WRUCC STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS SUPPORT CREATIVE BRIEF

February 17, 2016

Purpose

This document is designed to help guide the creation of Western Road Usage Charge Consortium (WRUCC) Strategic Communications Support design projects, including the branding, writing, and production of deliverables for the project. The client, project manager, and design team (collectively, or as a group) should reference this document prior to the start of any work by the design team.

The feedback noted in this brief was collected on **January 13, 2016** in a branding kick off meeting. The following WRUCC states were in attendance at the meeting:

- WSDOT (Washington): Tonia Buell
    - Studying and monitoring what other states are doing with RUC
    - Requested funding to plan the pilot project, on-hold, continue to study
- HDOT (Hawaii): Jade Butay
    - Consultant kickoff meeting next week
    - Leg prep
- Idaho Transportation Department: Matt Moore
- Caltrans (California): Norma Ortega, Brady Tacdol, Tami McGowen, Matt Rocco
    - Moving forward at rapid pace
    - In the process of reporting to Leg
    - Phase 2 of project: In the process of developing a pilot program, types of vehicles included (light-duty passenger vehicles and commercial trucks)
    - Trying to hit all parts of state to get to 5,000 volunteers, currently at 3,500
    - Transitioning website – www.CaliforniaRoadChargePilot.com
    - Trying to get influencers to participate in the 9-month pilot
    - Launch in July 2016
    - Report to Leg by Summer 2017
- CDOT (Colorado): Amy Ford and Debra Perkins-Smith
    - Getting ready to start RUC study
- NDOT (Nevada): Meg Ragonese and Jocene Yang
    - Meg – observers, looking forward to moving ahead and further education on need for funding
- ODOT (Oregon): Michelle Godfrey
    - Experienced RUC communicator
- TXDOT (Texas): Becky Ozuna
    - Monitoring media relations
- MDT (Montana): Nicole Pallister
    - Observers at this point

Overview

1. **What is the project background?**

   WRUCC exists to advance road usage charging as a preferred transportation funding model for the western citizenry and to provide interested western states a destination to educate themselves, utilize existing resources, and pursue next steps. WRUCC has requested that PRR **create unique branding, branded materials,** and **a website**. WRUCC also aims to serve a secondary audience made up of curious members of the general public, the media, and strategic partners. With this audience they would like to be positioned as the expert authority on RUC. The brief will go deeper into these audiences and provide an understanding of their needs.

2. **What principles should the WRUCC's design adhere to?**
   - Be factual, comprehensive, and build a wider circle of understanding from the inside, out.
   - Accurately and clearly educate people.
   - Proof by performance.
   - Respectful of real-world purpose
   - Supportive of what states are already doing
   - Easy to understand
   - Solution focused
   - Respectful of what states have accomplished
   - Speak to different tiers

3. **What are the goals (short- and long-term) of the project?**
   - **Advance** understanding of road usage charging as a transportation funding model.
   - **Gain understanding** for the collective consortium's work to inform and advance road usage charge policy and implementation.

4. **What measurable objectives have been identified, or what benchmarks or metrics will measure the success of this project?**
   - Create a **better understanding** of RUC in the public, and eliminate fear surrounding it.
   - **Create a national presence** for WRUCC.
   - **Promote public understanding** of road usage charging as an alternative transportation funding model.
   - **Establish a resource website** for both internal use and for external users to better understand what RUC is.
   - Make WRUCC **THE reliable resource** for states and federal examples.
   - Establish WRUCC as an information clearing house and position them as a national Go-To presence and resource for stakeholders, media, etc.
   - **Further the understanding as a viable alternative** for the collective consortium goal.
   - **Provide broad enough messages** for organizations, stakeholders and states to adopt and use for their own educational materials.
   - States referring people to WRUCC as a resource.

5. **What deliverables will be a part of the project? If known, please include quantity and any other requirements.**

- A WRUCC website that speaks to internal and external users
  - ○ *Internal (password-protected) includes:*
    - Library of WRUCC documents: charter, operating procedures, meeting notes, WRUCC contacts, etc.
    - Communications toolbox with key messages, infographics (not scoped), education video, testimonial, etc.
    - Research library with state studies, research, technology information
  - ○ *Public Facing website includes:*
    - Overview of WRUCC and state level of participation, WRUCC projects
    - General information on RUC, "why", possible RUC calculator
    - Serve as primary resource for media (with identified WRUCC spokesperson) and platform to public research papers/examinations
    - The site would serve as the primary resource for the WRUCC media contact, and the media contact would be listed on the site.
- Name recommendations
- A visual brand identity (*2 concepts*) with brand guidelines
- Key messages
- A communications toolkit for communicators to use and share with media and constituents, including, but not limited to:
  - ○ Key messages
  - ○ Infographics, such as: (*not scoped*)
    - How the RUC works
    - Why an alternative is needed
    - What it means for motorists, citizens
  - ○ Informational video (*not scoped*)
  - ○ Testimonials (e.g., OReGO profiles at MyOReGO.org) – (*web content*)
  - ○ WRUCC contacts for communications support and guidance

User Audiences

6. **Who are your primary user audiences? Please include as much information as you know: Demographics (age, income, education, etc.), Geographics (where they live, renting or owning, etc), Psychographics (how they think, values, beliefs, political views, personality traits, etc.), and Lifestyle (interests, hobbies, work, etc.)**

Internal Key Stakeholders (key targets)
- Member DOTs
- Steering committee
- Executive committee, directors
- Other organizations within our government: agencies, Legislature, policy-makers

External stakeholders (secondary targets)
- Non-Member DOTs
- Other agencies - every state is different
- Cities, Counties (recipients of gas tax revenue)
- MPOs
- Legislators
- Chambers
- Media - in-state and national
- Academics
- Related industries (trucking, AAA, privacy, security, business, equity)
- Transportation organizations
- State Highway Patrol

Phase 2 or 3: The general public

7. **Will each audience use the project materials in a different way?**

Internal (password-protected) includes:
- Library of WRUCC documents: charter, operating procedures, meeting notes, WRUCC contacts, etc.
- Communications Tool Box with key messages, infographics (*not scoped*), education video, testimonials, WRUCC contacts
- Research Clearinghouse with state studies, research, technology information, etc.

Public Facing website includes:
- Overview of WRUCC and state level of participation, WRUCC projects
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8. **Should anything be avoided in communicating with your audience?**
- Advocate/gain acceptance are not words to use – we want to further the understanding as a viable alternative

9. **What barriers/challenges exist with these audiences?**
- WRUCC acronym discussion – brand guidelines
- Western Road Usage Charge Consortium is a mouthful

Setting
10. **What setting(s) will this design piece be consumed in?**
- The web.

Messaging/Behavior

11. **What is the one key message, feature or fact you would like your audience(s) to come away with?**
RUC is the future of road infrastructure funding and the WRUCC is the main authority on this topic.

12. **Are there any additional messages, information, benefits or value you would like your audience to come away with?**

    WHAT: Road charging is a funding mechanism where drivers pay to maintain the roads based on the miles they drive, rather than the amount of gasoline they consume.

    WHY: The revenues currently available for highways and local roads are inadequate to preserve and maintain existing road infrastructure, reduce congestion and improve service. The gas tax cannot meet current and long-term transportation funding needs because it is ineffective and outdated, and will continue to generate less revenue as cars become more fuel efficient. By 2030 as much as half of the revenue that could have been collected from the gas tax will be lost to fuel efficiency. States needs to explore a sustainable transportation funding model to generate adequate revenue for its road maintenance and improvement needs. Identifying and implementing a more sustainable transportation funding mechanism such as RUC has the power to save lives. According to a study conducted by the Federal Highway Administration, $100 million spent on highway safety improvements will save 145 lives over a 10-year period.

    Failing to adequately address the issue of transportation funding has a direct effect on all car owners. Eighteen percent of America's major roads are in poor condition. Driving on roads in need of repair costs U.S. motorists $109 billion a year in extra vehicle repairs and operating costs – $516 per motorist.

    WHAT: The Western States Road Usage Charge Consortium builds the partnerships and allows us to pool resources and research to explore RUC.

13. **How does this messaging compare to similar materials or your competition? Please include examples or other information about how you think these have succeeded or failed.**
    - Currently the methodology of RUC is universal. Competition would be gas tax or other mechanisms that fund the roads.

14. **Are you trying to change a behavior of your audience, and if so, why should they think or act differently?**

    Internal
    - We want the states to understand RUC
    - This effort is aiming to move western states along the following three-tier path:
        1. States following/researching RUC
            a. **States:** AZ, HI, ID, MT, OK, ND, NM, NV, TX, WA
        2. States testing RUC
            a. **States:** CA, CO, UT
        3. States with policy enacted to implement RUC, implementing RUC
            a. **States:** OR
    - Here is more information on each tier:

- TIER 1: These states should be able to answer the question: why are you following/researching RUC? Preferred responses include:
    - We are a responsible transportation authority and continuously monitor transportation trends and developments nationwide.
    - We are interested to learn if RUC could be relevant and how it could impact our state. We are watching other states implementing RUC to see if such applications might work here.
    - We are not considering incorporation of RUC into our transportation policy, but we need to stay aware of how the concept and technology is developing across the country. Even if we never implement RUC, our state transportation systems are connected and another state's road usage charge program may affect our transportation system.
    - As states begin looking for new or alternative transportation funding options, this is just one of many options to explore.
    - Refer to WRUCC website for additional information RUC.
- TIER 2: These states should be able to answer the question: why are you doing a pilot? Preferred responses include:
    - We are a responsible transportation authority. We are interested to learn RUC could be important and relevant for our state, and if such a system would work here.
    - All states are looking for new transportation funding options. This is just one option we are considering.
    - In order to really know if RUC is viable for our state we have to test it. This is the next step in the extensive process of evaluating the concept, how it works and uncovering implementation issues.
    - We are also engaging stakeholders and members of the public in this process because we also want to know how we can address public concerns about the RUC.
    - We need to understand system elements in more detail in order to have a discussion with the public about any direction we might take.
    - Should we decide to pursue RUC further, we will need to be able to describe how it would operate in our state. In conducting a pilot, we will gain real world experience to help us learn and decide if road charging is right for us.
- TIER 3: We need these states to be able to answer the question: what is the state's approach to adopting a RUC program?
    - The answer will be different for each state. It's recommended that they identify the end game and prepare talking points for how it would be achieved, whether the goal is a legislative report, mandate policy, or some other result.

External
- We want influencers to participate with the consortium beyond state DOTs (AAA, the media, etc.)
- We want influencers to understand that RUC is a viable solution to fund roads and that, along with other benefits, the sharing of research and resources could result in a reduction in administrative costs.
- We want local, trade, and national media to consider the consortium and its assets (website/materials), reputable, factual and credible for everything RUC.
- We want influencers to better understand the current transportation funding problem and the need for a more sustainable, viable, and equitable long-term solution.
- We want influencers to be armed with the facts about the transportation funding problem and RUC so that they can adequately relay this information to their constituents.
- We want to build momentum for RUC amongst additional states and DOTs throughout the western region.
- We want to provide information that will allow the public to estimate what they are currently paying in fuel taxes and what they could expect to pay under RUC.

15. **What do you want your audience to feel and think about WRUCC?**
   Internal
   - Access to everything states need to tell the RUC story – all in one place to provide relief
   - Understanding of why this is useful
   - Ability to explain the problem RUC is solving
   - Ability to explain RUC to their co-workers
   - Have tools and places to point other to for more information on RUC
   - Easy access to RUC research (i.e.: rural study)
   - Empowered – excited about same baseline story told across all states
   - Active – What's currently happening and what is going to happen?

   External
   - Very similar to internal audience perception
   - Awareness of the problem RUC is solving
   - Have a sense of where their state is in this process
   - Educated, base understanding
   - Find WRUCC as a valuable "go-to" resource
   - Consider joining WRUCC
   - RUC is not so scary
   - Valuable, value-added
   - See WRUCC as a valuable resource and alliance

16. **What does your audience currently feel and think about WRUCC?**
    Internal
    - OR is the only one doing something, CA very close – Consortium is much larger and many states are working actively on these solutions
    - State and local lawmakers are not always as knowledgeable as they could be on RUC
    - Misunderstanding what RUC is and how it works
    - Incubator of sorts
    - Feeding curiosity? How can I contribute?
    - Provide the range of things that are happening that feed that curiosity
    - Example: Colorado research projects
    - Not feeling judgmental of the tier each state is in
    - Members of the internal audience will find WRUCC. WRUCC will not need to do much work to find them (push marketing). RUC is increasingly becoming a hotter issue. Members of both audiences are searching to learn more about it. We want to be sure they arrive at WRUCC to receive a solid baseline on RUC as a solution.

    External
    - Mixed feelings on RUC, could be confused with WRUCC
    - We are launching WRUCC – why should I care, they don't care about us
    - Define solving the problem
    - They find US, we don't find them
    - When WRUCC notes that RUC is a solution to the problem, most members of the external audience will be unaware of what the problem is
    - Communications need to clearly define "the problem" before arriving at the solution
    - The public will not be aware of who WRUCC are and why they exist. This communications effort will introduce WRUCC to the world

17. **What content will help close this perception gap?**
    - Understanding of what a road charge is. Fact vs Fiction.
    - Firm understanding of what RUC is, especially by the public. Eliminate fear.
    - The "what" about Western RUC Consortium.
    - THE reliable resources for states and federal examples.
    - Resource for the media.
    - **Show what states are doing**: Participating states contributing to a growth in understanding. With projects underway, states can speak to what they are doing.
    - Consortium mission vs. Communications mission.
    - Careful about what the "right model" might be.
    - Show success of the goals and/or objectives using tangible metrics?
    - Perception of being the reliable RUC practitioner: national and statewide.
    - Promote public understanding of RUC as an alternative.
    - Increase people's understanding of RUC, clear up misperceptions.
    - **Educate on the problem**: Deficit of funding and understanding:
        - Help people understand the shortcomings while bearing in mind the limitations of funding and resources.

Design/Voice

18. **If you have a current example of this or a similar project, do you have any frustrations with it? Are there things that you like or don't like?**
    - **More like**: http://www.californiaroadchargepilot.com/
    - **Less like**: http://www.myorego.org/

19. **What tone are you hoping to set with your audience(s)? Please use adjectives to give us an idea: fun, funny, casual, serious, business-like, kid-friendly, elegant, fear-inducing, etc…**
    Internal
    - Simple, clear, useful, concise, credible, reliable
    - Knowledgeable
    - Plausible – good, bad and ugly
    - United front
    - Accurate

    External
    - Who, what, where, when why
    - Useful materials
    - Cautious momentum
    - Buzz, educational
    - Engaging – make that connection
    - Acknowledge the scary
    - Transparent
    - Minimalist in design
    - Timely, current, up-to-speed
    - Progressive, evolutionary – look what's coming – forward-thinking
    - Not too slick or marketing-focused (closer to CA and less like OR)

20. **Do you have any colors or photography in mind for the project?**
WRUCC is looking to PRR to recommend a color scheme along with the branding effort.

Content
21. **Who will be responsible for writing the content?**
PRR.

22. **Who will be responsible for any images used on the project?**
PRR to utilize its iStock account for stock photography. Original photography will not be a part of this scope.

Budget & Schedule
23. **What is the project budget?**
    - **Project Management**: $7,676
    - **Website**: $33,609
    - **Branding**: $5,832
    - **Toolkit**: $6,548
    - **Key Messages**: $1,091
    - **TOTAL** - $54,756

24. **What is the project schedule, including any specific deadlines for deliverables or events?**
February
    - Communication Taskforce meeting
        - Present base framework for branding concept (March 1, 2016)
        - Accomplishments
        - Document to affirm mission and key messaging
        - One-pager with takeaways

March
    - Secondary meeting

April
    - Steering Committee Meeting: April 26th-27th, Nevada

June
    - Presentation to Board: June launch target

Process
25. **Who has primary accountability for the project?**
Amy Ford and Randal Thomas are the primary contacts.

26. **Who has final approval authority or veto power (especially if different from above)?**
The Board and Steering Committee will have final approval of all communications collateral. Amy Ford and Randal Thomas will serve as the primary contacts.

Any Additional Information?

27. **Is the project being funded by another entity or is it a collaboration with other organizations or sponsors? Please list contact info for resources/logos and any requirements they may have for materials.**
The WRUCC Board of Directors has accessed each member an initial $5000 for development of the Strategic Communications Plan/Website; and authorized annual assessments for website maintenance.

TIMELINE/PRODUCTION SCHEDULE/BUDGET

Branding Production Schedule	Website Production Schedule
INTERNAL PRODUCTION ■ **2/11/16**: PRR internal brainstorm to come up with brand names ■ **2/12 – 2/19/16**: Designers developing rough concepts ■ **2/16/16:** 30-minute design team check in ■ **2/19/16**: Designers presenting rough concepts internally to collect feedback ■ **2/26/16**: Second internal review ■ **2/29/16**: Prep meeting for presentation **CLIENT PRESENTATION** ■ **3/1/16**: Present three (3) draft brand identity concepts to WRUCC ■ **3/3/16**: WRUCC to deliver feedback to PRR (round 1 of revision) **REVISIONS** ■ **3/10/16**: PRR to present revised concepts to WRUCC ■ **3/14/16**: WRUCC to deliver final round of feedback to PRR (round 2 of revision) **DELIVERY OF FINAL BRANDING** ■ **3/25/16:** PRR to deliver package of logo and brand guidelines	**DISCOVERY** ■ ~~**1/13/16**: Discovery Meeting~~ ■ ~~**2/12/16**: PRR to deliver creative brief + work plan to the WRUCC~~ **INFORMATION ARCHITECTURE** ■ **3/1/16**: Present wireframe to the WRUCC ■ **3/3/16**: Receive revisions to the wireframe from the WRUCC **WRITTEN CONTENT** ■ **3/15/16**: Deliver full draft content to WRUCC using Google Docs or Microsoft Word ■ **3/15/16**: PRR to deliver domain options to WRUCC for review ■ **3/22/16**: By this date WRUCC to make revisions to text directly in Google Docs or within the Word Documents—Track Changes should be used ■ **3/22/16**: WRUCC to deliver domain selections to PRR. PRR to purchase selected domains **DESIGN** ■ **4/1/16**: Deliver full site design to the WRUCC for review

	- **4/5/16**: Receive revisions to the design from the WRUCC on the designs - **4/12/16**: PRR to implement on revisions and send revised version to WRUCC and developer **BUILD** - **4/25/16**: Deliver untested site build with Google Form for *a select group* at WRUCC to perform user acceptance testing (UAT) on the site - **4/29/16**: Cutoff date for UAT - **5/6/16**: Complete Revisions based on UAT feedback **SOFT LAUNCH (5/9/16)** - **5/9/16**: Direct the purchased domain to the development website - **5/9/16**: Integrate Google Analytics - **5/9 – 5/12/16**: Internal testing and fixes from PRR leading up to full launch **FULL LAUNCH (5/13/16)** - **5/13/16**: Announce site to the public (marketing) **ONGOING DESIGN & DEVELOPMENT** - **TBD:** Web team training (2 hour training) - **TBD:** 12 hours of development (monitoring analytics, security, & performance) - **TBD:** 8 hours of design (creative direction, photography, etc.)