

Building Community and Fostering Change: Reflections on a Communication Campaign
Collaboration with *People Friendly Stamford*

This semester, my Communication Campaign class at the University of Connecticut is working with a community advocacy group called "People Friendly Stamford" (PFS) whose mission is to create walkable and bikeable neighborhoods, improve transit, reduce car-dependency, and support housing abundance in the city of Stamford. The class has identified two imminent issues faced by PFS, and they are currently working towards achieving two initial goals: 1) to re-engage and activate existing members of the organization, and 2) to recruit new members to join the organization especially from a historically underrepresented group.

After one month of collaboration, the class has successfully helped PFS enhance its brand platform by refining its vision, mission, and core values. Additionally, we have developed a research proposal to identify the challenges faced by PFS and to gain insights from its target publics. Our next step is to conduct a focus group and survey to understand the target publics better, after which we will use our findings to develop strategies and tactics to achieve our campaign goals.

Working with a real-world client like PFS provides a unique opportunity for students to learn and apply their knowledge and skills. The class has the chance to work with a client who is passionate about their cause, which makes the experience even more meaningful. It also exposes students to the challenges that organizations face in the real world and helps them develop skills such as problem-solving, collaboration, and communication.

Furthermore, the project is a great way for students to get involved with the community and make a positive impact. This work not only benefits the community but also provides students with a sense of fulfillment and purpose.

As we progress with this project, we look forward to the results of the focus group and survey and how they will inform our future strategies and tactics. It is exciting to think about the positive impact that our campaign may have on PFS and the community.

The brand platform and the research proposal can be found below.

Brand Platform for **People Friendly Stamford**

<https://www.peoplestamford.org/>

- Vision Statement

People Friendly Stamford envisions a safer, more sustainable, and inclusive Stamford with accessible and affordable housing options and safer roads for all.

- Core Values

- **Community** - We value the importance of community and strive to create inclusive and safe neighborhoods that are accessible to all through walkable and bikeable infrastructure.
- **Environmental Sustainability** - We are committed to promoting environmental sustainability by designing and implementing street infrastructure that prioritizes the safety of pedestrians and cyclists.
- **Improvement** - We are dedicated to continuously improving the city of Stamford by advocating for affordable housing and creating an economically viable community.
- **Advocacy** - We believe that advocacy is essential for driving positive change in Stamford.
- **Safety** - We prioritize safety in all our endeavors and aim to reduce conflict between drivers and pedestrians in Stamford.

- Mission Statement

Our mission is to build a sustainable, livable, and accessible Stamford through safer street infrastructure for pedestrians and bikers, developing walkable mixed-use neighborhoods, improving public transit, and reducing society's reliance on personal vehicles. As an advocacy group, we campaign for housing affordability and a safer environment overall in the city of Stamford.

Research Plan

Research Objectives

1. To gain an understanding of how current and lapsed members of People Friendly Stamford feel about the organization and its future (i.e., stability).
2. To gain insight on how to enhance awareness and the number of minority members at People Friendly Stamford.

Methods

Surveys

This survey will be conducted in March by UConn Stamford's Applied Campaigns in Communication Research Team. This survey will be completed by pedestrians, bicyclists, scooterists, skaters, other commuters and residents of Stamford, Connecticut. After the team completes the survey, the group will analyze the statistical data to detect relationships and patterns contributing to a successful public relations campaign.

Focus Group

The focus group will be conducted on March 6, 2023 at 11:00 AM at the University of Connecticut, Stamford. The participants for our focus group will consist of current and lapsed members of the People Friendly Stamford Organization, and our targeted sample size is 6-8 members. The respondents will be chosen using convenient sampling method based on those available. The focus group aims to gauge how members of People Friendly Stamford feel about the organization, its stability, and where they envision its future. The focus group will be about one hour long, focusing on open-ended questions and will be recorded through physical and verbal note-takers who will be in the room during the process. The data gathered during this focus group will be interpreted to find patterns and trends in the responses and common themes. Each participant will sign a proper consent form prior to conducting the focus group.

Timeline

February 28, 2023: The team begins conducting research.

The week of March 7, 2023: Focus Group and qualitative analysis

The week of March 7 and March 21, 2023: survey data collection

The week of March 28, 2023: Quantitative data collection done.

The week of April 4, 2023: Research analysis is completed. Report done.

April 6, 2023: Research report and campaign objectives due.

Potential Survey Questions

Thank you for taking the time to take this survey started by UConn Stamford's Applied Campaigns in Communication Research Team. We would like to ask you some questions regarding your attitudes and beliefs on various topics within Stamford, CT. This survey will take approximately 10 minutes to complete. All information collected will be anonymous. Only the research team will be able to view your responses.

The findings of this survey will give insight into Stamford's transportation and commuter systems. We kindly ask you to assist us with this study and thank you for your participation.

By clicking "Next" you consent to participate in this survey.

1. Are you a current resident of Stamford, CT?

- a.) Yes
- b.) No

2. What is your current age?

[]

3. Please state your gender.

- a.) Male
- b.) Female
- c.) Non-binary
- d.) Other

4. Please state the ethnicity/race(s) you identify with (Select all that apply).

- | | |
|--------------------------------|-------|
| Native American/Alaskan Native | [] |
| Black/African-American | [] |
| Hispanic/Latino | [] |
| Asian/Pacific islander | [] |
| White/Caucasian | [] |
| Other | [] |

Multi-Racial []
Decline to respond []

5. Which of these methods of transportation do you use the most to travel within Stamford, CT?

- a.) Driving
- b.) Public Transportation
- c.) Walking/Running
- d.) Biking

6. Please indicate how often you use these methods of transportation.

[Never, Rarely, Sometimes, Often, Always]

- | | | | | | |
|---------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| a.) Driving | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| b.) Public Transportation | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| c.) Walking/Running | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| d.) Biking | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| e.) Skating/Scooter | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |

7. How often do you think about pedestrian safety in Stamford, CT?

- a.) Never
- b.) Rarely
- c.) Sometimes
- d.) Often
- e.) Always

8. During a typical week, how many hours per week do you use social media platforms?
(Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Snapchat, Tiktok, etc.)

- a.) 1 - 5 hours
- b.) 6 - 10 hours
- c.) 11 - 16 hours
- d.) Over 20 hours a week
- e.) I do not use any social media applications or websites.

9. Please rank which of the following social media platforms you have the most screen time on during a typical week with “1” being the most used and “5” being the least used.

Facebook []

Twitter []
Instagram []
Tiktok []
Snapchat []

10. Please state how familiar you are with the group called, “*People Friendly Stamford*”?

- a.) Very Familiar
- b.) Somewhat Familiar
- c.) Neutral
- d.) Unfamiliar
- e.) Very Unfamiliar

11. *People Friendly Stamford* is a local group composed of volunteers that are “working to create walkable and bikeable neighborhoods, improve transit, reduce car-dependency, and support housing abundance.” (Mission statement from official website). How likely would you want to become a member of this group?

- a.) Very Likely
- b.) Likely
- c.) Neutral
- d.) Unlikely
- e.) Very Unlikely

12. Please indicate how important or unimportant the following topics are to you within Stamford, CT.

[Not at all important Rarely Important, Somewhat
Important, Very Important, Extremely Important]

a.) Walkable and bikeable neighborhoods	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
b.) Improved public transportation	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
c.) Reduction of car-dependency	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
d.) Affordable housing	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

13. On an average week, how many hours do you dedicate to volunteer work in charitable organizations and/or non-profits?

- a.) 0

- b.) 1-5 hours
- c.) 6-10 hours
- d.) 11+ hours

14. With the knowledge of “*People Friendly Stamford*” ’s existence and what they advocate for (pedestrian safety, housing abundance, improved transit, reduced car-dependency), **how likely are you going to tell your friends and family about this group?**

- a.) Very Likely
- b.) Likely
- c.) Neutral
- d.) Unlikely
- e.) Very Unlikely

15. With the knowledge of “*People Friendly Stamford*” ’s existence and what they advocate for (pedestrian safety, housing abundance, improved transit, reduced car-dependency) **how likely would you attend one of their virtual or in-person meetings in the future?**

- a.) Very Likely
- b.) Likely
- c.) Neutral
- d.) Unlikely
- e.) Very Unlikely

16. In addition to meetings on Zoom, “*People Friendly Stamford*” hosts a “Happy Hour” event every other month. Would fun events such as the “Happy Hour” event increase the likelihood of you showing up for meetings?

- a.) Yes
- b.) No
- c.) Yes, however I would attend meetings regardless of the availability of fun events.
- d.) No, in addition I would not attend meetings regardless of the availability of fun events.

17. Have you ever experienced or seen conflict between drivers and pedestrians within Stamford, CT?

- a.) Yes
- b.) No
- c.) Yes, I have seen/read about said conflict on the news.
- d.) Don’t know/Unsure

18. Do you currently own a home?

- a.) Yes
- b.) No

19. Do you currently have a place of residence such as an apartment or condo where you pay rent every month?

- a.) Yes
- b.) No

20. Would you consider yourself as someone who is financially secure?

- a.) Yes
- b.) No
- c.) Decline to answer

21. Do you, or have you ever voted for locally elected officials?

- a.) Yes
- b.) No

22. Do you believe that it is important to vote?

- a.) Yes
- b.) No

23. Do you commute to, or within Stamford, CT on a regular basis (multiple times a week)?

- a.) Yes
- b.) No (→ add script that sends them to end of survey)

24. Do you own a car?

- a.) Yes
- b.) No

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COMM 4510 Communication Campaign and Applied Research

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey. Please email cen.yue@uconn.edu for any questions regarding the survey. In addition, If you wish to know more about *People Friendly Stamford*, please visit <https://www.peoplestamford.org/> .

Focus Group Invitation Letter

Hello, we are UConn Stamford's Applied Campaigns in Communication Research Team, conducting research for the local community advocacy group, People Friendly Stamford. This research project will be used to develop a campaign for the organization. This campaign is designed to increase the engagement of current members and promote awareness of the organization. This focus group aims to gain insight from existing members of People Friendly Stamford to create an effective campaign that will lead to more satisfactory awareness and engagement towards the organization.

The focus group will take approximately one hour. This study investigates members' opinions on People Friendly Stamford as an organization.

This interview is entirely anonymous and confidential. The interview will be recorded for the purpose of data analysis and the recording will be destroyed after the analysis is completed. If you do not wish for the conversation to be recorded, we can make written notes instead.

Please indicate verbally if you consent to the recording of your interview.

Focus Group Questions

1. How long have you been a member of *People Friendly Stamford*?
2. What traits or qualities of *People Friendly Stamford* as a group attracted you to become a member?
3. How many *People Friendly Stamford* meetings have you attended since you joined the group?
 - a. Why do you attend? Or Why not?
 - b. What do you like/dislike about the meetings?
 - c. Besides the happy hour meetings, are there any suggestions that would make meetings at *People Friendly Stamford* just as engaging as it is informative?
4. During a typical week, how many hours of free time would you say you would have?
5. Are there any other groups, organizations, or charities that you volunteer at regularly?
6. What would help increase your participation in the group?
7. How would you describe the communication between members?
 - a. How can *People Friendly Stamford* improve communication with existing members?
8. Do you feel like you belong in *People Friendly Stamford*? Why or why not?
9. What issues would you like *People Friendly Stamford* to focus on?