



University of Washington students help design the future of Seattle transportation through Imagine Mobility Ideathon

Four winning projects selected

SEATTLE, Wash., October 15, 2018 —In partnership with the Mobility Innovation Center at UW CoMotion, [Challenge Seattle](#), WSDOT, SDOT, Sound Transit and King County Metro hosted the [Imagine Mobility Ideathon](#), a weekend-long hackathon-inspired social innovation challenge where 48 select UW grad and undergrad students of diverse disciplines ranging from technology to social services tackled our transportation challenges from a user perspective. The students helped generate solutions and ideas that will raise public awareness around the [Period of Maximum Constraint](#).

Activities included a UW CoMotion-led Design Thinking workshop, neighborhood-based discoveries throughout greater Seattle, and on Sunday, presentations by the student teams of their proposed solutions. A panel of judges included former Governor Chris Gregoire, UW VP for Innovation Strategy Vikram Jandhyala, Executive Director of Commute Seattle Jonathan Hopkins, SVP WSP/Parsons Brinckerhoff Paula Hammond and Amazon Vice President Babak Parviz. Here are the four winning teams and their solutions:

First Place – Mobility hubs at schools to help parents ditch the car

This solution is based around reshaping public schools to also function as mobility hubs, allowing parents to commute to shared workplaces together from their children’s schools. These routes could be served by vanpools, city buses, Ubers, company shuttles, or private cars depending on the locations and size of the schools. The mobility hub will also create a sense of community around the schools, allowing greater interaction between parents. Additionally, by traveling to schools via vanpools, buses, etc with their children, parents will have the opportunity for greater engagement with their children without the distraction of driving and navigating traffic.

Second Place – A platform for large employers to coordinate trip reduction efforts

This solution is to build a web-based system to coordinate employer use of alternative commuting options. This helps participating employers within each area work together. Companies located within a few blocks of each other coordinate their “work from home days” and “alternative transport days” to reduce car travel to that area every day of the week. To incentivize employees to not use their vehicle, we use an app to collect their commute data from Orca or other systems. Employees use the app to track when they stay at home or use alternative transportation. Users have access to their personal commuting data which they could use for lower car insurance premiums.

Third Place Tie – Transit loyalty programs and gamification



This gamification solution creates more solutions to create an entertaining experience for riders, and allow transit agencies to prioritize their projects to increase customer satisfaction. On the user side, the purpose: improve rider experience, give riders a sense of ownership to their neighborhoods, increase ridership at all times and neighborhood engagement, help transit agencies prioritize their projects. It is a two-pronged approach: a competition and an exploration. Users will be able score points the more they ride and visualize how much they help the environment. Virtual scoreboards allow them to see how they stack up to your friends, coworkers, and neighbors, incentivizing them to ride more. The exploration part is a treasure hunt at stops, local businesses, and historic locations. On the agency side, by getting users involved in the app they can collect precious data about transit usage and rider preferences that allows them to prioritize which solutions to build and how, based on this feedback.

Third Place Tie – Capacity solutions for transit

Modeled after other bigger cities that use this system, this proposal aims to decrease time spent in transportation on the light rail and at increasing capacity to increase the number of people transported. Model for decreasing time spent: there would be two types of trains on the light rail corridor - an express train and a regular train. The express train would leave on the hour just before the regular train and would only stop at the most traveled stops. Model for increasing capacity (and safety): cars would be modified a little, some of them becoming standing room only, and special priority seating could be deployed for night rides targeting women, children and the elderly or otherwise mobility-impaired people.

About the Mobility Innovation Center

A partnership between Challenge Seattle and the University of Washington, the Mobility Innovation Center tackles specific transportation challenges, using applied research and experimentation. Housed at CoMotion, University of Washington's collaborative innovation hub, the multi-disciplinary center brings together the region's leading expertise from the business, government, and academic sectors to use technology and innovation to find transportation solutions.

About Challenge Seattle

Challenge Seattle is an alliance of CEOs from 17 of the region's largest employers. Together, they are taking on the challenge of ensuring the greater Seattle area continues to thrive as one of the most vibrant, innovative, and globally competitive regions in the world.

Launched in 2015, Challenge Seattle's CEOs have made a five year investment to collectively tackle some the region's most pressing civic challenges. Led by former



Washington State Governor Christine Gregoire, Challenge Seattle harnesses the committed leadership, unique resources, and innovative talent of its member companies to find innovative solutions and inspire collective action for the greater good.

About Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT)

SDOT's mission is to deliver a high-quality transportation system for Seattle via core values that work toward creating a safe, connected, vibrant, affordable, and innovative city for all.

About Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT)

The Washington State Department of Transportation is the steward of a multimodal transportation system and responsible for ensuring that people and goods move safely and efficiently. In addition to building, maintaining, and operating the state highway system, WSDOT is responsible for the state ferry system, and works in partnership with others to maintain and improve local roads, railroads and airports, as well as to support alternatives to driving, such as public transportation, bicycles and pedestrian programs.

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