Module 4: Deep Dive
Communicating the Value of TSMO

Courtesy:

Regional Operations Forum Training Program

American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO)

U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration

ITS Heartland Chapter

Nebraska Department of Transportation

Iowa DOT

Missouri Department of Transportation

U.S. Department of Transportation Federal Highway Administration
Session Purpose

• Introduce Communicating the Value of TSMO

• Provide understanding of:
  • What is Communicating the Value of TSMO about?
  • Why is it important?
  • What are the benefits?
  • Leadership actions for communicating
What is Communicating the Value of TSMO?

• Conveying key messages to various audiences to help them understand why TSMO is valuable

• Articulating the business case for TSMO
Words Can Make the Difference

- Transportation Systems Management and Operations
- TSMO
- Management and operation
- Operations
- Managing the system

How does your agency talk about it?
Regional Operations Forum Training Program

Why is it Important?

- Creates understanding of the need to manage transportation system
- Advances knowledge and acceptance of TSMO as a tool for managing transportation
- Drives investments toward TSMO strategies
- Builds and sustains a TSMO culture
What are the Benefits?

- Generates support from key stakeholders
- Demonstrates efficiency and effectiveness of TSMO strategies
  - Impacts need to be demonstrated and explained to gain support and acceptance
- Presents agency as a good steward of public resources
  - Choosing solutions that best address problems within constraints
Leadership Actions for Communicating

- Define and know your audience
- Build the case
- Identify opportunities to engage
Define and Know Your Audience

• Who is your audience?
  • Elected officials and regional leadership
  • Agency leadership
  • Other functional areas
  • Partner agencies
  • Private sector
  • And the public too!

Recommended Product
• SHRP2 L17 Business Case Primer: Communicating the Value of TSMO
# Define and Know Your Audience

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Target Audience</th>
<th>Decide or recommend funding?</th>
<th>Part of my Network?</th>
<th>If no, then who can help me (“Influencer”)?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Sarah Jones, Chief Engineer</td>
<td>Yes --- decides budget allocation for all engineering programs; recommends lists of projects to include in TIP</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>John Smith, Assistant Chief Engineer</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>John Smith, Assistant Chief Engineer</td>
<td>Yes --- recommends allocation of state funds among state funded programs</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Mary Henderson, Safety Program Manager</td>
<td>Yes—recommends allocation of Safety Program funds to individual projects</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Harrison County MPO Board</td>
<td>Yes --- approves improvements to be put in long range plan and projects to receive funding in MPO TIP</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>DOT Planning and Programming Division Director; Carrie Peterson, DOT Liaison to Harrison County MPO</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Carrie Peterson, DOT liaison to Harrison County MPO</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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</table>
Define and Know Your Audience

- Understand their interests and concerns
  - What operational issues (e.g., congestion, safety, access) have they talked about most?
  - Are their responsibilities long or short-term?
  - What areas of responsibility are most important to them?
Define and Know Your Audience: Elected Officials

• What do we know about them?
  • Limited time to address any issue
  • Their own interest areas
  • Very dependent on staff for details
  • Interpersonal relationships key to getting things done
  • Like to be given credit and recognition
  • Sensitivity to fiscal constraints
  • Jargon—elected officials prefer “plain speak”

• And remember – elected officials like to get re-elected!
Build the Case

• Once you identify and understand the problem that needs to be solved
• Then, explain how TSMO strategies will solve the problem
Build the Case: Decision-Maker

Problem/Issue
Growing congestion and travel disruptions due to crashes, construction, weather, and other event makes it increasingly difficult for transportation agencies to provide safe and efficient travel on the highway system.

Solution
We have learned that we cannot build our way out of congestion. Incident management, managed lanes, synchronized signals, active traffic management, and other strategies are available to keep traffic moving.

Message
TSMO policies and strategies offer immediate benefits at lower cost than new construction to address congestion.
Build the Case

- Remember the public is an important audience and influencer
  - Decision-making taxpayers
  - Agency reputation
  - Importance of customer service
- Some strategies are more visible than others
  - Traveler information
  - Freeway service patrol
Build the Case: Houston Signal Timing

- Performance measures used as compelling proof
  - 20% time savings for synchronized signals
  - 20 min vs. 16 min average trip
  - Reducing delay saves fuel
  - 800 of 2,300 signals timed this year
  - Analysis and updates as conditions change
Identify Opportunities to Engage

- Effective communication is not just one contact or single event
- Opportunities may be formal…
  - Meetings, presentations, newsletters
- …or they may be informal
  - Email, “elevator speech”
Identify Opportunities to Engage: Decision Makers

Get them involved

- Keynote or panelist at professional meetings
- Applies to agency executives and external leaders

Legislative outreach plan

- Collaborate on strategies to engage officials and their staff
- Make elected officials part of strategy and solutions
Identify Opportunities to Engage: Media

**Educate media about transportation issues**

- Informational “media summits”
- Educate new traffic reporters

**Collaborate with your PIOs**

- They have best relationships with media outlets
- They know what will resonate with the public
Discussion

• What are some ways the value of TSMO can be described in your region?
• What tools are available in your agency to communicate the value of operations?
• What messages can you share to shape the perception of TSMO?
• What are some ways that you can better engage PIO staff and media to help advance your message?
Communicating the Value of TSMO Resources

• SHRP2 L17 Business Case Primer Communicating the Value of TSMO

• SHRP2 L31 Operations in the 21st Century DOT: Meeting Customer Expectations
  • https://www.nap.edu/read/22543/chapter/1

• AASHTO Subcommittee on Transportation Communications
  • https://communications.transportation.org/

• NOCoE – Why TSMO?
  • https://transportationops.org/business-case