

# *Rider Rewards Program: Unsubsidized Riders*

B.S. Senior Capstone Project  
Human Centered Design & Engineering  
University of Washington  
June 2020

# Team



Emily Rosenfield  
UX Researcher



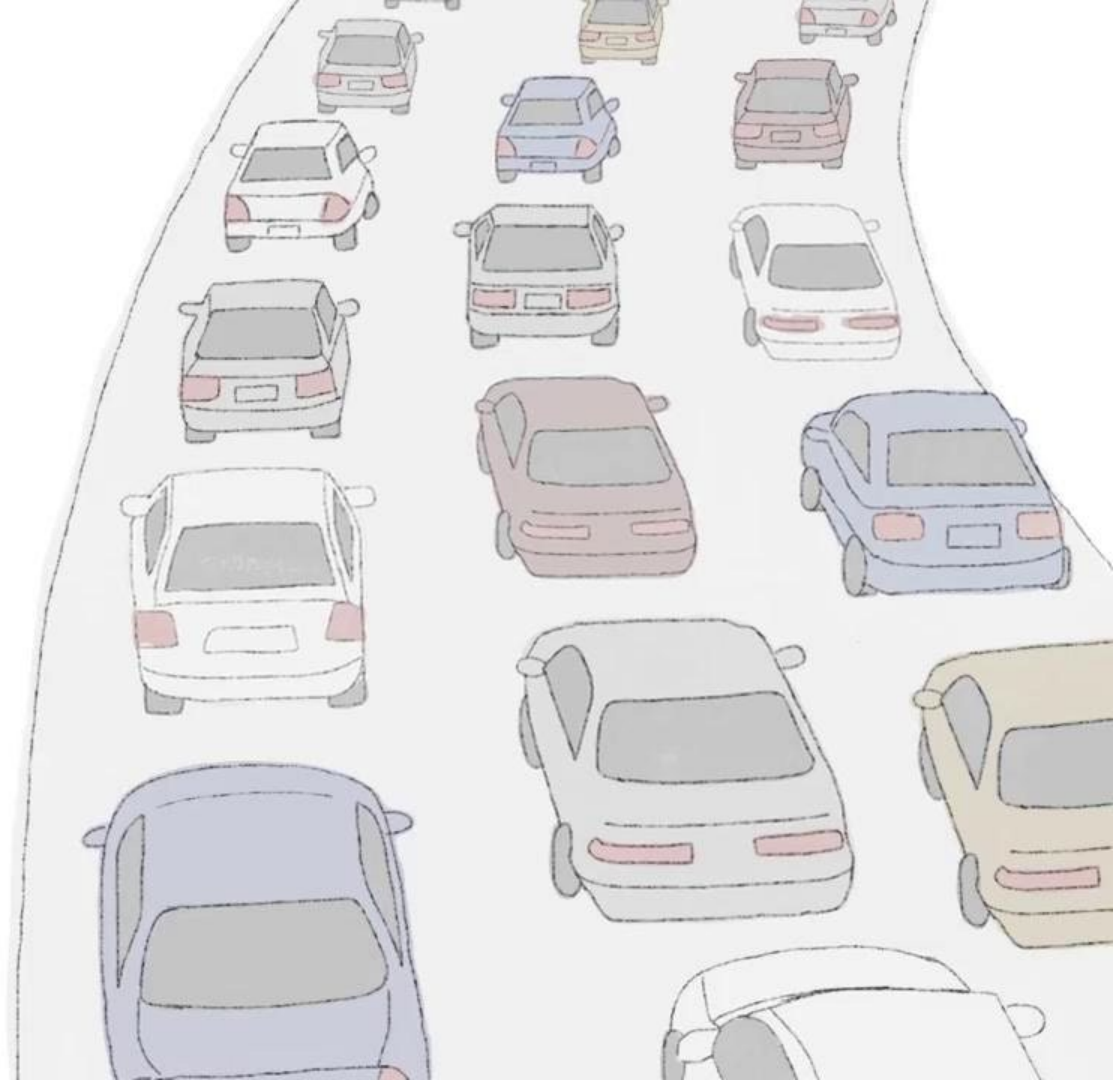
Karishma Patel  
Project Manager



Rachel Wallace  
UX Designer



Griffen Schwiesow  
UX Designer



# *Agenda*

- Problem Introduction
- Rider Survey & Interviews: Key Findings and Decisions
- Design Requirements
- Rewards and Features Survey
- Rider Rewards Program Design
- Implementation Plan: MVP 1 & MVP 2
- Documentation

# *Problem Introduction*

# *Problem*

Unsubsidized and partially subsidized rider populations do not benefit from employer transportation benefits despite the fact that they may rely on the transit system just as much, or even more, than the people who currently receive these benefits.

# *Benefits of a rewards program*

Research has shown its easier and cheaper to pull in existing customers further, than it is to convince new people to want your product

A rewards program is one way to show you care about your customers and create a sense of connection to your brand



*Alaska*  
AIRLINES

  
SEPHORA

## *Who we're solving for*

Since close to 75% of Seattle riders are not subsidized by an employer or school (*2018 Rider/NonRider Survey*), a rider rewards program would be widely beneficial to the majority of Seattle transit riders

A rewards program would encourage unsubsidized/partially subsidized riders, particularly those who ride infrequently, to include transit more regularly into their daily routines



How might we design a loyalty program that leverages incentives to reduce barriers and increase ridership among unsubsidized transit riders?

*Rider Survey &  
Interviews:  
Key Findings and Decisions*

# *Rider Survey & Interview Goals*

- Learn about how transit is used by unsubsidized riders
- Discover what motivates these riders to use transit
- Identify barriers that unsubsidized riders face
- Gather insight into what might incentivize them to ride more

# *Research Approach*

## *Rider Survey*

Goals: Foundational understanding of target users' motivations and barriers, interview recruitment

203 participants

## *One-on-One Interviews*

Goals: Personal understanding of rider motivations, behaviors, and perceptions of loyalty programs

6 participants

# *Interview Participants*

- Interviewed riders using transit, but not primarily for commuting
  - Only one out of six participants used transit M F to commute to work
- Riding transit out of choice; 5 participants used transit ad hoc to:
  - Run errands (doctors appointments, grocery shopping)
  - Meet up with friends
  - Get to the airport
  - Take kids to school
  - Go to part-time jobs (~ 3 times a week)
  - Go downtown

# Research Findings

## *Motivators*

Transit..

- Is more environmentally friendly
- Provides the rider a sense of community
- Is cheaper than alternatives

## *Barriers*

- First and Last Mile
- Cost savings don't always offset the time it takes on transit
- Transfers are inconvenient
- Payment can be confusing
  - It's burdensome to pay per ride and decide if purchasing a monthly pass is worthwhile

# *Opportunities for Loyalty Program*

- **Fare Capping / Discounted Passes**
  - Relieve the conscious decisionmaking of paying per ride
  - Reduce burden of upfront cost for monthly pass
- **Transfer Incentives**
  - Offer rewards to offset inconvenience of transfers
- **Community Connection**
  - Display environmental impact of taking public transit
  - Options to donate points earned
- **“First and Last Mile” Opportunity**
  - Have rideshare promotions to cover the first or last mile of their trip
  - Encourage riders to take public transit to places they normally would not

# *Design Requirements*



# *Design Requirements*

Earning rewards, redeeming rewards, and the rewards themselves should be...



*Flexible*



*Equitable*



*Feasible*



*Easy*









*Engaging*



*Beneficial to transit*







# Design Requirements

Earning rewards, redeeming rewards, and the rewards themselves should be...

<i>Value</i>	<i>Actionable Recommendations</i>
 Flexible	Points don't expire; various reward options to choose from at different point levels
 Equitable	Physical touchpoint for those without internet; all fare types (ORCA Lift, Senior fare) receive same point values
 Feasible	Low entry barrier (earning points is easy); transit can implement this system
 Easy	Limited manual effort by automated tracking; riders understand what rewards are and how to earn them; riders know when a reward is available and what options they have for redemption
 Engaging	Users can see their progress/rewards balance; transit upkeep (rotating rewards, new challenges, special events, level-up/mastery factor)
 Beneficial to transit	Does not involve bus drivers, doesn't require additional questions; leads people back to using transit







# Design Requirements

Earning rewards, redeeming rewards, and the rewards themselves should be...

<i>Value</i>	<i>Actionable Recommendations</i>
 Flexible	Points don't expire; various reward options to choose from at different point levels
 Equitable	Physical touchpoint for those without internet; all fare types (ORCA Lift, Senior fare) receive same point values
 Feasible	Low entry barrier (earning points is easy); transit can implement this system
 Easy	Limited manual effort by automated tracking; riders understand what rewards are and how to earn them; riders know when a reward is available and what options they have for redemption
 Engaging	Users can see their progress/rewards balance; transit upkeep (rotating rewards, new challenges, special events, level-up/mastery factor)
 Beneficial to transit	Does not involve bus drivers, doesn't require additional questions; leads people back to using transit







# Design Requirements

Earning rewards, redeeming rewards, and the rewards themselves should be...

<i>Value</i>	<i>Actionable Recommendations</i>
 Flexible	Points don't expire; various reward options to choose from at different point levels
 Equitable	Physical touchpoint for those without internet; all fare types (ORCA Lift, Senior fare) receive same point values
 Feasible	Low entry barrier (earning points is easy); transit can implement this system
 Easy	Limited manual effort by automated tracking; riders understand what rewards are and how to earn them; riders know when a reward is available and what options they have for redemption
 Engaging	Users can see their progress/rewards balance; transit upkeep (rotating rewards, new challenges, special events, level-up/mastery factor)
 Beneficial to transit	Does not involve bus drivers, doesn't require additional questions; leads people back to using transit







# Design Requirements

Earning rewards, redeeming rewards, and the rewards themselves should be...

<i>Value</i>	<i>Actionable Recommendations</i>
 Flexible	Points don't expire; various reward options to choose from at different point levels
 Equitable	Physical touchpoint for those without internet; all fare types (ORCA Lift, Senior fare) receive same point values
 Feasible	Low entry barrier (earning points is easy); transit can implement this system
 Easy	Limited manual effort by automated tracking; riders understand what rewards are and how to earn them; riders know when a reward is available and what options they have for redemption
 Engaging	Users can see their progress/rewards balance; transit upkeep (rotating rewards, new challenges, special events, level-up/mastery factor)
 Beneficial to transit	Does not involve bus drivers, doesn't require additional questions; leads people back to using transit







# Design Requirements

Earning rewards, redeeming rewards, and the rewards themselves should be...

<i>Value</i>	<i>Actionable Recommendations</i>
 Flexible	Points don't expire; various reward options to choose from at different point levels
 Equitable	Physical touchpoint for those without internet; all fare types (ORCA Lift, Senior fare) receive same point values
 Feasible	Low entry barrier (earning points is easy); transit can implement this system
 Easy	Limited manual effort by automated tracking; riders understand what rewards are and how to earn them; riders know when a reward is available and what options they have for redemption
 Engaging	Users can see their progress/rewards balance; transit upkeep (rotating rewards, new challenges, special events, level-up/mastery factor)
 Beneficial to transit	Does not involve bus drivers, doesn't require additional questions; leads people back to using transit

# Design Requirements

Earning rewards, redeeming rewards, and the rewards themselves should be...

<i>Value</i>	<i>Actionable Recommendations</i>
 Flexible	Points don't expire; various reward options to choose from at different point levels
 Equitable	Physical touchpoint for those without internet; all fare types (ORCA Lift, Senior fare) receive same point values
 Feasible	Low entry barrier (earning points is easy); transit can implement this system
 Easy	Limited manual effort by automated tracking; riders understand what rewards are and how to earn them; riders know when a reward is available and what options they have for redemption
 Engaging	Users can see their progress/rewards balance; transit upkeep (rotating rewards, new challenges, special events, level-up/mastery factor)
 Beneficial to transit	Does not involve bus drivers, doesn't require additional questions; leads people back to using transit

# Design Requirements

Earning rewards, redeeming rewards, and the rewards themselves should be...

<b>Value</b>	<b>Actionable Recommendations</b>
Flexible	Points don't expire; various reward options to choose from at different point levels
Equitable	Physical touchpoint for those without internet; all fare types (ORCA Lift, Senior fare) receive same point values
Feasible	Low entry barrier (earning points is easy); transit can implement this system
Easy	Limited manual effort by automated tracking; riders understand what rewards are and how to earn them; riders know when a reward is available and what options they have for redemption
Engaging	Users can see their progress/rewards balance; transit upkeep (rotating rewards, new challenges, special events, level-up/mastery factor)
Beneficial to transit	Does not involve bus drivers, doesn't require additional questions, leads people back to using transit



*Rewards and Features  
Survey*

# *Rewards and Features Survey*

## *Motivation*

### Goals:

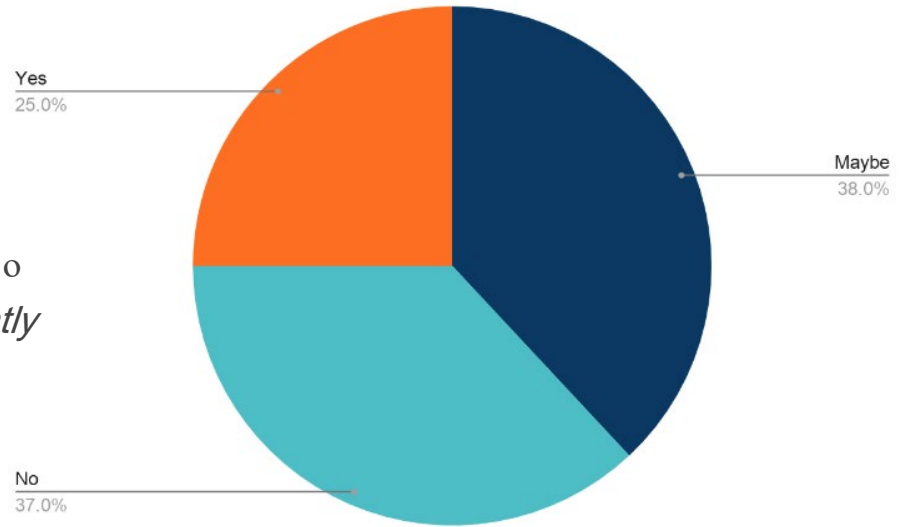
- Help prioritize our ideas for possible rewards and program features
- Hear from riders about what is and is not important to them
- Gauge effectiveness of Rider Rewards Program

# Rewards and Features Survey

## Key Finding

A Rider Rewards Program would encourage riders to ride more.

- 63% of respondents in our Transit Rider Rewards survey responded 'Yes' or 'Maybe' to the question: *Would you ride more frequently if there was a rewards program for Seattle transit?*

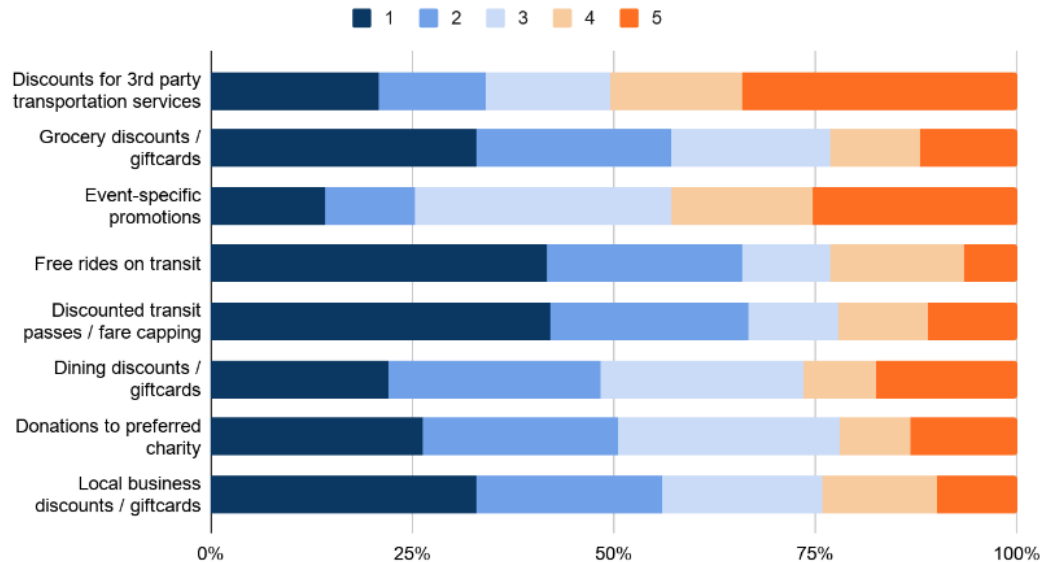


# Rewards and Features Survey

## Design Implications

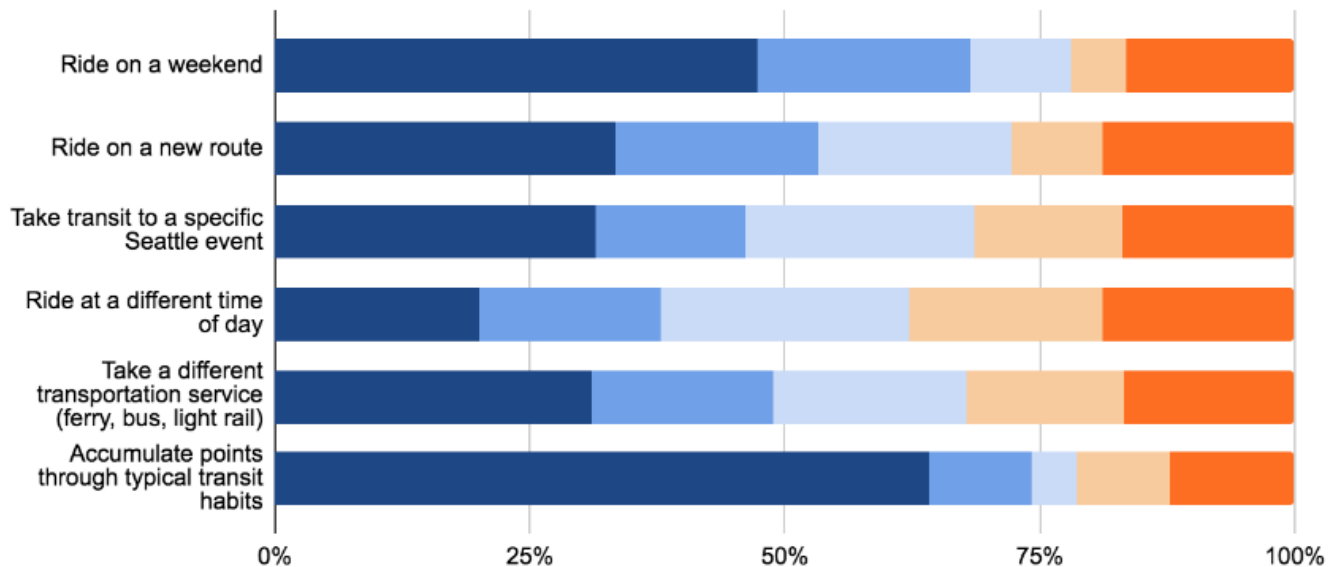
- Transit-related rewards most motivating
- Some partnerships with third party entities might be motivating

1 = I would ride transit more to receive this reward, 5 = I do not care at all about this type of reward



1 being extremely likely, 5 being extremely unlikely

1 2 3 4 5



How likely would you be to complete the following challenges to earn special rewards or 'bonus' points?

# *Rewards and Features Survey*

## *Design Implications*

- People are likely to stick to their transit habits
- Relevant challenges and rewards might encourage behavior change and uptake in ridership
- Allow for subsidized riders to track their ridership, even though they would not be earning rewards

*Rider Rewards  
Program Design*

# *Earning Points*

- Typical Ridership
- Challenges



# Earning Points: Typical Ridership

- Riders earn points every time they ride
- Point value is based on the price for that mode of transportation
  - Ex: Rider earns more for a ferry ride than bus ride
- ORCA LIFT and discounted pass holders receive same amount of points as full fare payers
- First transfer earns half points of full fare
  - No points earned for additional transfers

### Ride History See all

---

Bus 372 toward University of Washington  
May 3rd, 10:05 AM \$2.50 ORCA  
+2 Points

---

Bus 49 toward Downtown  
May 1st, 8:32 PM \$2.50 ORCA  
+2 Points

---

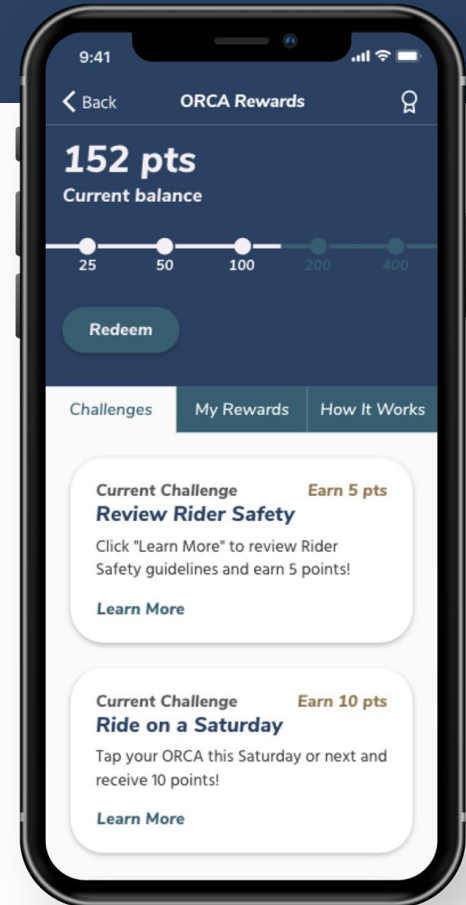
Link Light Rail to Stadium  
May 1st, 8:32 PM \$4.50 ORCA  
+20 Points

**Challenge Completed: Take Light Rail to Seattle Event**

Ride Type	First Bus	Transfer 1	Transfer 2+
Points Earned	6	3	0

# Earning Points: Challenges

- Challenges are optional
- Gamification feature to incentivize riders to ride outside of their normal behavior, and earn bonus points
- Example challenge: *This week, ride the bus after 6 pm for 10 bonus points*

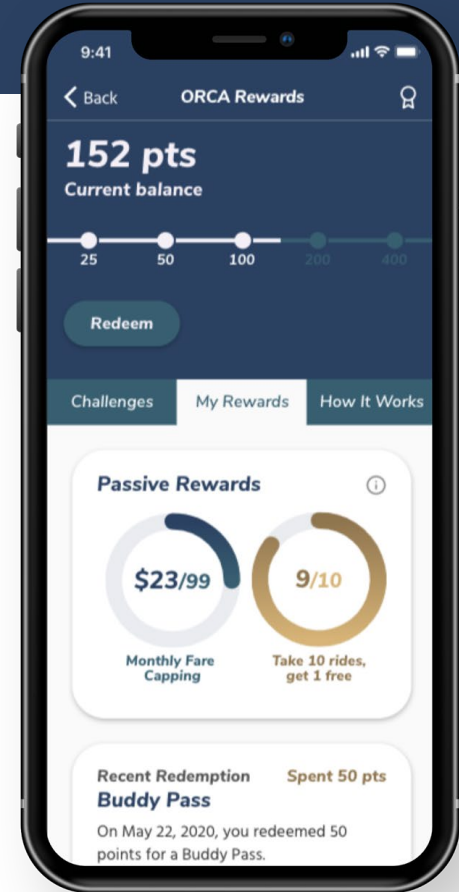


# *Rewards*

- Earning Rewards
  - Active Rewards
  - Passive Rewards
- Types of Rewards

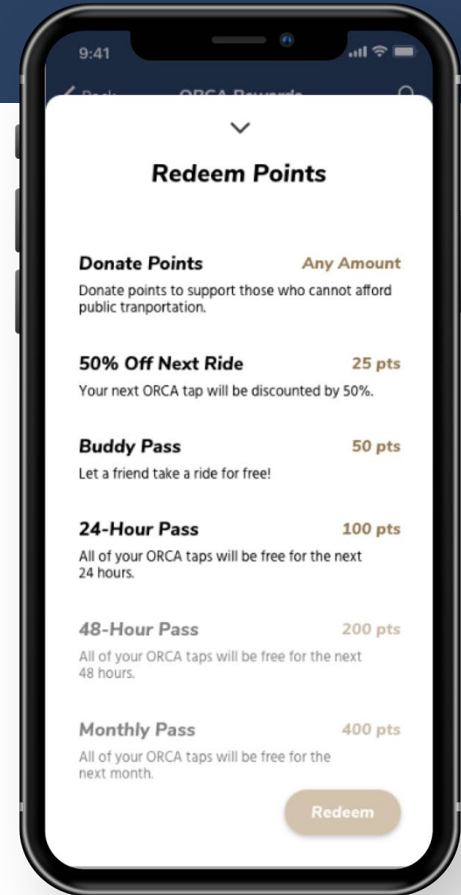
# Rewards: Passive

- Automatically implemented and applied to riders' accounts
- Do not require any manual input from the rider
- Rewarded with Fare capping, take 10 rides get the 11th free



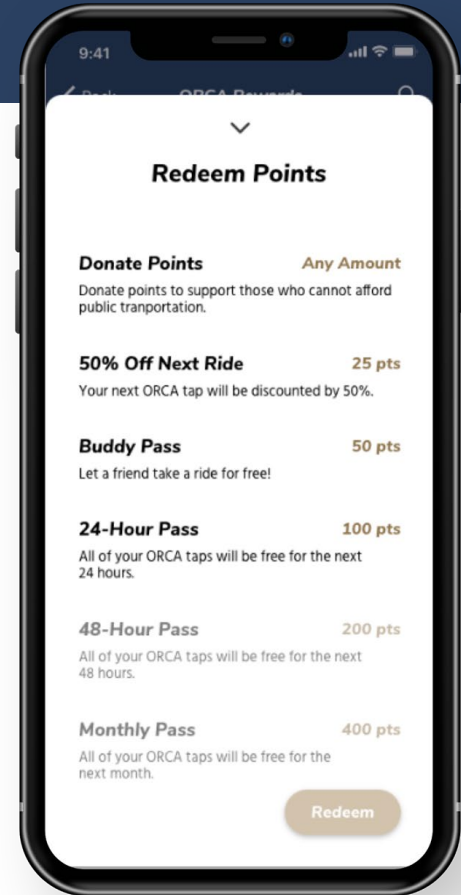
# Rewards: Active

- Riders redeem earned points for a reward of their choice
- Rider must manually complete this action
- Various reward types at different costs are available



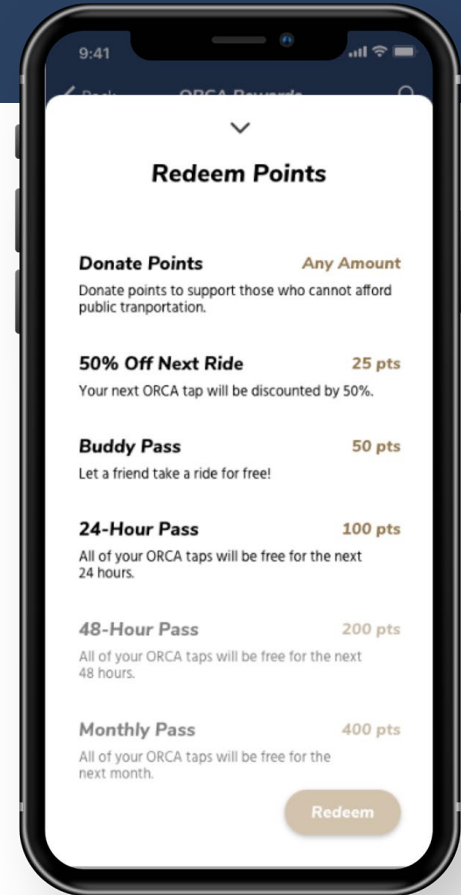
# Types of Rewards

- Transit-related rewards should be offered initially
  - Leads people back to transit
  - Survey results suggested transit-related rewards to be most motivating



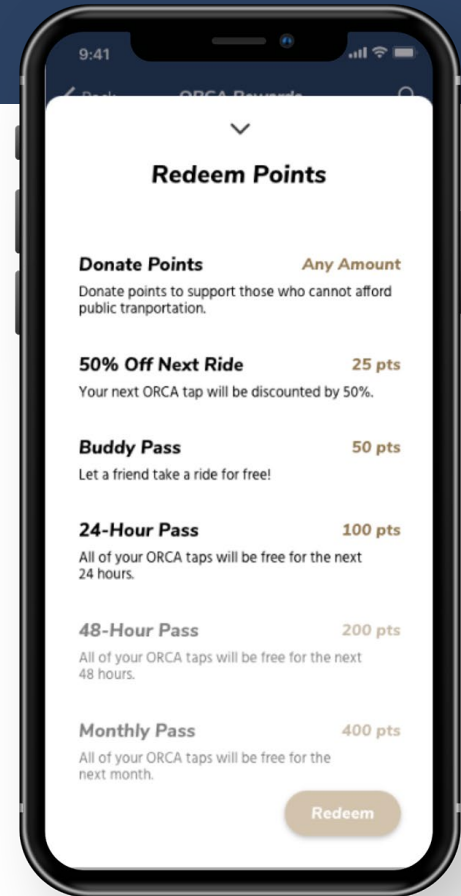
# Types of Rewards

- Transit-related rewards should be offered initially
  - Leads people back to transit
  - Survey results suggested transit-related rewards to be most motivating
- Point Donations
  - Foster goodwill and community connection
  - Motivating to riders where cost to transit is not a barrier



# Types of Rewards

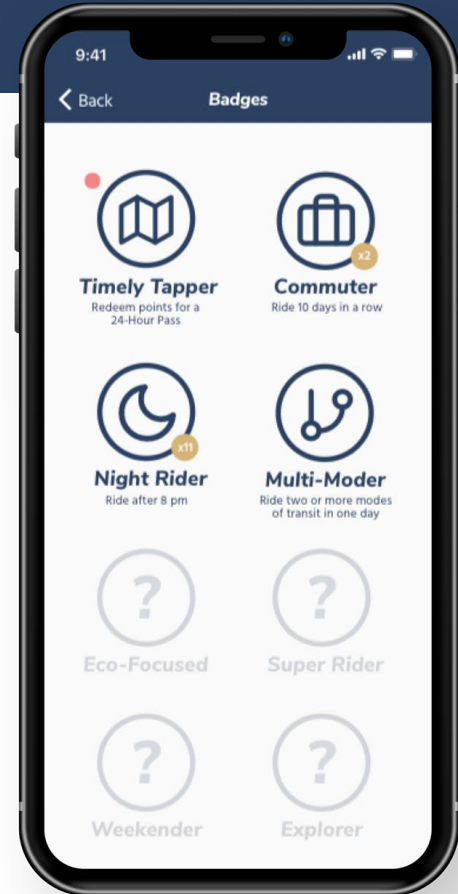
- Transit-related rewards should be offered initially
  - Leads people back to transit
  - Survey results suggested transit-related rewards to be most motivating
- Point Donations
  - Foster goodwill and community connection
  - Motivating to riders where cost to transit is not a barrier
- Future partnerships with private entities
  - Mobility as a service companies (Uber, Lyft, Lime Bike)
  - Discounts at local businesses
  - Local charities



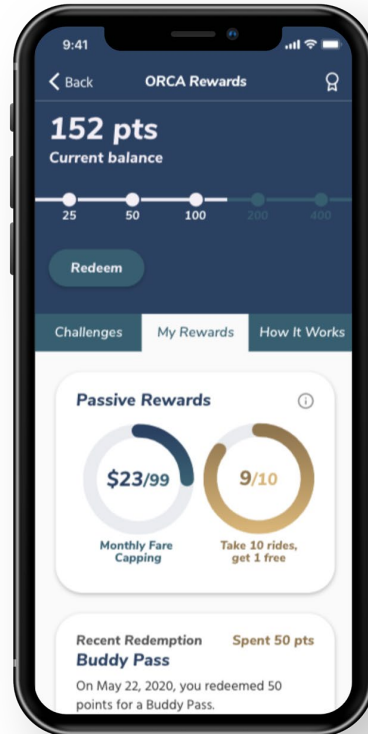


# Badges

- Rider engagement
- Track personal ridership
  - Especially for super transit riders
- No point value, but provides motivation to accomplish more
- Accumulating Badges
- Can be offered to subsidized riders



# Prototype Walkthrough



*Implementation Plan:  
MVP 1 & MVP 2*

# *Implementation Plan & Recommendations*

- Integrate rewards program into ngORCA application
  - Implement during “Phase 2- Next Phase Projects” of ngORCA plan
- Apply rewards program at the Transit account level
- Automatically enroll all pre-existing and new accounts
- Buy-in from all ORCA participating agencies

# *MVP 1: Structure*

- Initial launch in web and mobile browser
  - Comprehensive web tutorial
- Point history incorporated with ride/payment history
  - “Fare paid: \$2.25, +2 points”
- Auto-enrollment into the program
  - All existing and new ORCA accounts are automatically enrolled into the rewards program

# *MVP 1: Features*

- **Active rewards**
  - Internal transit rewards offered only (buddy passes, weekend passes, etc.)
- **Passive rewards**
  - Farecapping; Ride free every X ride
- **Challenges**
  - Only internal (ride X route, ride on X day, etc.)
- **Badges**
  - One-time badges (rider can only earn once)
  - Accumulating badges (rider can earn multiple times)

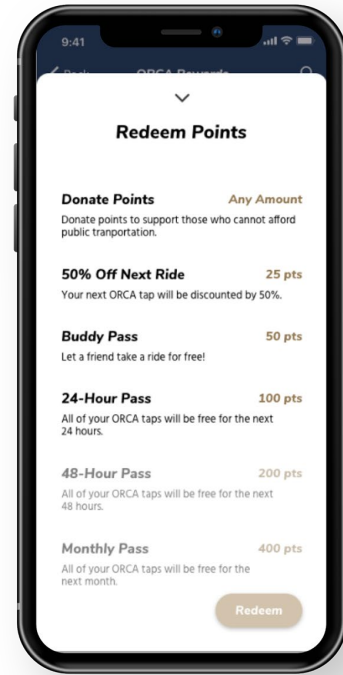
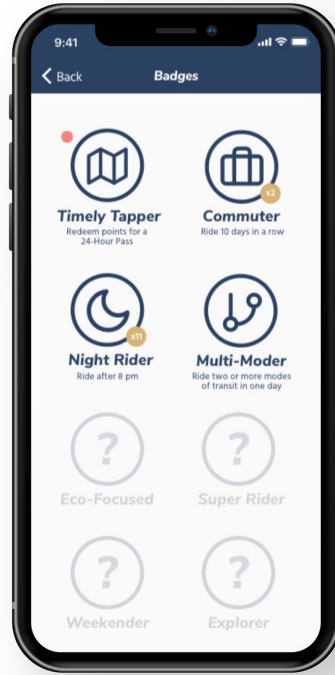
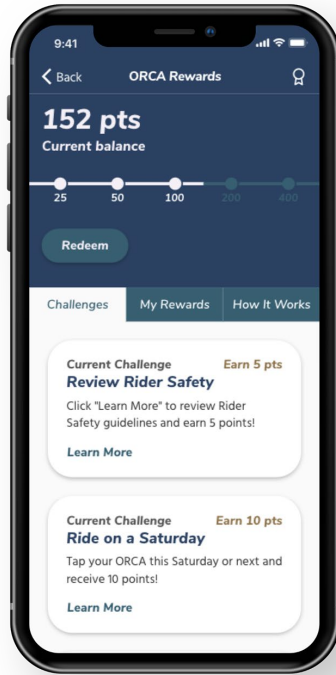
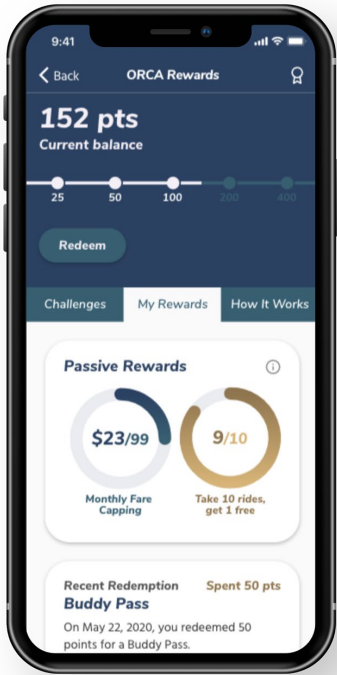
# *MVP 2: Structure*

- ngORCA mobile application integration
  - Add the rewards program to the “More” tab in the navigation bar
  - Include an in-app tutorial highlighting core functionalities and walking through how to use them
- Include external partnerships
  - Rewards: offer rewards from outside the transit agencies (rideshare partnerships, discounts at local businesses, etc.)
  - Challenges: offer challenges based on dynamic city events (ride transit to X event)

# *MVP 2: Features*

- **Notifications**
  - Implement in-application notifications that users can opt-in to (notify about challenges, rewards, badges, etc.)
- **Point-sharing**
  - Allow for accounts to share points with one another
- **Share badges to social media**
  - Build the ability for users to share the badges they earn on social media to help foster a transit community and online presence, thus furthering ridership growth





# ORCA Rewards

*Documentation*

# Documentation 1/4

	Deliverable	Description
1.	<a href="#"><u>Project Proposal</u></a>	Includes the project motivation and plan for completion. Note that this plan does not exactly reflect the deliverables completed as our plan had to be adjusted as we went due to global events.
2.	<a href="#"><u>Literature Review</u></a>	Includes two publications we reviewed. The first discusses a case study of gamifying transit. The second discusses a case study of leveraging social intervention tactics to increase transit ridership.
3.	<a href="#"><u>Survey &amp; Interview Findings [Presentation]</u></a>	Includes the high-level findings from our survey and interviews. During this research phase we explored barriers and motivations to transit usage as well as rider perceptions of rewards and loyalty programs for transit.

# Documentation 2/4

	Deliverable	Description
4.	<a href="#">Research Findings Final Report [Report]</a>	Includes the findings from our survey and interviews. It is more detailed than the presentation [3] and provides direct quotes from our research participants. During this research phase we explored barriers and motivations to transit usage as well as rider perceptions of rewards and loyalty programs for transit.
5.	<a href="#">Personas</a>	Includes the four design personas that we created based on our research, which are: (1) the Transit Family, (2) the Student, (3) the Growth Center Commuter, and (4) the Event Rider.
6.	<a href="#">Design Requirements</a>	Includes our Design Requirements, which were developed from the research findings and our team point of view on the project. Includes actionable recommendations that align with the Design Requirements.

# Documentation 3/4

	<b>Deliverable</b>	<b>Description</b>
7.	<a href="#"><u>User Journey Maps</u></a>	Includes a walk-through journey of how two of our personas: The Student and The Event Rider might use the Rider Rewards Program.
8.	<a href="#"><u>Transit Rewards Survey Results</u></a>	Includes presentation of the high level findings from a second survey that we ran. This survey was focused on understanding the desirability of a rewards program and of possible incentives and program features.
9.	<a href="#"><u>Low-Fidelity Wireframes</u></a>	Includes prototype of our low -fidelity wireframes, which we used for our usability testing.

# Documentation 4/4

	<b>Deliverable</b>	<b>Description</b>
10.	<a href="#"><u>Usability Testing [Presentation]</u></a>	Includes a presentation of the Low -Fidelity Wireframes, the goals of Usability Testing, the design implications from the results of usability testing and the finished High -Fidelity Wireframes.
11.	<a href="#"><u>High-Fidelity Wireframes</u></a>	Includes prototype of High -Fidelity Wireframes.
12.	<a href="#"><u>Rider Rewards Proposed Structure</u></a>	Includes a final report documenting our proposed structure for the Rider Rewards Program.
13.	Process Book	Includes documentation of overall process and deliverables.

*Thank you!*



**Seattle**  
Department of  
Transportation



MOBILITY  
INNOVATION  
CENTER  
at the  
UNIVERSITY of WASHINGTON

