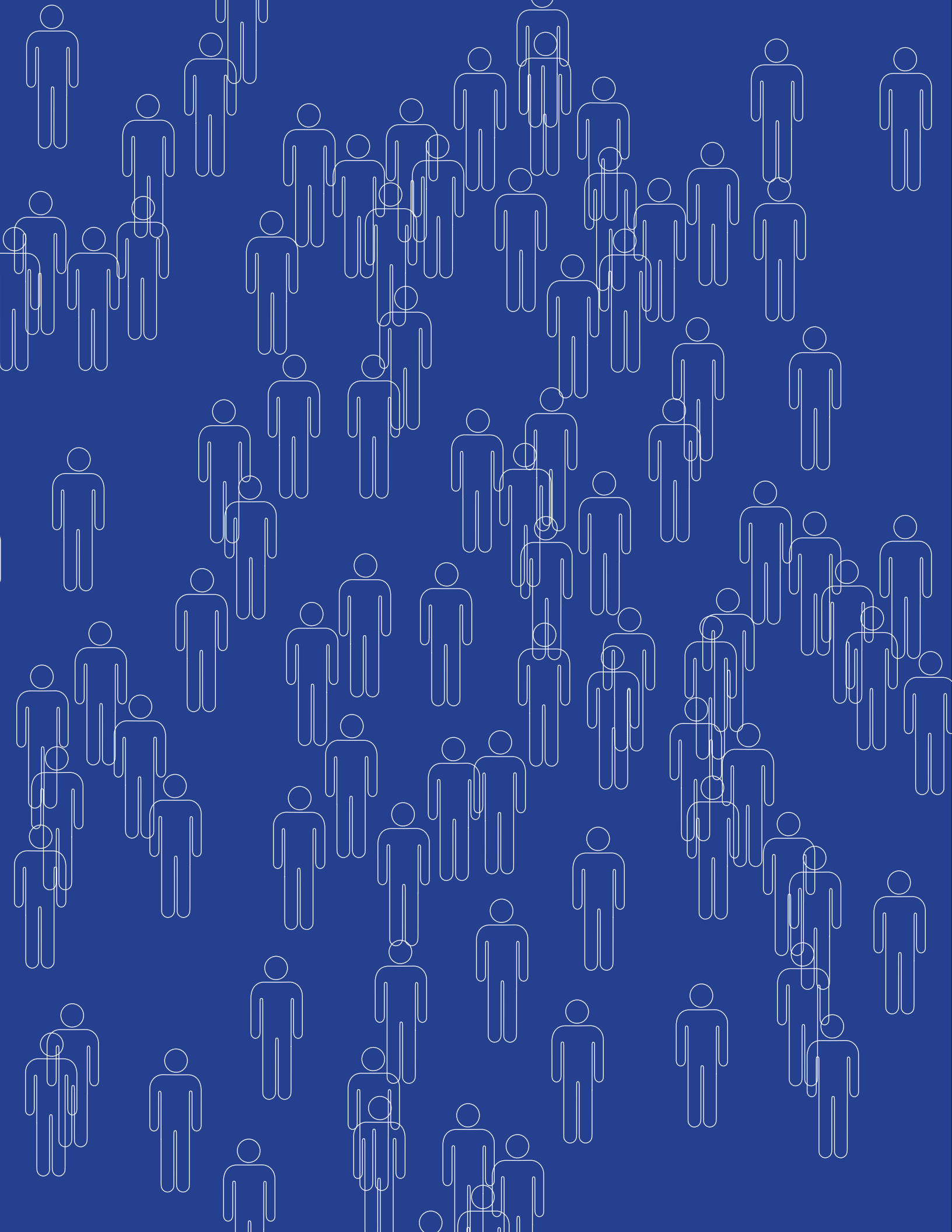


B-ON THE LINE



FINAL REPORT



B-ON THE LINE

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Students Reflect on the Future

March 31, 2014

Vancouver, BC -

CityStudio’s newest project, B-on the Line, is an interactive public art installation visualizing open data to draw attention to the present and future of commuters along the Broadway Corridor. The project launch takes place on May 7th outside Broadway-City Hall skytrain station of Cambie and Broadway and aims to engage the public by sparking conversations about transit in relation to Vancouver’s predicted population increase of 1 million people by 2041.

“Vancouver is a beautiful city and I know many people want to keep it that way; the numbers tell me about Vancouver’s future, but they don’t make me feel it,” said Vivian Lin, one of the students spearheading B-on the Line. “We want to keep Vancouver as one of the world’s most livable cities, and we see accessibility in public transportation as a key factor in helping the growing population get around comfortably.”

TransLink reports the 99 B-Line to be one of North America’s busiest bus routes, making it a perfect choice for highlighting Vancouver’s reliance on transit. Based on the 99 B-Line’s boarding data, we designed a hidden message graphic for the public to engage with; the installation inviting viewers to reflect and consider the future of our city.

The public is encouraged to visit B-on the Line and engage with the installation through sharing their experience and thoughts on social media using the hashtag #GetBeyond.

B-on the Line is a project of CityStudio developed in partnership with the help and guidance of the Integrated Graffiti Management Program and the Digital Output Centre of Emily Carr University of Art + Design.

For more information about CityStudio and our projects, please visit our website.

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CityStudio is an innovation and leadership hub inside City Hall where staff, citizens and students from 6 universities co-create solutions making Vancouver more liveable, joyful and sustainable. CityStudio convenes stakeholders, defines problems and creates solutions while developing student skills and retaining the talent of next generation changemakers. Using the “teaching hospital” model inside City Hall, students are redefined as key problem solvers in cities. Since 2011, 50 city staff, 75 faculty 93 professionals and 3000 students have contributed 75,000 hours of new projects and public sector innovation in Vancouver.

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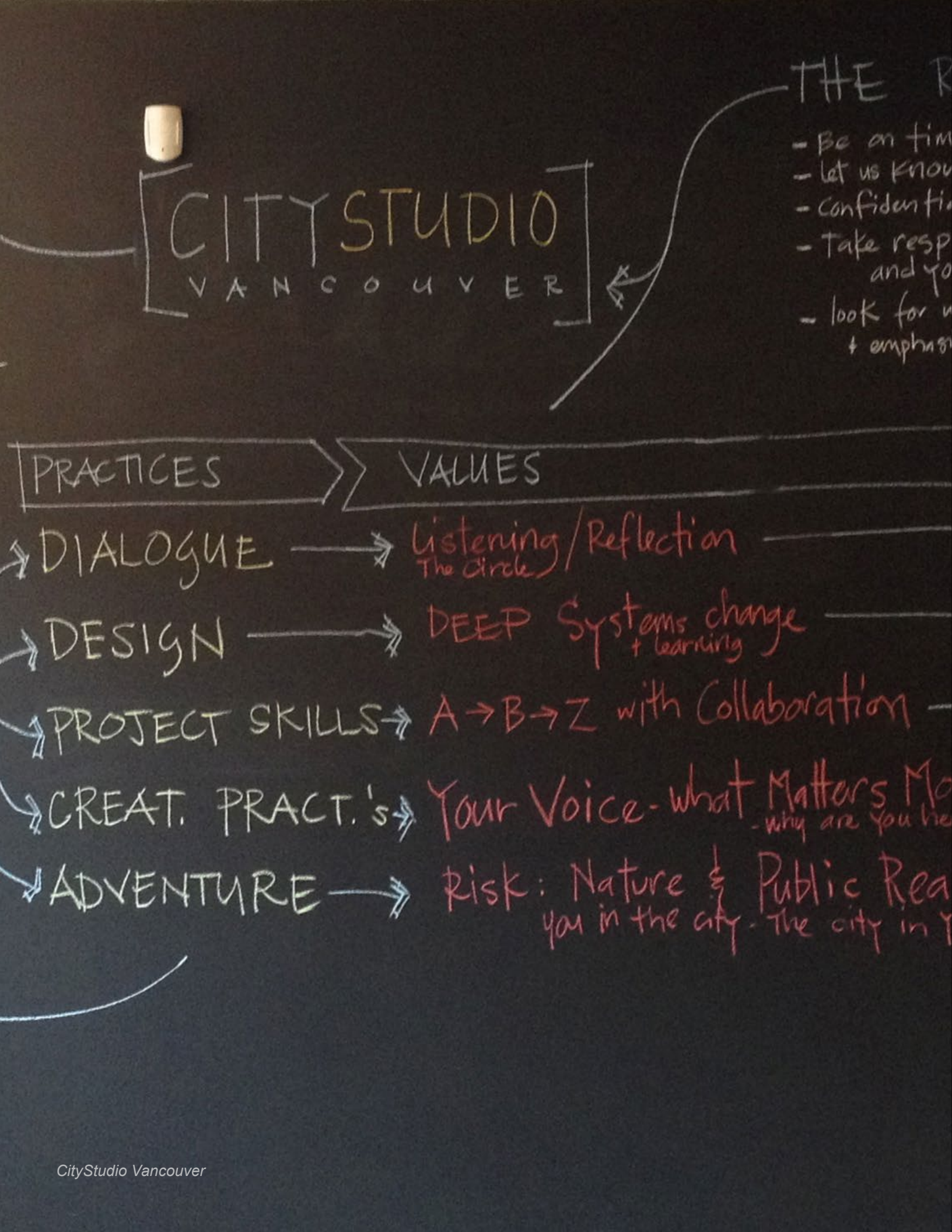
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Strategic Transportation Planning

Under the expertise of Nathan Pope, Integrated Graffiti Management, we have learned all about the permitting process a project must go through to hit the ground. Over the course of the semester, Nathan has been our key contact at the City and has offered great support and guided us throughout the process.

Our other staff contact was Tanner Watteyne, Strategic Transportation Planning. He supported us by providing key pieces of data on the ridership of the B-99.

PROJECT SUMMARY

Will be submitted post-implementation at the end of May, 2015, with a complete summary of project description, implementation procedures and outcomes.

THE VISION

B-on the Line aims to draw attention to the present and future of commuters along the Broadway Corridor through an interactive public art installation visualizing open data. The installation intends to spark conversations about transit in relation to Vancouver's predicted population increase of 1 million people by 2041.

CITY TARGET GOALS

B-on the Line aims to draw attention to the present and future of commuters along the Broadway Corridor through an interactive public art installation visualizing open data. The installation intends to spark conversations about transit in relation to Vancouver's predicted population increase of 1 million people by 2041.

THE PURPOSE

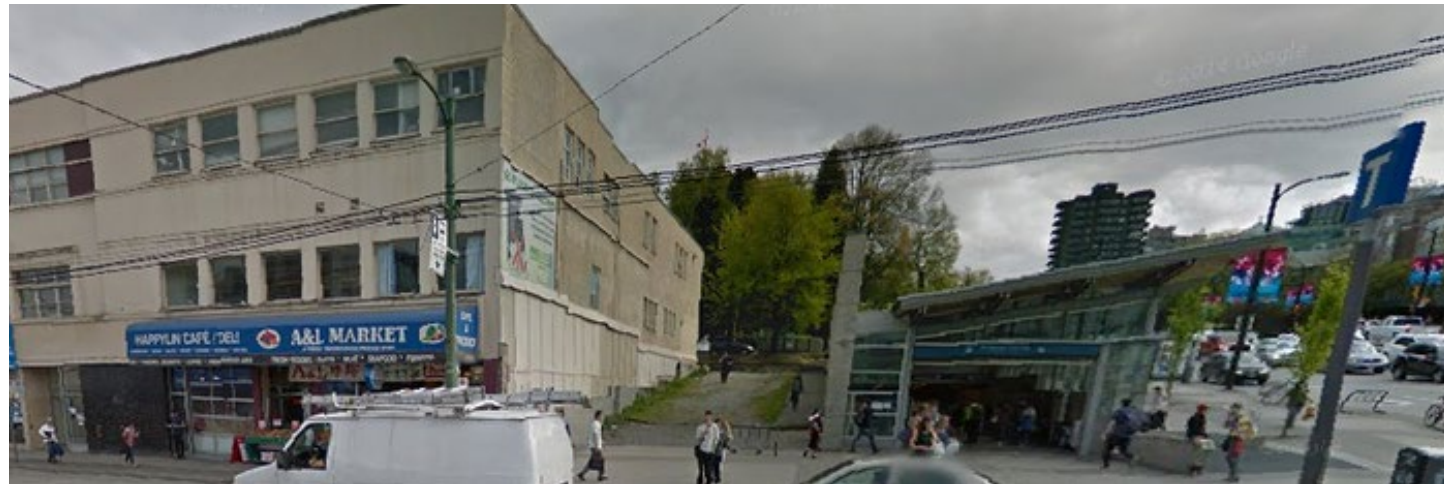
The purpose of B-on the Line is to spark conversations amongst the public related to the increase of ridership along the Broadway corridor. Vivian Lin, one of the students spearheading B-on the Line said that "the statistics on the increasing population tell me about Vancouver's future, but they don't make me feel anything about how this might affect me." Her words drawing attention to a need in the city for the reality of its future to be conveyed in a tangible, creative way.

THE CONTEXT

As the Metro Vancouver Transportation and Transit Referendum is ongoing during the spring of 2015, we saw an opportunity to create a fun and interactive installation to spark conversations about the use of transit in our city. It is being said over and over again that not enough Vancouverites are politically engaged or vote and therefore we believe in new and innovative ways of getting people involved.

TransLink reports the 99 B-Line to be one of North America's busiest bus routes, making it a perfect choice for highlighting Vancouver's reliance on transit. Based on the 99 B-Line's boarding data, we designed a hidden message graphic for the public to engage with; the installation inviting viewers to reflect and consider the future of our city.





SITE + APPROVALS

Broadway-City Hall skytrain station is a high traffic site and one of the busier stops for the rapid transit route B-Line 99. According to TransLink the Broadway Corridor is one of North America's busiest bus routes and in addition to this fact, the space offers.

Unknown to us, this site is quite complex, the space being owned by three parties (private, CoV, and Translink) making the permitting process extra complicated. In learning this, we thought about using a secondary site, specifically the Willow and Broadway 99 b-line bus stop. However, because our project's concept relied heavily on the boarding data at the Cambie and Broadway Bus stop, we decided to keep pursuing the space regardless of the problems.

In order to use the space and the wall, we needed approval from the City's Public Art team, Signage Department, Engineering Department, the Real Estate owner and Facilities Management.

IDEATION + PROCESS

From the start, our team wanted to create a project that engaged the public in a fun and unique way: our initial leading thought stating that we desired to "cultivate connections in our transit community by bringing creativity into the mundane." Our first project ideations centered on getting people to engage with each other, experiencing safer environments around transit stations and through doing this it would support the city in their "Engaged City Task Force" goals of getting citizens to engage with one another about the future of Vancouver.

We focused our project on the empty space outside of the Broadway-City Hall SkyTrain station and the 99 B-Line. The bus stop being a great opportunity to explore innovative ways of bringing both fun and open data into the everyday commuter life. Another main focus of our project was helping raise awareness about the upcoming Transit Referendum through using the boarding data of the 99 B-Line in our final design.

We went through countless ideas and designs throughout the semester ranging from an interactive newspaper installation that drew inspiration from the greenest city action plan, to making a large air balloon set that people could enter.

With these ideas in mind, we proposed three different projects for the Cambie and Broadway 99 B-line bus stop.





1: Redesigning the back area (highlighted red) to create a space for people to sit. Our idea here was to create something that would colour up the actual space through installing benches and planting flowers in order to create a welcoming environment for the public to enjoy.

2: Our second idea (highlighted blue) focused on the ground area and entailed creating a painted mural message or visualization of boarding data for the public to interact with. We were excited about using the ground primarily because it is quite a large space and currently devoid of any kind of creative visualizations.

3: Finally, our third idea (highlighted in green) was to project a time lapse or video depicted historic imagery of Vancouver's transit evolution. We also thought about projecting something onto the ground as an experimental piece which would make the video become more interactive instead of just visual.

Why did we want to do this? We were responding to the Vancouver Foundation survey, 'Connections and Engagement', which stated that 25% of Vancouverites felt alone more often than they would like. We wanted to draw attention to this issue through making people feel more connected to each other and our city.

After discussing our ideas with City Studio staff, we decided on using the ground space leading to our first official project VanConnect, which focused on creating a visual representation of the increase of ridership on the 99 B-line. By using specific colours to represent the boarding data of the past, present and future of the B-line, our project's aim was to help the public start conversations about the population growth of Vancouver as represented in transit.



However, our team needed to revise our idea in response to the concerns held by graffiti management and city engineers; painting on the ground and creating directional lines being a public safety concern for the city. This led us to consider using the wall as our next best option.

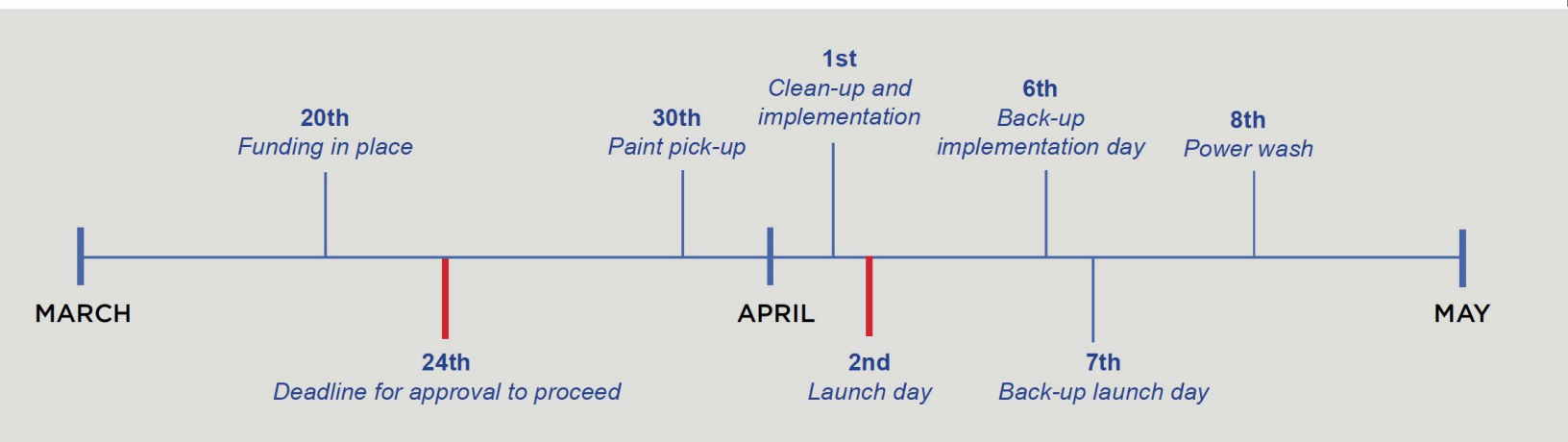
Our second project focused on using mirrors to help the public visualize the past, present and future of Vancouver's transit. Our design mimicked the size of skytrain advertisements, and was meant to help the public reflect on the future of the city. The first mirror would be foggy to represent the boarding data from 2000, the second would reflect the present and the third mirror would have a multiplying effect that would present the potential chaos of transit in 2041. This idea however was lacking the fun, conversation starter piece that our team desired, leading us to revise it a third time.



Our third and final revision, B-on the Line, developed in response to our desire for the project to engage the public in a fun and compelling way. Being a colourful, hidden message graphic, this new idea satisfied our desire from the beginning to create something that would give people a reason to interact. It also used the knowledge we gleaned while working on the previous projects, B-on the Line continuing to use the 99 Cambie and Broadway boarding data we acquired.

TIMELINE

Below is our initial timeline for design no. 1 with the lines on the ground and it is based from our initial launch day on April 2nd. However, as we ran into barriers around using the ground space and changed our idea to installing it on the wall instead, the timeline continued to be pushed back. Our goal is to have the hidden message board installed in the first week of May and stay until the last day of the referendum on May 29th.



BUDGET + MATERIALS

Throughout the semester with the various ideas, we explored many options of paint, materials for the board, etc. to make a high quality project for the smallest amount of money. As for paint we discussed two temporary options, chalk spray and vinyl stickers, and one more permanent, exterior paint. Each one came with its own set of challenges, for example, it was difficult finding Canadian and local suppliers for the chalk spray and in case of rain, it would spoil the design. This was our main option if we would have held a one-day event.

Once we moved onto the hidden message board, we quickly decided to print the design on a vinyl as it was the most durable and affordable option.

CHALLENGES + KEY LESSONS

As a team we learned a lot about embracing process, responding to constraints and pushing through problems we encountered in each phase of our project. The first major road block in our work concerned the use of the ground space outside Broadway-City Hall skytrain station. Our first piece used chalk paint to create graphic lines that depicted ridership data and the inability to use the ground due to public safety concerns with our design made this project unfeasible for our allotted time frame.

Paint on the sidewalk can no longer be just power washed away, instead it needs to be executed by the City’s contractors who are using a costly special burning system and hard to undertake in a high traffic location. These barriers made us to respond to the situation proactively by coming up with a new design that still used the same core idea and vision as our first design.

Our next idea building upon the Lineup for the future data plan but instead of the ground, we relocated our design from the ground to the wall. We also came up with the idea of using mirrors to visualize Vancouver’s growing population. Though this project was more feasible then painting the ground space, the message was not as compelling which made our team revise it and come up with a more eye-catching installation. This led us to creating a colourful, hidden graphic message that would both invite public interaction while also communicate the key message.

Our biggest challenges in this project were the tight time constraint: we had to come up with the revised idea with a week and half to go before Hubhub. Then the second largest challenge was gaining permits to the space we wanted to use.

Overall, the project taught us that nothing is wasted, valuable knowledge we gained in the two previous ideas allowing us to work fast and efficiently on getting B-on the Line from an idea to a reality.

CURRENT STATUS + NEXT STEPS

Our project received great feedback from visitors at Hubbub, sufficient funding has been approved and we are now waiting excitedly for the official approval from the CoV. Once we receive the approval, the vinyl will be printed and the last components regarding the installment of the hidden message board will be collected. We will make sure to have good communication with the people printing the vinyl to assure high quality of the colours and layering on the hidden message board.

B-on the Line will be hitting the ground during the first week of May, 2015. The full impact of the project will be known once it is out in the real world and the public is able to interact with it. We will be documenting people's reactions and interactions with the installation through video and photography.

From the beginning some of the measures of success we set for ourselves consisted of the amount of users of our hashtag #GetBeyond, our installation traffic, and the longevity and potential replication of our project. Currently, we are waiting to see what our hashtag will generate, but one thing that has exceeded our expectations is that our project (which we designed for a one day event) is set to be up for the duration of May. This is extremely exciting and a great turn of events.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Since our installation was very place specific with the data used, it would have helped us move the project forward faster if we would have contacted the City earlier on in the process to discuss the space.
2. Clear communication with the printers to make sure the graphic comes out properly since it is a key aspect for the colours and layers to work well in order to convey our message.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

THANK YOU CITYSTUDIO TEAM AND CITY STAFF