



Modernizing the Transit Journey

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By: Shari Herman, Transit Market Lead

Public transportation is the foundation of a community's wellness, growth, and sustainability. While some people opt to take the bus for travel, either for business or pleasure destinations, others rely on public transportation to meet their daily essential needs, such as going to work, an important appointment or shopping. The 2020 COVID-19 pandemic has created significant changes to transit travel and daily life as we know it. Recently, since the beginning of COVID, daily ridership has decreased significantly, and response measures were put in place, to protect drivers and passengers alike. Ideally, these measures will become a starting point towards advancing an ideal transit environment, with the hopes of building transit back better than before, as it relates to riders' **Safety, Security**, and overall positive **Experience**. When people think of bus travel, they only consider the trip itself; however, a truly positive passenger experience starts well before an individual even reaches the bus stop. The conversation of the "last mile" is often heard as people look to the future of mass transit. When traveling by transit the "last block" is just as critical to a traveler's experience. There are three elements of the "last block" as it relates to modernizing and transforming the transit journey, that are woven together: safety, security, and a positive rider experience.

When we think of transit safety, security, and rider experience, a few considerations might include:

- ▶ Is the surrounding area well-lit?
- ▶ Is an intersection ADA compliant, with pedestrian push buttons for those with disabilities?
- ▶ Is the bus clean, and does it have the appropriate ventilation to help mitigate airborne disease?

The reality is that advancements in technology and systems design can be adopted to create a more vibrant public transportation environment in a post-pandemic future.

Safety: The safety of a passenger begins at the start of an individual's journey, while locating and heading to a bus stop. A concern that has recently come to light, due to the pandemic, is cleanliness. Riders now expect facilities to have a means to sanitize the air to mitigate the spread of infectious disease. Upon arriving at the bus station, it is important that the area is well-lit. Often bulbs are dim, or lighting structures are not functional and degrade over time. Once a station is located, crossing the intersection can be a safety challenge, particularly for disabled individuals, who cannot always rely on sight or sound alone. A few Faith Group solution examples are given below.

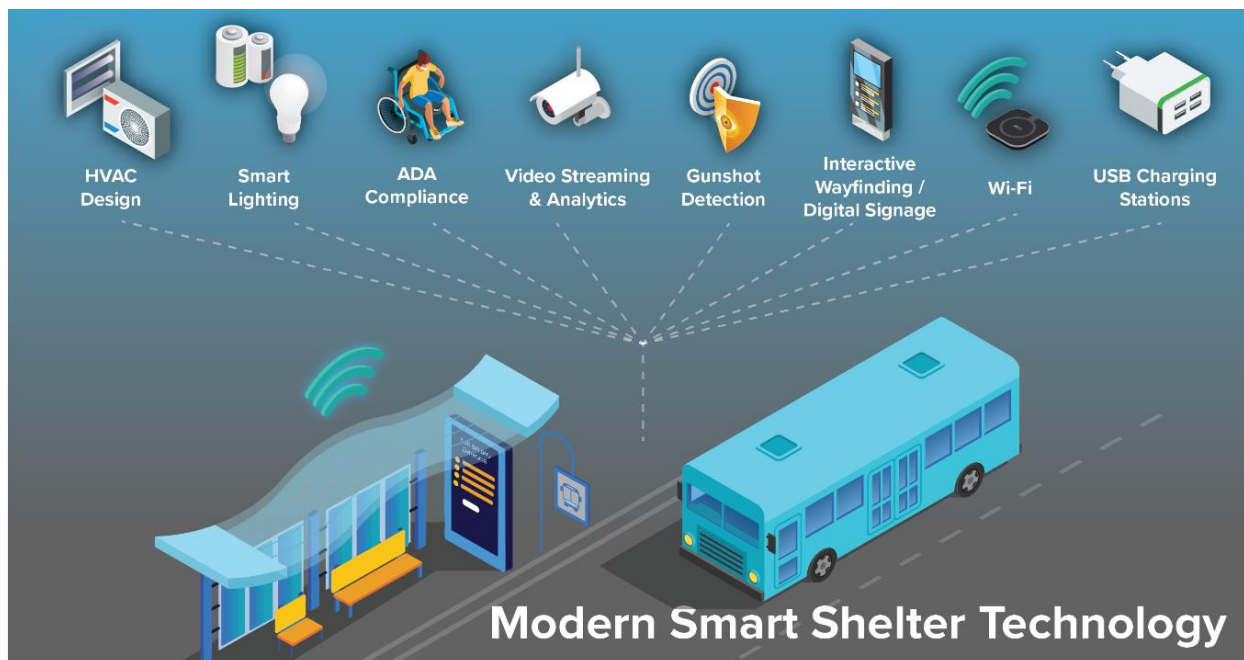


- ▶ **HVAC Design for Infectious Disease** has become an expectation for riders. A positive transit experience for a passenger includes modern, connected systems that promote air quality and an environment that is sanitized of infectious particulates, through smart technology.
- ▶ **Smart Lighting** offers cities the advantage of understanding their infrastructure wellness and proactively keeps tabs on the location where lighting is out. Movement detection can also be incorporated, to allow the fixture to brighten, so a traveler has the necessary lighting needed for safety.
- ▶ **ADA-Compliant Pedestrian Crossing Signals** can assist a disabled individual to safely cross the street. The addition of smart pedestrian audio signals and ADA-compliant push buttons are essential to give pedestrians audio messages and visual cues that can assist them with getting to the station safely.

- ▶ **Streaming Video Surveillance** should be introduced for riders' safety in the event of an emergency or altercation. Wi-Fi should be introduced to shelters and buses, so that Smart Shelters and buses can provide real-time video feeds to security and emergency personnel to provide riders with enhanced security services.
- ▶ **Video Analytics** have created advancements in security, with the ability to identify suspicious behaviors, classify objects, bag detection, facial recognition, and occupancy sensing.
- ▶ **Gunshot Detection** can be achieved with acoustic sensing technology that reports gunshots within seconds and gives vital information to police stations to determine if emergency resources should be dispatched.

Security: The rider and the bus driver should always be secure. For a rider, this includes waiting for the bus, as well as riding the bus. In case of an emergency, surveillance cameras are needed to detect and to further analyze any threatening behavior. In the case of gunshot violence, smart technology is needed. A few Faith Group solution examples are given below.

Rider Experience: Beyond safety and security, the choices that people make, with regards to what to pursue in life, is based on a positive experience. Mobile apps are not always available or helpful in locating a bus stop, and most stops either have little to no signage, or dated static signage, with information that is not kept up to date. If a rider does not have access to Wi-Fi, it will significantly limit their overall experience of riding the bus, without the use of electronics, such as a phone or laptop. Riders need



to be able to charge their electronics, during the ridership experience. A few Faith Group solution examples are given below.

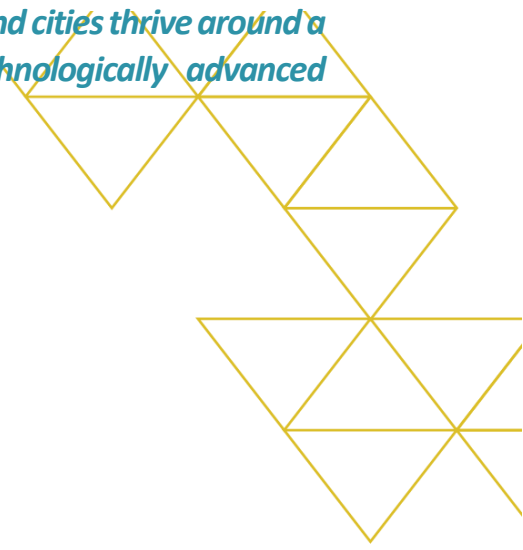
- ▶ **Interactive Wayfinding and Digital Signage** provides bus route and local information, guides the rider to the appropriate bus stop or transit facility, provides estimated time of arrival for buses they are waiting for, and allows for planning pick-ups.
- ▶ **Wi-Fi** enhances the rider experience. Some examples include: a student can study, an eBook can be read, someone can finish up an assignment for work, or people can simply enjoy surfing the net on their phone or laptop.
- ▶ **USB Charging Stations** ensure that riders can charge up on the go, so they are not left without access to their laptops and phones at any time.

Transit and Community go hand in hand. Friendships are forged by regulars on certain routes, and cities thrive around a progressive, technologically advanced transit option. The environment depends on recognition of shared resources to lessen the planet's carbon footprint. According to a safety article by Safety + Health magazine, "using public transit is 10 times safer than traveling by vehicle." ¹ With this in mind, we should be giving individuals a reason to get back to transit as a means of movement. After all, we have the advanced technology and ability to transform transit safety, security, and ridership experience even more by implementing a smart, high-tech, innovative, and sustainable transit experience.


References:

1. "Public transportation is 10 times safer, analysis show." *Safety + Health*, a NSC publication, 27 December 2018, <https://www.safetyandhealthmagazine.com/articles/17905-public-transportation-is-10-times-safer-for-commuters-analysis-shows>.

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Shari Herman
Transit Market Lead
Faith Group, LLC
shari.herman@faithgroupllc.com
(248) 821-9944



www.faithgroupllc.com