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Webinar: Community Transportation Academies: Rethinking Effective Community Engagement Around Transportation Decision-Making

Nathan McNeil

Portland State University, nmcneil@pdx.edu

Keith Bartholomew

University of Utah

Andrea Olson

Utah Department of Transportation

Laura Hanson

Utah Department of Transportation

Thuy Tu

Thuy Tu Consulting, LLC

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Community Transportation Academies:

Rethinking Effective Community Engagement Around Transportation Decision-Making

NITC WEBINAR

THURSDAY OCTOBER 20TH, 2022

Nathan McNeil, Portland State University

Keith Bartholomew, University of Utah

Webinar Outline

Why Community Transportation Academies? – Nathan McNeil / Keith Bartholomew

Instructors discussion with:

Thuy Tu (Portland Traffic and Transportation course) and
Keith Bartholomew (Wasatch Transportation Academy)

Stakeholders discussion with:

Andrea Olson (Planning Director, Utah Department of Transportation) and
Laura Hanson (State Planning Coordinator, Utah Governor's Office of Planning and Budget)

What does public involvement look like?

Are people engaged?

Do they know:

- When and where to get involved?
- Who to talk to?
- Which questions to ask?



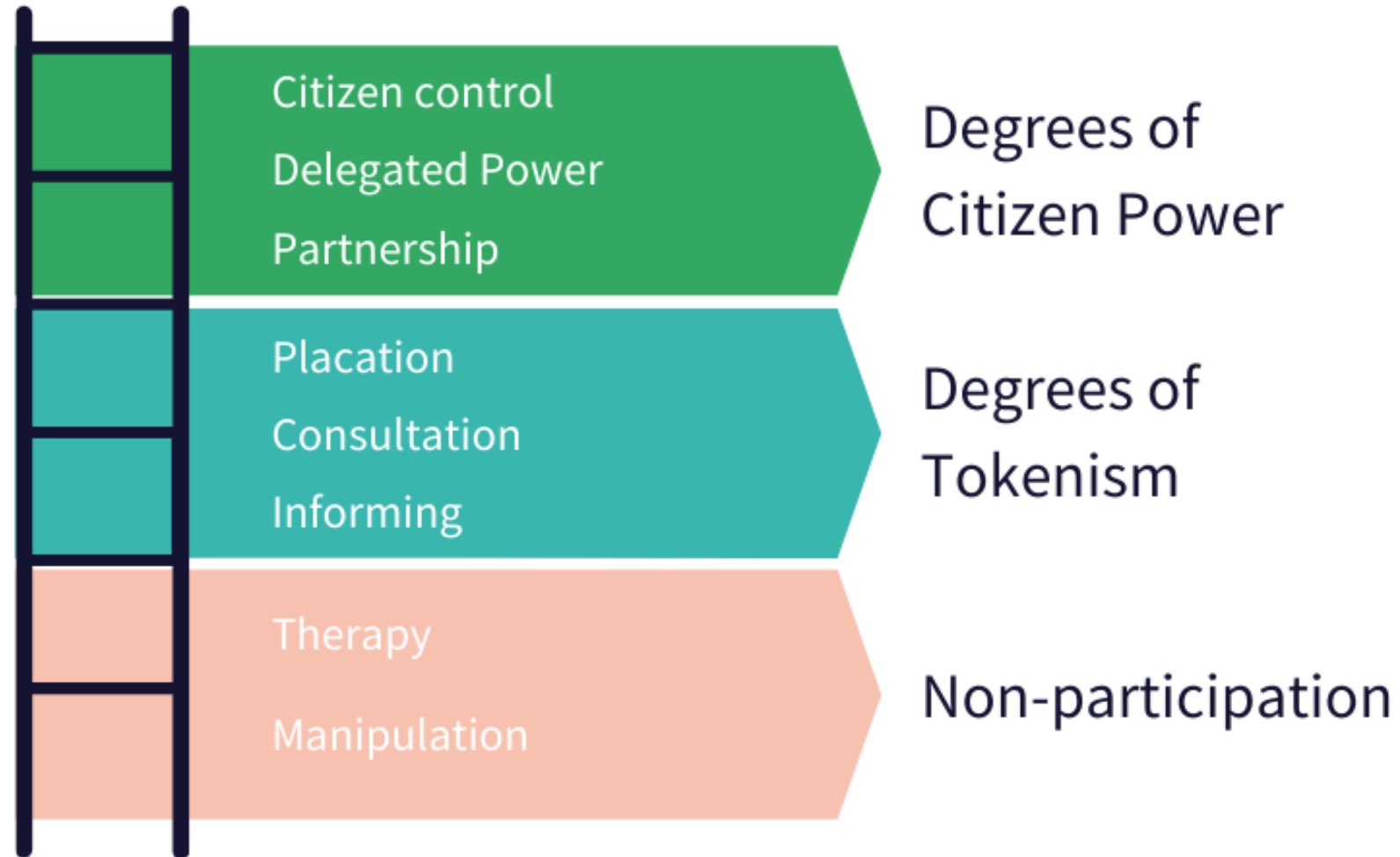
Foothill Freeway hearing, Los Angeles (1966)



“BOF Holds Public Hearing on Town Budget (for Audience of 10)”

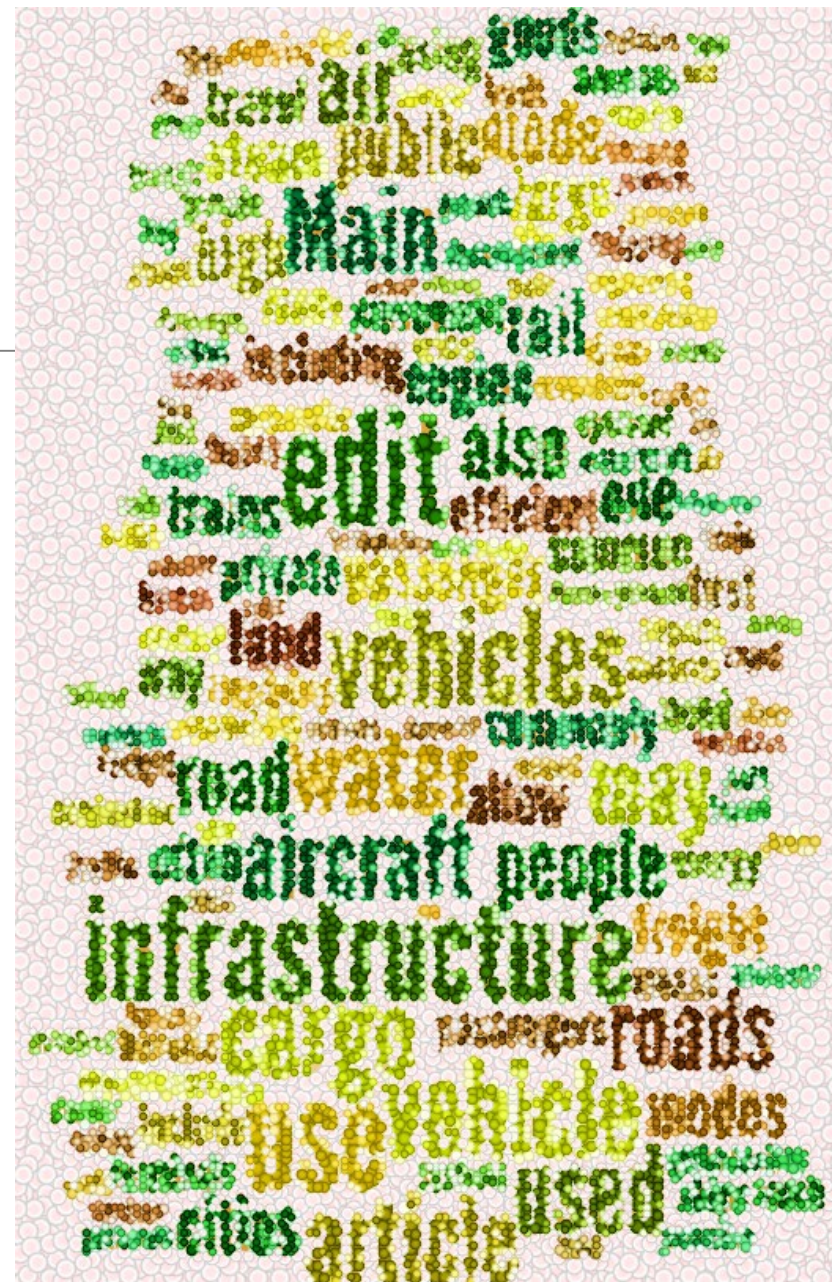


Arnstein's Ladder of Public Participation



Motivations: Civic education

- Transportation is complex:
 - Engineering principles
 - Travel behavior
 - Policy
 - Politics
 - Agency constraints



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Loyalty and patronage?



Professionalization of bureaucracy



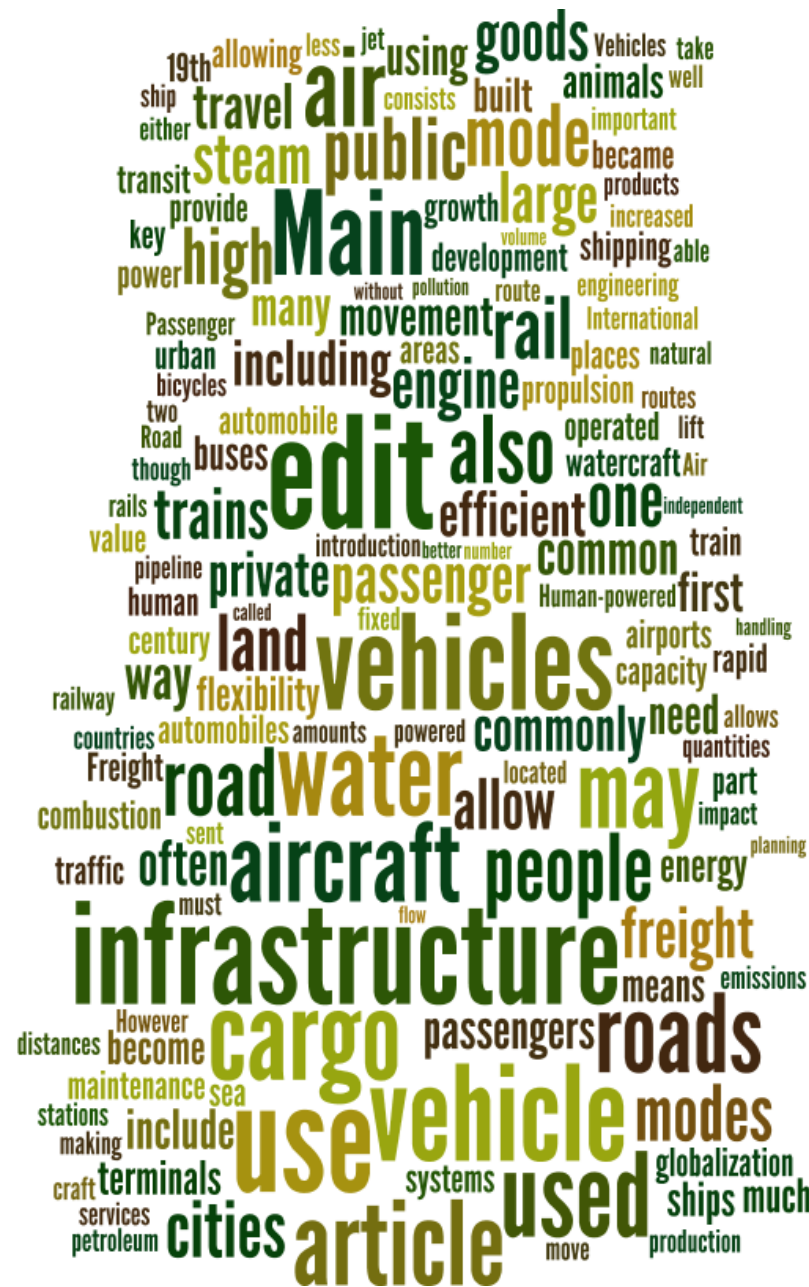
Centralized
planning?



C.M. Stieglitz, *Robert Moses* (1939)

Motivations: Civic education

Or give people **information** and **tools** to understand and take part in transportation decision-making?



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Motivations: Develop Community Capacity

Community capacity can be defined as:

“the interaction of human capital, organizational resources, and social capital existing within a given community that can be leveraged to solve collective problems and improve or maintain the well-being of a given community. It may operate through informal social processes and/or organized effort”

Chaskin, R. J. Building Community Capacity: A Definitional Framework and Case Studies from a Comprehensive Community Initiative. In *Urban Affairs Review*, Vol. 36, No. 3, 2001, pp. 291–323.

Motivations: Develop Community Capacity

Key elements for developing community capacity include:

- Participation and leadership
- Skills
- Resources
- Social and inter-organizational networks
- Sense of community
- Understanding of community history, community power
- Community values
- Critical reflection.

Goodman, R. M. , M. A. Speers, K. McLeroy, S. Fawcett, M. Kegler, E. Parth, S. R. Smith, T. D. 15 Sterling, and N. Wallerstein. Identifying and Defining the Dimensions of Community Capacity to Provide a Basis for Measurement. In *Health Education & Behavior*, Vol. 25, No. 3, 1998, pp. 258-17 278.

Motivations: Fostering Connections

- Building connections among community members
- Building connections between community members and decision-makers
- “meeting” = “trusting”

What is a Community Transportation Academy?



Course Key Elements

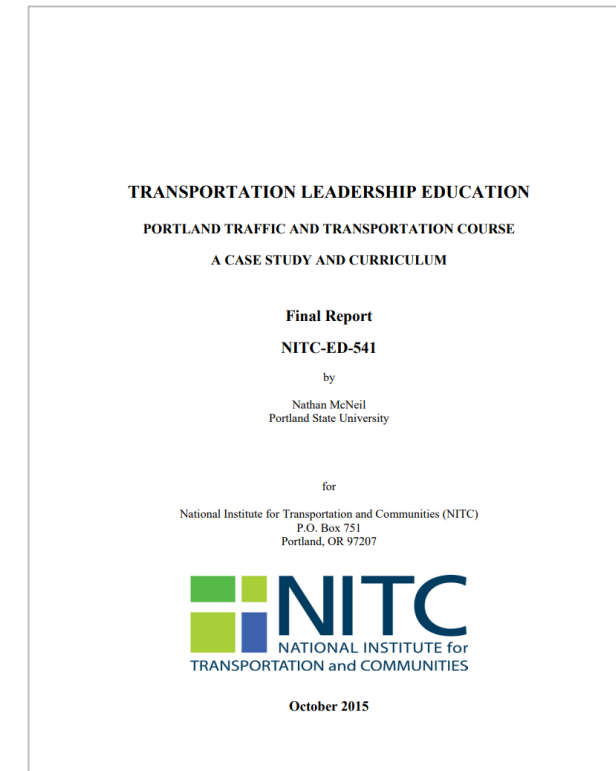
Community members can enroll in the class, meet regularly to learn about different facets of the transportation system and decision-making process

Key elements include:

- Presentations from transportation practitioners
- Transportation tour / field trip
- Mentored student project

Portland Traffic and Transportation Class (OR)

- Started in 1991
- Partnership between Portland Bureau of Transportation and Portland State University
- 2015 NITC study documented the class and created an implementation handbook



Wasatch Transportation Academy (UT)

- Inaugural year: 2022
- Collaboration between PSU, University of Utah, and local partners in Salt Lake Region
- NITC funded project used PTT and the NITC Implementation Handbook as guides



Other examples

Tampa Bay Citizens Academy on Transportation (FL)

- Launched in 2021
- Part of a UTC funded project at the National Institute for Congestion Reduction

Denver Reg Council of Govts: Civic Academy (~2007)

- Operated by Transit Alliance until ~2018
- Focus now extends beyond transportation

Surrey Transportation Talks Program (BC)

- Partnership with Simon Fraser University and City of Surrey
- Launched in ~2009

Central Maryland Transp. Alliance: Transportation 101 (~2017)

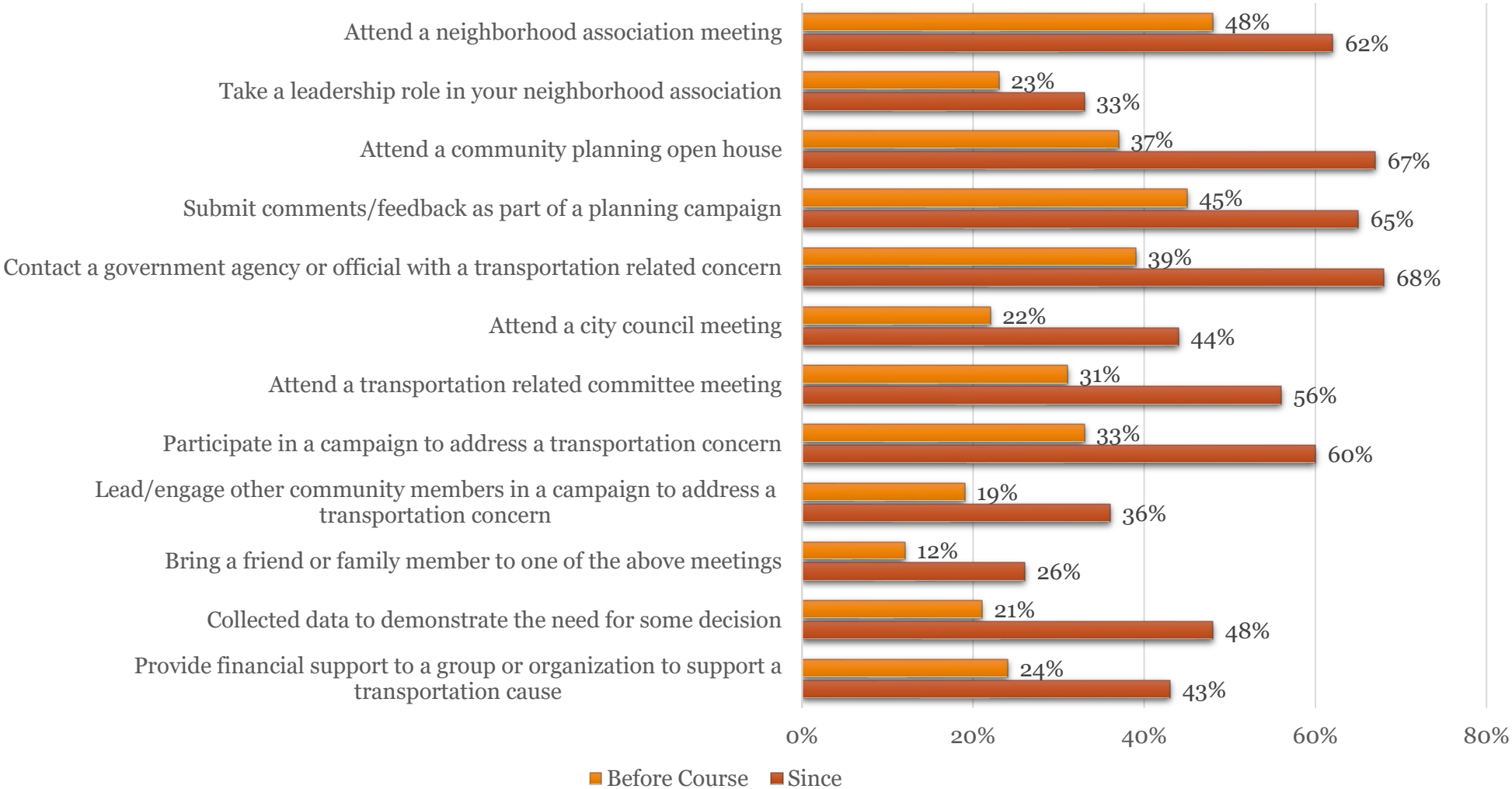
- Modeled after Denver course

What topics do Transportation Academies cover?

Topic	Wasatch	Portland	Tampa	Surrey
Transportation History	X	X	X	X
Statewide Planning	X	X		
Regional Planning	X	X	X	X
Municipal Planning	X	X	X	X
Transit Planning	X	X	X	X
Walking and Biking	X	X	X	
Site Visit	X	X		X
Transportation Equity	X	X		
Advocacy	X	X	X	
Theory and Design	X	X		X
Land Use				X
Group Activity	X	X		
Final Project	X	X	X	X

Early results

Participation in Activity at Least Once Per Year



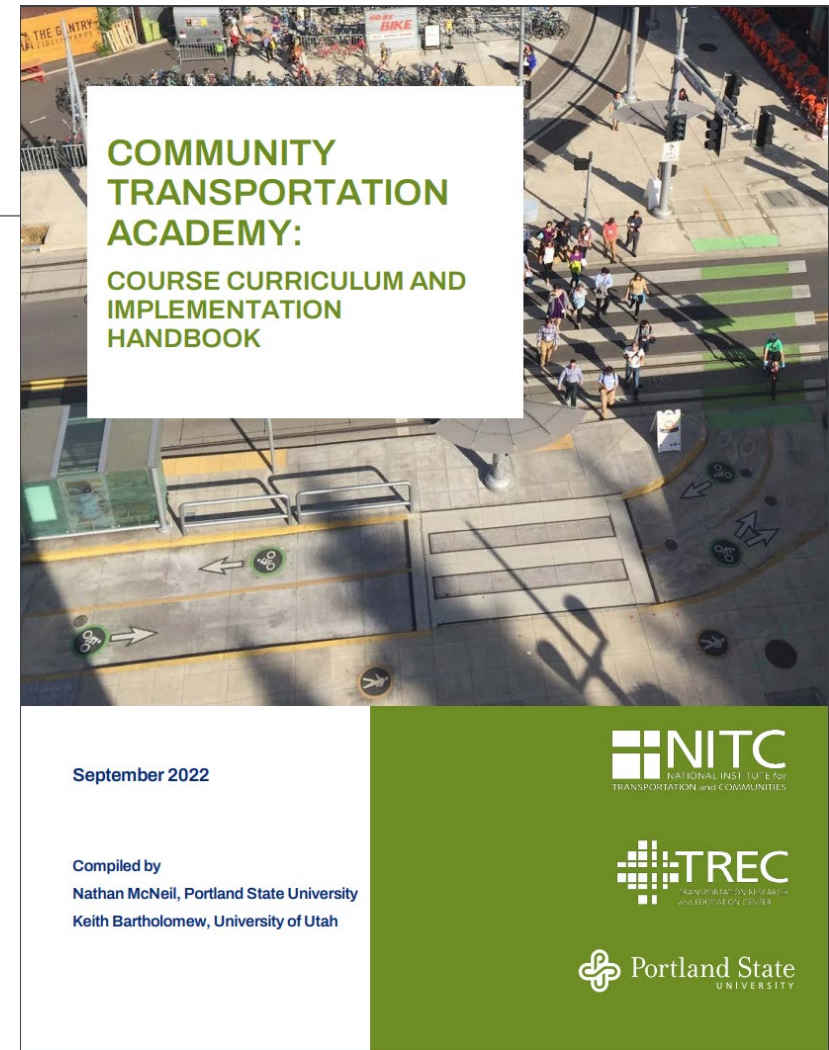
What's next?

- Further developing evaluation framework
 - Benefits to students + Impact on the community
- Expanding peer knowledge exchange between academies
- Encourage new transportation academies!

Resources

2022 CTA “Course Curriculum and Implementation Handbook”

- Sample class project assignments
- Potential class sessions
- Suggested readings
- Course operating principles, checklists, and tips for organizers, instructors and presenters
- Wisdom and expert advice



<https://nitc.trec.pdx.edu/research/project/1518>

Discussion with Instructors

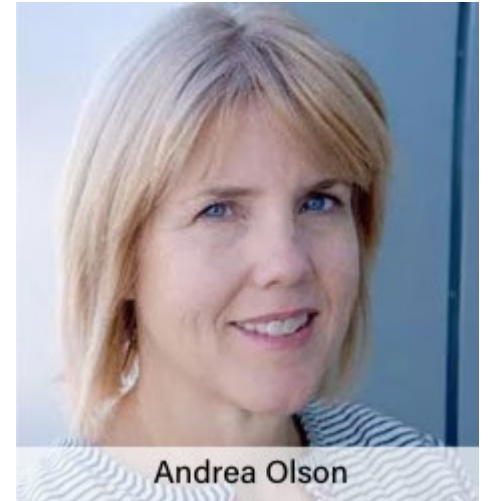
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