



Saskatoon Transit Bus Rapid Transit

The Journey to Developing the BRT Brand

June 4, 2024

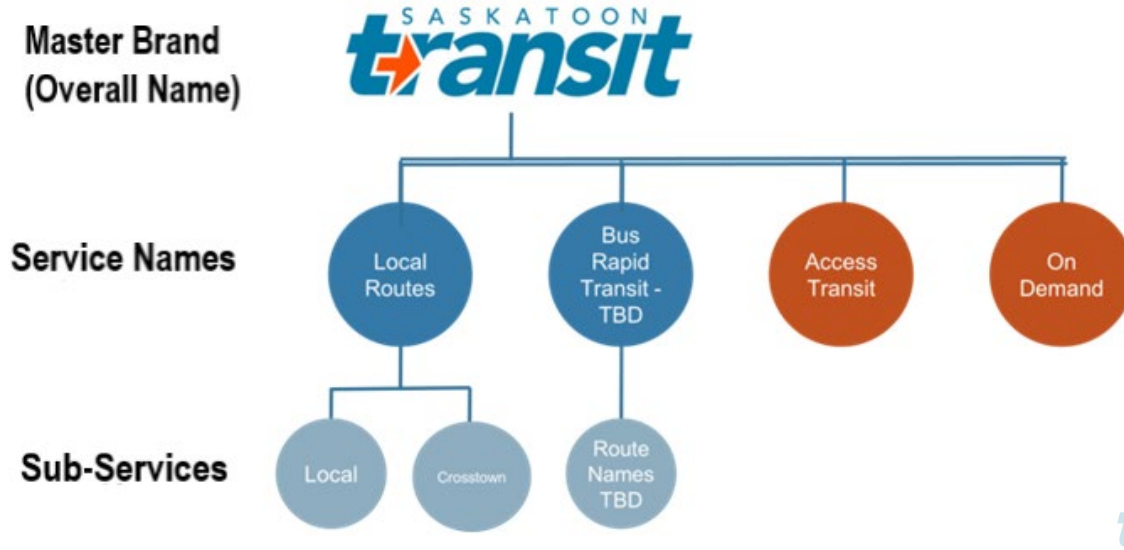
Table of Contents

Table of Contents

Saskatoon Context.....	3
Background.....	4
Discovery and Landscape.....	8
Stakeholder Research.....	11
Naming Phase One.....	15
Naming Phase Two.....	20
Brand Development and Validation.....	26
Visual Language and Guidelines.....	35
Wayfinding.....	37
Communications and Marketing.....	40
Brand Launch and Construction.....	42

◎ Saskatoon Transit Context

- Saskatoon Transit brand remains the master brand.
- Bus Rapid Transit is a new service offering being added.



Background



Transit Implementation Plan

- During its April 26, 2021 meeting, City Council approved a budget adjustment to proceed with the Bus Rapid Transit Wayfinding, Brand and Marketing development.

[Bus Rapid Transit Wayfinding, Branding, and Marketing Budget Adjustment](#)

Request for Proposals and Selection

- City Administration issued an RFP in May 2021.
- Entro, a global branding, wayfinding and environmental design firm was awarded the project in September 2021.

Pathway to Brand Development

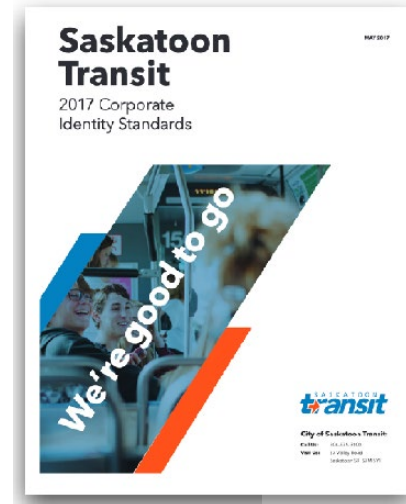
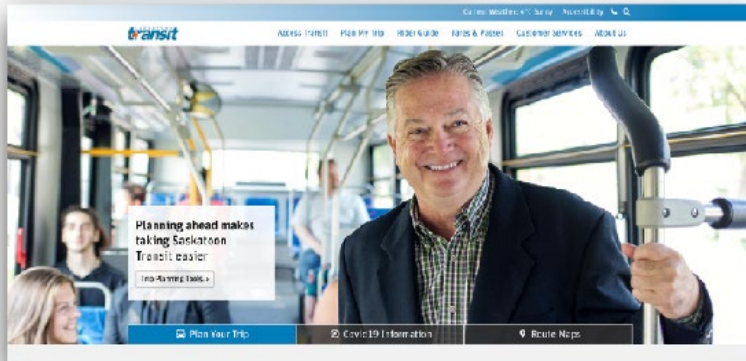
1. Discovery and Landscape Analysis (Brand & Site Audit)
2. Stakeholder Research (Visioning & Analysis)
3. Naming
4. Brand Development and Validation
5. Visual Language and Guidelines
6. Wayfinding
7. Communications and Marketing Plan
8. Brand Launch and Construction

Discovery and Landscape

1. Discovery and Landscape October 2021 – November 2021






















Discovery and Landscape

- A review of previous research reports and Saskatoon Transit assets was completed as part of a brand audit and to gather a general understanding of themes.



Discovery and Landscape

- A comparative analysis was completed to identify best practices and explore transit brands in five other cities.

						
BRT System Existing						
BRT System Upcoming						
Train						
Ridership	11,000,000/year	97,100,000/year	310,100/day	144,385,200/year	27,400,000/year	2,297,600/day
Climate	Cold, Semi-arid	Humid Continental	Warm-summer, Mediterranean	Humid Continental, Subarctic	Humid Continental	Humid Continental
Separate BRT Brand						

2. Stakeholder Research

December 2021 - February 2022

Brand Visioning

- An important part of the research phase includes the brand visioning process with key stakeholders.
- This focused on understanding the brand goals and attributes of Saskatoon Transit while gaining insight into priorities, perceptions and expectations of the experience around the future bus rapid transit.
- A total of eight brand visioning meetings and workshops were held with various stakeholder groups.

Stakeholder Research

Meeting and Workshop Stakeholder Groups

BRT Project Team

Transit Customer
Service

Indigenous and
Newcomer Perspectives

Transit Operations

Operators and
Maintenance

Bus Riders of
Saskatoon

Transit Planning

Public Art Consultants

Saskatoon Council on
Aging

Emerging Themes from Stakeholder Research

The BRT brand should be more modern and playful than the master brand, but not exclude/deter certain groups.

The BRT brand should be clear and simple, aligning with the master brand experience.

The BRT brand should balance corporate and professional tones with human and personable tones.

◎ Naming Phase One

3. Naming Phase One

February 2022 – July 2022

○ Naming Phase One

Naming Evaluation Criteria

- Naming evaluation criteria was developed to evaluate names for the BRT system which included both naming qualities and project specific considerations.

◎ Naming Phase One

Naming Qualities

- Meaningful
- Distinctive
- Future-Oriented
- Positive
- Descriptive

BRT Specific Criteria

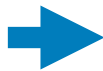
- Make sense in the transit context.
- Apply itself easily to wayfinding and signage specifications.
- If possible, have ties to Saskatoon and the region.
- Not duplicate another local business name.
- Sounds, looks, and works well with the overall Saskatoon Transit brand name.

○ Naming Phase One

Naming Process

- After completing a long list of names and continuing to shortlist based on the naming criteria, five potential names surfaced to the top.

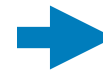
Long List
182 Names



Short List
42 Names



Top 10
10 Names



Potential
5 Names

○ Naming Phase One

Naming Validation

- As part of the naming validation process the first preferred name was tested with internal and external stakeholders from February to June 2022. A total of 16 engagement sessions were held.

BRT Project
Team

Individual
members of
Council

Indigenous
Elders

Key
Stakeholder

- The initial name selected resulted in the identification of critical obstacles.
- Although the name was unable to proceed, the importance of the validation process was demonstrated to work.

◎ Naming Phase Two

4. Naming Phase Two

July 2022 – December 2022

○ Naming Phase Two

Naming Validation

- In July 2022, a second review of names from all lists was completed .
- Additional name validation was conducted with groups who participated in earlier research sessions and had a knowledge about the BRT project.
- Initially three names were explored.

Saskatoon
Transit

BRT Project
Team

Amalgamated
Transit Union

Indigenous
Elders

Small group sessions
with Councillors

Bus Riders of
Saskatoon

Saskatoon Council
on Aging

- In August 2022, one name was dropped with two proceeding to the word and image association phase.

○ Naming Phase Two

Word Association: Names

- Participants attached various words to both names.
- ‘Fast’, ‘Community’ and ‘Ease’ were highly associated with both names.
- Many words were associated with linking people together and connecting community.
- Ease of use and accessibility were identified for both names.
- Both names were associated with words related to community as well as the more professional, utilitarian tones of a transit system.
- **Link** had more words associated that were related to human emotions and feelings.
- Top of mind was the experience of the system in more straightforward ways, along with the opportunity to improve communities and be inclusive to all.

○ Naming Phase Two

Image Association: Names

- Respondents chose images that reflected:
 1. Connectivity – described the relationship between people, cultures and communities; along with the city’s various neighbourhoods, attractions and transportation systems
 2. Reliability – associated with images that suggest accuracy, dependability, clarity, ease and simplicity
 3. Human or Natural World Focus
 4. Order and Direction

○ Naming Phase Two

Brand Name Selection

- A total of 11 engagement sessions were held during this phase.
- In December 2022, based on the results on the engagement, the name selected for the Bus Rapid Transit in Saskatoon is “**Link**”.
- Participants identified with this name more frequently and could more easily see the associations with transit.
- Words and images that were chosen connected closely with **Link**.
- The name brings Saskatoon’s system to the perceived caliber of other cities fitting within the overall plan for growth.
- Ease of understanding achieved through similar naming in other transit systems.
- Straightforward while having opportunities for community connection.

○ Naming Phase Two

Brand Name Selection

- The name **Link** meets many of the naming qualities and BRT specific evaluation criteria.
- **Link** embodies concepts of connection, speed, and network.
- The name is timeless and easy to understand.
- **Link** will be at the heart of a system that is growing to enable simple, seamless, reliable and friendly travel.
- The brand should echo these qualities.

From October 2021 to December 2022 a total of 35 engagement sessions were completed.

Brand Development and Validation

5. Brand Development and Validation January 2023 – December 2023

Brand Development and Validation

Brand Identity Concepts

- January to June work began on developing brand concepts.

BACKGROUND

Saskatoon Transit is introducing a new bus rapid transit service to the City. While this new bus service will fall under the master brand of Saskatoon Transit, its own identity is needed.

The name "Link" has been chosen as it embodies concepts of connection, speed and network. The name is also timeless and easy to understand.

Link will be at the heart of a system that is growing to enable simple, seamless, reliable and friendly travel. The brand should echo these qualities.



GUIDING WORDS

CONNECTIVITY FAST

RELIABLE

WELCOMING EFFORTLESS

ACCESSIBLE

Brand Development and Validation

Brand Identity Concepts

- By July 2023, several visual identity concepts were narrowed down to two concepts for internal engagement.
- Internal feedback was used to refine and finalize a concept.
- Concepts incorporated feelings of movement and being welcoming.

Movement

Draw upon and expresses the idea of rapid speed, mobility and progress.

Welcoming

Draw upon expressions of friendliness.

Brand Development and Validation

Brand Identity Validation Research

- Validation research is a crucial part of ensuring that the outcome of earlier research and creative options is a name and visual identity that is understood by multiple audiences.
- In September and October 2023, further validation research was completed for the name and visual identity along with an exploration of colour and pattern palettes and wayfinding information.

Brand Development and Validation

Brand Identity Validation Stakeholder Groups

- In September and October 2023, various groups within the previous sessions, as well as members of the public, participated in focus groups to validate the brand. A total of 9 sessions were held.

Bus Riders of
Saskatoon, Walking
Saskatoon &
Saskatoon Cycles

Business
Organizations

Saskatoon
Council on Aging
and Accessibility
Groups

Newcomer &
Indigenous
Community

Amalgamated Transit
Union / Employees

Members of the
Public

Members of
City Council

Students

◎ Brand Development and Validation

The logo for 'Link' is displayed in a bold, italicized sans-serif font. The word 'Link' is primarily blue, with the final 'k' being orange. The 'k' is stylized with a diagonal stroke that extends downwards and to the right, creating a sense of movement or connection.

Brand Development and Validation

Brand Identity Validation: Word Association



◎ Brand Development and Validation

Brand Identity Validation: Colour

- The Saskatoon Transit master brand, as well as other City of Saskatoon branding, were associated with positive ideas and qualities.
- The azure (blue) colour was chosen most often as it expressed many of the qualities found in the positioning statement.
- Orange was also a colour with many strong associations with warmth and welcome, and it was noted that it relates to reconciliation and Indigenous identity which would be important to feature.

Brand Development and Validation



- Blue and orange colours are associated with the Saskatoon Transit logo.
- The arm and leg of the 'k' wraps around its stem, offering a welcoming embrace.
- The rounded ends not only create a friendly aesthetic but reflects the stunning natural landscape of Saskatoon.

Visual Language and Brand Guidelines

6. Visual Language and Brand Guidelines January – May 2024

Visual Language and Brand Guidelines

- Visual Look and Feel Document is completed.
- Brand Guidelines Document is completed.



7. Wayfinding

February 2024 (In Progress)

Wayfinding Audit

- Saskatoon Transit facilitates nearly a million rides monthly, operating 40 routes with over 1,400 stops to cater to the diverse transportation needs of residents and newcomers alike.
- The upcoming launch of Saskatoon Transit Bus Rapid Transit, *Link*, presents a significant opportunity to reaffirm the organization's commitment to enhancing connectivity, reliability, and customer satisfaction.

Wayfinding Audit

- Central to this initiative is the implementation of an effective and user-friendly signage and wayfinding program.
- In February 2024, a comprehensive audit of Saskatoon Transit's existing signage system was conducted to identify gaps and opportunities for improvement.
- A second phase of work will be required to develop and implement new wayfinding system.

8. Communications and Marketing Plan

February 2024 (In Progress)

⦿ Communications and Marketing Plan

Communications and Marketing Plan

- The new Link system is an exciting time for all Saskatoon residents.
- A campaign to help residents familiarize themselves with the **Link** brand and learn more about the benefits of having more frequent accessibility to areas of the city is under development.



Brand Launch and Construction

9. Brand Launch and Construction

Summer 2024 (In Progress)

Brand Launch and Construction

Prepare for Brand Launch and Construction

- The launch is an opportunity to demonstrate that the brand was developed with public and stakeholder input all along the way.
- Additional communications will be developed to help keep the public and impacted neighbourhoods informed as the City begins construction efforts for the new *Link* system.

S A S K A T O O N
transit **Link**