue to struggle in the future.

Plans to Present to the Executive Committee:

To present to the executive committee, the first three slides focus on setting the stage by discussing usage patterns such as travel trends, commuter age, income levels, etc. By comparing Public transit usage with Car ownership stats, the low popularity of Public transportation is discussed. The next two slides discuss the current struggling phase of public transit and how federal funding has been historically low compared to infrastructure and highway funding, thus establishing that Public Transit is not their top priority. After discussing the current struggling phase, the focus shifts to why more funding is necessary in the future by examining the changing demographics of the future and crowded cities, thus showing the need to invest more in Public transportation. It can also provide more employment opportunities in the future thus providing a boost to the economy. The presentation concludes with a positive note of how the current state can be improved by exploring additional opportunities by introducing intercity express routes or by partnering with services like Greyhound, thus boosting revenue.

Ethical Considerations:

The project aims to improve the current public transportation system and does not suggest replacing the car industry, which is unlikely. The Auto industry in the U.S. is vast and employs thousands of people. Hence, care must be taken while promoting environmental awareness about the hazards caused by cars and automobiles. The discussion of road casualty statistics must be dealt with care and compassion as they represent the number of people who lost their lives. Due to space limitations, the

data in the maps were only displayed for the contiguous 48 states while the analysis was done for all 50 states including Alaska and Hawaii.