

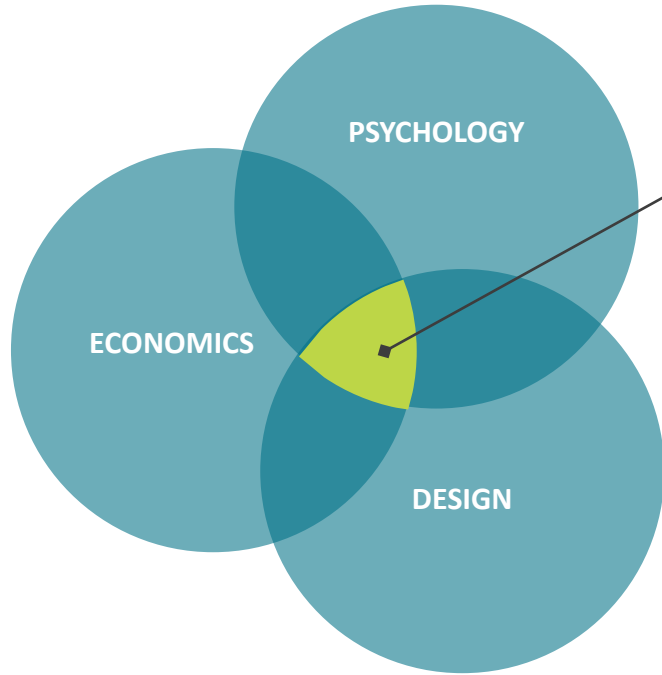
# **INCENTIVIZING COMMUTER BEHAVIOR**

**Using focused incentives to reduce transit overcrowding**

**Doug Palmer, Vice President**

April 1, 2020

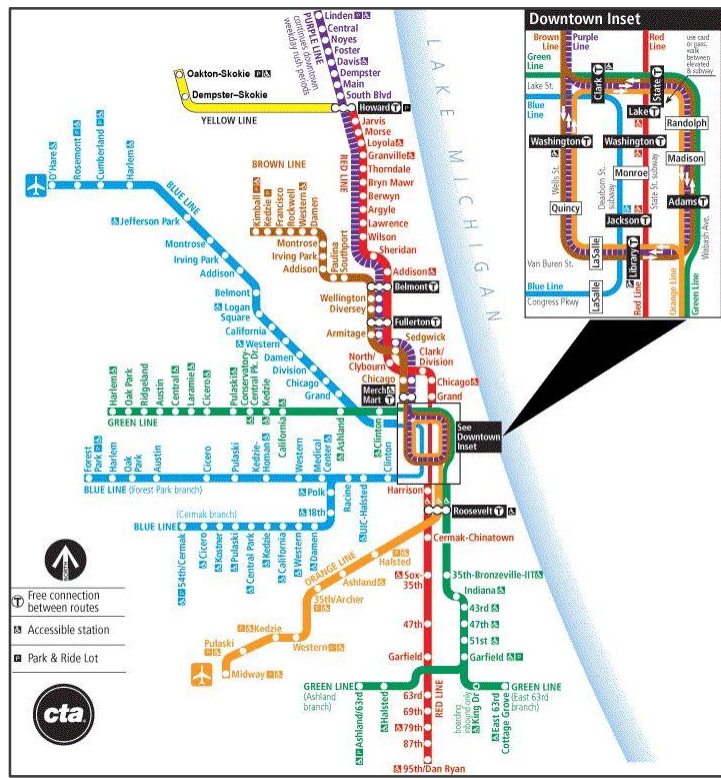
# WHO WE ARE



**ideas**<sup>42</sup>

We use insights from **human behavior** – why people do what they do – to help **improve lives, build better systems, and drive social change.**

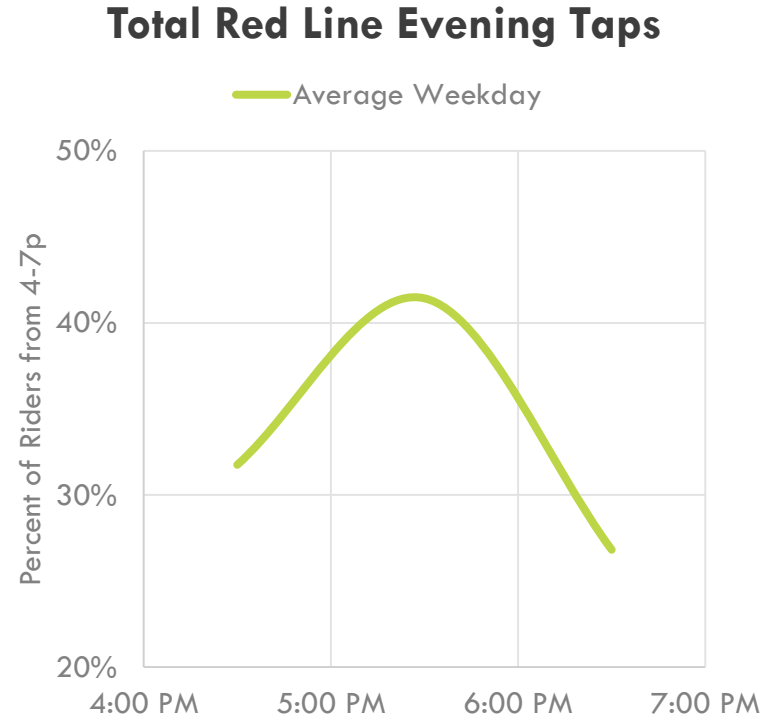
# CHICAGO'S 'L' TRAIN – BY THE NUMBERS



- 224 miles of track
  - 36 miles of elevated track
- 145 rail stations
- 500 million annual rides
- 8 color-coded lines

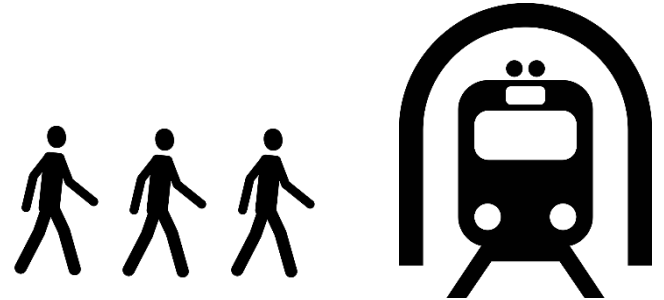
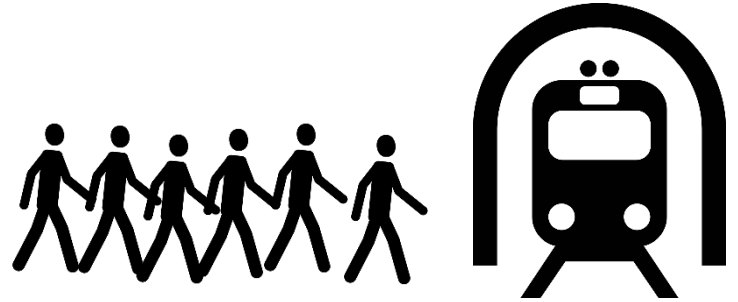
# COMMUTING IS ABOUT CHOICES

- People choose to commute on the Red Line between 5-6 pm.
- Many people making the same choice leads to congestion.
- Congestion leads to unpleasant experiences and concerns for rider safety.

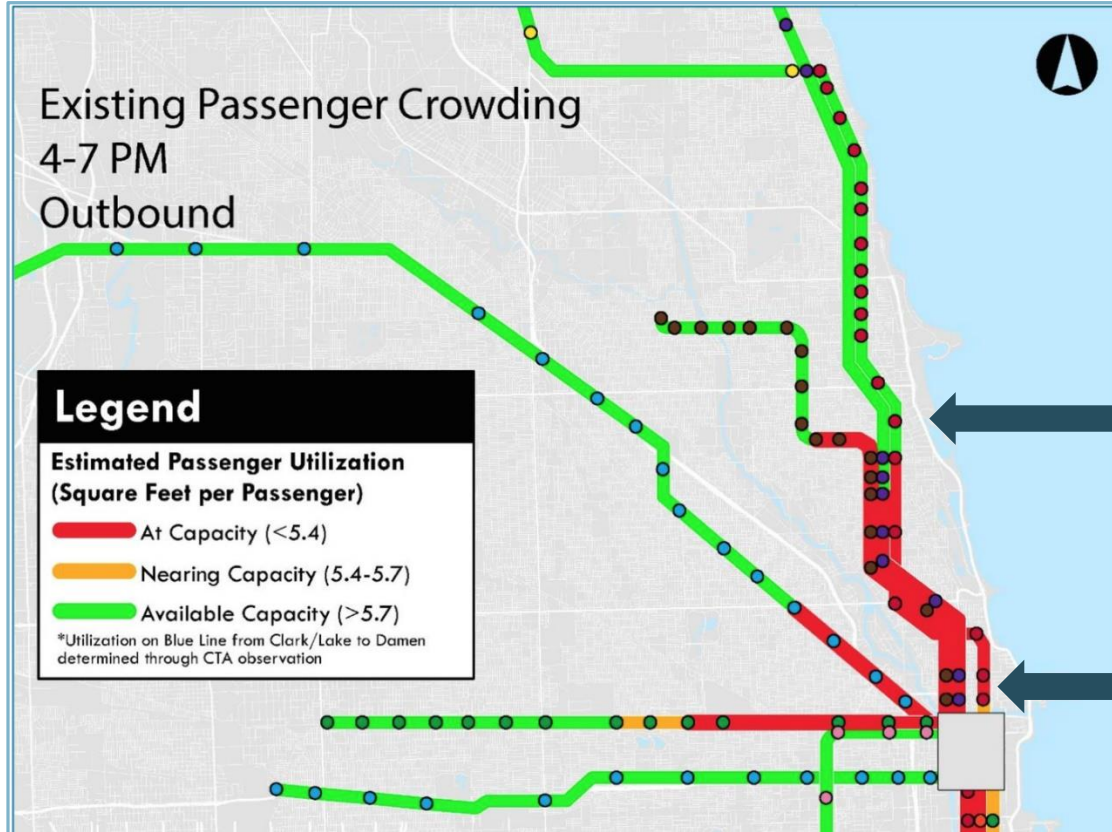


# CHOICES BECOME HABITUAL

- Some only travel at peak times due to a learned habit.
  - Others for structural reasons
  
- How do we smooth the commuter curve to reduce demand at specific times?



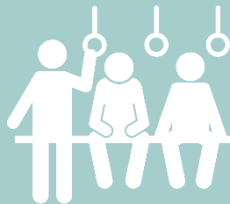
# COMMUTERS' HABITS GET JAMMED



Fans access the Red Line

Source: <https://chicago.curbed.com/2017/7/10/15945694/cta-crowding-capacity-map-blue-line>

# COMMUTERS AND FANS OVERCROWD TRAINS ON CUBS GAME DAYS



Chicagoans take  
**1,600,000 CTA RIDES**  
each weekday.



Red Line trains run every  
**2-3 minutes**  
during evening rush hour.



Cubs fans and commuters  
crowd the same trains  
on Cubs game days.

# PEOPLE USE TRANSIT WITHOUT CONSIDERING THE CUBS GAME CONGESTION



## CONVENTIONAL VIEW

Transit agencies need to increase frequency of trains, expand tracks and coverage, and increase fares

## BEHAVIORAL VIEW

People's transit choices are made on "autopilot," driven by habit without an active consideration of congesting events





# BARRIERS TO CHANGING COMMUTE HABITS



## LIMITED ATTENTION

People choose commute time on autopilot, not considering congestion



## INTANGIBLE INCENTIVES

Incentives are unclear during moment of decision.



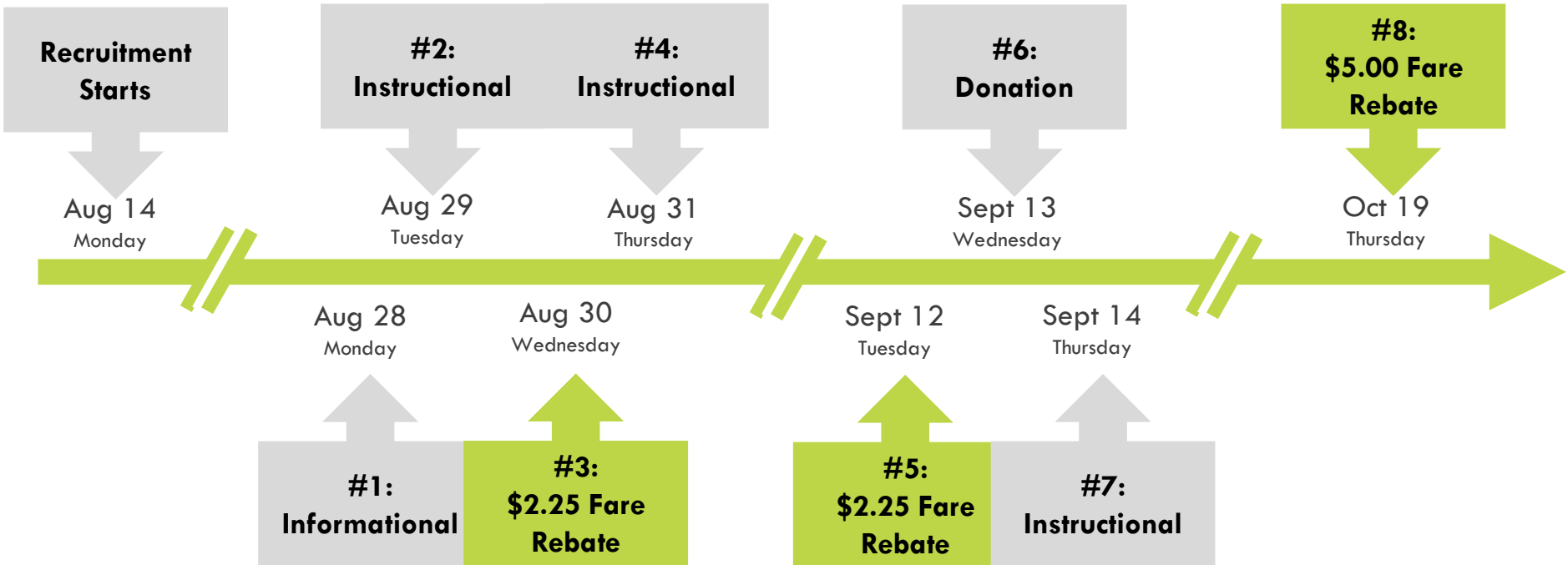
## HABITS

Commuting at certain times is based on learned behavior

# SEND TEXT MESSAGES TO RIDERS TO...



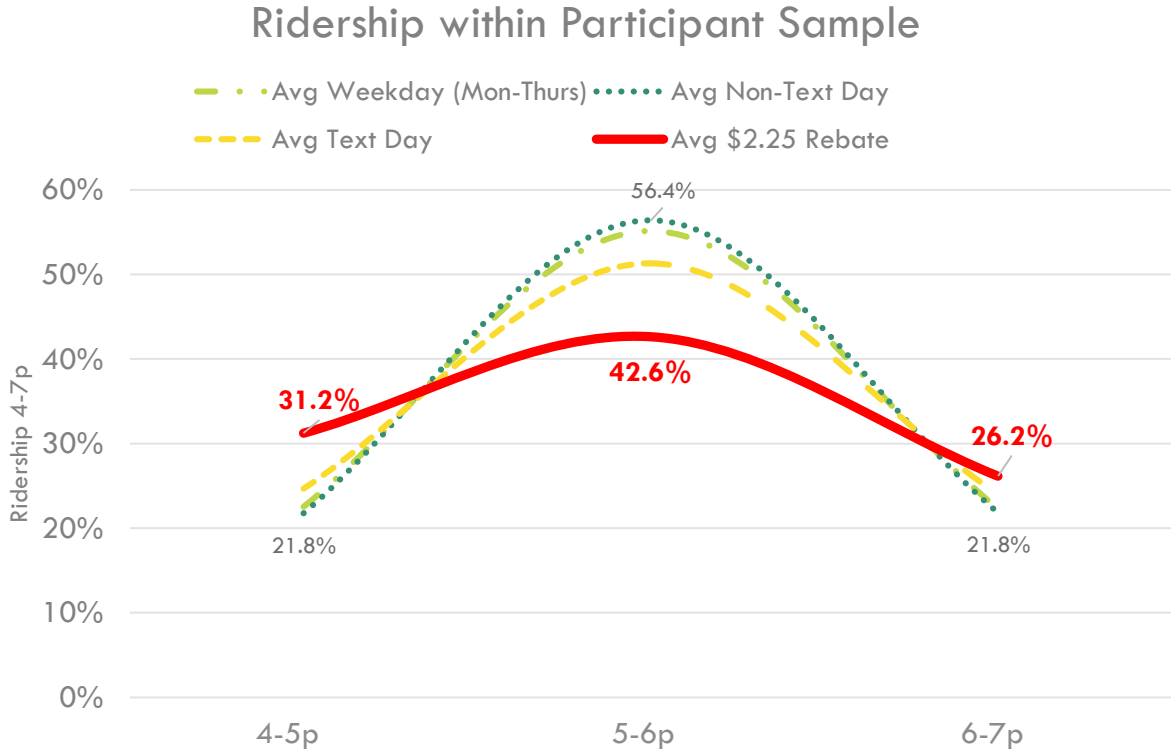
# TIMELINE



# FARE REBATES SMOOTH RIDERSHIP

On average, 56.4% of participants ride the Red Line from 5-6p when they don't receive a text message.

On days with \$2.25 fare rebates, the 5-6p rush represents 42.6% of ridership from 4-7p.



\*The change in ridership for fare rebates on peak-hour ridership is statistically significant ( $p < .01$ ).

# DECREASED PEAK-HOUR RIDERSHIP

CTA Info: Want a free ride? Cubs game @ 7:05p tonight. Travel on the Red Line from 4p to 5p or 6p to 7p & receive a \$2.25 fare value on your registered Ventra Card once your ride has been validated. Please note this may take a few days.

A **\$2.25 FARE REBATE** is correlated with a **17.5% decrease** in Red Line rush-hour ridership.

**FARE REBATES** are correlated with a **9.2% increase** in overall ridership.





ideas **42**

**THANK YOU**

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