Futurama 2.0:   A Transportation Vision for America

As experienced designers of transportation systems and visual narratives, we are passionate about seeing America re-establish global leadership in advanced transportation solutions.

We believe in a vision where we move our people, goods and energy with respect for our planet, each other and our economy. We believe that such a vision can propel the United States back to economically powerful and global leadership in transportation – a position that has ebbed over the last few decades.

This new Administration's dedication to creating a more resilient, equitable and sustainable United States presents a once in a generation opportunity to define the comprehensive, innovative and bold transportation vision needed to underpin our nation's bold future.

We want to make this happen, regardless of how it unfolds and who needs to be involved to deliver it! This vision must focus on people, their safety and their voices, not machines and concrete. It must be a vision well beyond just driving cars, to include alternative and new types of journeys and pathways that move people and goods. It must be a vision that is about the common welfare, not special interests.

It is over 80 years since the US last visualized and communicated a comprehensive Transportation Vision to the public – the 1939 Futurama Exhibit at the New York World Fair. It was a brilliant vision lead by designer Norman Del Geddes, which inspired the millions of Americans who saw it. It also greatly inspired the 1956 Federal-Aid Highway Act, which succeeded in creating American jobs, industry and widespread economic prosperity, just as the railroads had a century before.

Futurama spoke of new horizons, new technologies, re-planned spaces and it was energizing and persuasive. However, Futurama and the ensuing Highways Act neglected to account for some important unintended consequences: environmental harm; gradual splintering and segregation of urban communities; death and injury through road accidents and huge swathes of land dedicated to automobiles. It was also an agenda for the benefit of particular industries – automobile, oil and concrete – leaving us with a transportation legacy that has affected social and economic equity within our country.

We see a transportation future for America that prioritizes the healing of our planet while providing greater opportunity for all America's peoples, exceeding their needs and expectations. Our transportation future must invigorate innovation throughout American industry – from the exciting potentials of entrepreneurs inventing new disruptive technologies to the deeply valuable capabilities of our legacy companies.

We see a transportation future, which is built around how people really want to live and therefore understands how our current and future cities, towns and rural areas need to be considered as a united whole that serves the real needs, expectation and aspirations of diverse populations and communities.

We see these needs being met by seamlessly integrated, new forms of mobility and logistics systems, constantly supporting the comfort and safety of travelers, workers and operators as well as thriving enterprises.

We see new kinds of vehicles, equipment and infrastructure being invented and developed, that operate collaboratively with minimal or zero environmental impact, lubricated by free flow of secure data and with mutual economic benefit for both private and public sectors.

The Futurama 2.0 Initiative Goals:

Propelling American industry to be at the global forefront of transportation and inspiring widespread national participation requires the following goals:

- Place the needs and aspirations of all individuals and communities first
- Ensure maximum opportunities for all types of American industry and business while setting environmental standards that exceed the Paris Climate Agreement
- Carefully balance the advantages of automation with the need for meaningful and gainful employment
- Ensure healthy opportunities for co-creation and inclusive procedures in the planning and implementation of new solutions and their systems
- Ensure fair play, transparency and constructive collaboration between the private and public sectors
- Communicating these goals in a visually compelling and evocative manner that brings together industry, government and community leaders to take the steps today that will make the Futurama 2.0 vision a reality

Extraordinary nations require extraordinary solutions – and extraordinary solutions require an extraordinary team.

We believe that designing this future transportation vision requires the thoughtful, careful assembly of a creative, knowledgeable multi-disciplinary, collaborative team managed according to best design and storytelling practices.

Best design practices assume the meaningful input and feedback of citizens, communities and enterprises that will be the beneficiaries of the new vision. Best design practices include thorough, iterative cycles of research, future forecasting, evaluating insights and ideas until final, holistic solutions can be developed that all stakeholders can be confident in.

Best storytelling practices, assume the creation of a common visual language that allows a diverse group of stakeholders to communicate with each other in a manner that fosters collaboration and an understanding of the broader goals and objectives. Best storytelling practices allow people to envision that preferred future that they want to live in, and to take the steps today to start making that future a reality.

The nucleus of the extraordinary team needed to do this is already in place. Muyres and Wardle have teamed up with Experimental Design and together will assemble and facilitate the experts, designers, technologists and storytellers needed to contribute to the Futurama 2.0 Vision. This collaboration will bring to life America's transportation future that will inspire all stakeholders to make it a reality.

Creating the Vision:

The Futurama 2.0 Initiative proposes to deliver to the Transportation Secretary's administration a comprehensive, compelling, high-resolution, multi-media presentation comprising clear and evocative visual and verbal narratives about many future transportation scenarios within an integrated, national framework. We propose delivering this by mid 2022 with a preliminary 'thin-slice snapshot' sample of our complete work about three months after starting. This will allow the Transportation Department to gain confidence in the eventual outcome.

We will assemble a multi-disciplinary team of highly creative design professionals, media-makers, experts, students and independent advisors representing a diverse cross-section of disciplines,. They will be collaborators in imagining and visualizing highly innovative solutions across the entire transportation landscape to include the built environment, infrastructure and planning. Using the best design and storytelling practices described above, multiple journey narratives and visualizations will describe how our

transportation systems and networks need to be in 20 – 50 years hence - for people, goods, energy and security. These will be in the form of highly realistic, digitally represented scenarios. They will be comprehensive and clearly communicate how these transportation systems will serve and benefit a broad array of people and enterprises from rural areas to to suburbs to inner cities. Audiences will enjoy and be provoked by an immersive, believable experience.

Conclusion:
The Futurama 2.0 Initiative believes that creating this Transportation Vision is a powerful way of inspiring government and citizens alike to make informed, societal, environmental, political and economic choices today to save our planet while rejuvenating communities and improving the quality of life for all.

The original Futurama exhibit was extraordinary and physical. Our vision will be extraordinary and digital, so that once the Transportation Department has decided how to move forward, it can be shared fluidly, rapidly and broadly with other stakeholders to guarantee that the Administration is able to convince them all to enthusiastically take on these significant American and global challenges.

America needs a Futurama 2.0 Transportation Vision process and now is the time to begin.

Please support us on this journey.