Viola Hernandez

DIGITAL PRODUCT LEAD | TRANSIT ECOSYSTEM

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English · Cantonese · Mandarin (B2) · Spanish (A2)

After 8 years of managing interconnected digital transit products in a small (but mighty!) operations team, I've gotten pretty good at turning government red tape and user feedback into features that genuinely advocate for the rider. My combined UX and business background allows me to comfortably act as the translator between legacy GovTech, transit staff, and the everyday rider (who is also me). Thus, my self-serving intention to improve my own commute gets extra motivating. That, and I really just don't like driving.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE & SELECT PROJECTS

Web Project Coordinator (Product & UX Design Lead)
2016–2024

York Region Transit (YRT)

- **Product Strategy & Roadmap Prioritization:** Steered the digital product lifecycle across YRT's interconnected digital ecosystem (web, mobile, and hardware), negotiating feature priorities and leading large-scale initiatives from RFP scoping and change management to launch
- **Vendor & Stakeholder Management:** Directed external agencies and partnered with internal transit teams as key clients, navigating competing priorities to build consensus and align stakeholders around a shared vision
- **UX Research & Alignment:** Bridged the gap between rider needs and government constraints, leading end-to-end UX research and leveraging prototyping to secure buy-in
- **Requirements Gathering & Backlog:** Managed product workflows and issues via Jira and Salesforce, triaging user feedback and translating pain points into actionable functional requirements for IT and engineering teams
- **Data-Dense Design:** Designed interfaces for public platforms and real-time transit hardware, translating complex data-heavy information into accessible, plain-language user flows

YRT.ca Website Redesign — *Product Lead*

Unified a fragmented transit platform through **2 large-scale redesign initiatives**, driving cross-functional alignment of **10+ teams** to deliver a cohesive digital experience supporting **4M+ unique annual visits**

Transit Feedback Form — *Product Lead/UX Designer*

Designed a plain-language frontend that optimizes user flows, minimizing manual triage for **30k+ quarterly customer cases** and improving staff response times

Customer Self-Serve Portal — *Product Lead/UX Designer*

Dictated core features of a public knowledge base designed to automate service and **alleviate bottlenecks of 100k+ support calls**, redirecting executive strategy to protect the rider experience

Real-Time Digital Transit Displays — *UX Designer*

Designed UIs for departure boards and next-stop screens across **500+ buses** and **15 transit facilities**, optimizing legibility for dynamic data within hardware constraints

Health Marketing Coordinator (Proposal Lead)
2013–2016

CannonDesign Architecture

- Managed cross-functional teams across multiple time zones to deliver multi-million dollar RFP submissions, contributing to **over $500M in secured healthcare projects**.
- Navigated strict institutional procurement guidelines, combining market research and strategic storytelling to ensure competitive bid positioning

EDUCATION & CERTIFICATIONS

Master of Digital Media (MDM) — 2026
Toronto Metropolitan University

Certificate in User Research (UXR) — 2021
Akendi · Certification ID 39766375

Certificate in User Experience Design (UXD) — 2019
Akendi · Certification ID 13312524

Joint Bachelor: Business Admin (BBA), Design (BA) — 2013
Simon Fraser University · Marketing & Interaction Design

AWARDS & PUBLICATIONS

Websites, Award of Excellence — 2020
APEX Awards, York Region Transit Website
Product Lead for YRT (shared)

Digital Media - Websites, Gold Winner — 2019
MarCom Awards, York Region Transit Website
Product Lead for YRT (shared)

Can You Hear the Halcyons Sing?
Children's advanced illustrated book · ISBN 9781738788309
Available in select Canadian public libraries and online retailers

CORE COMPETENCIES & TECHNICAL TOOLS

Product Delivery	Roadmapping · Requirements Gathering · Vendor Management · RFP Procurement · Change Management
UI/UX Design & Research	End-to-End Product Design · Wireframing · Rapid Prototyping · Usability Testing · UAT · Accessibility
Tools & Tech	Salesforce · Jira · GitHub · Google Analytics · Adobe Creative Suite · Figma · Claude · Drupal