Transportation Policy Forum

Communicating Reauthorization
August 9, 2019

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Session Goals

• Overview of current transportation communications – Everyone is talking about “transportation.” Are you listening?
  ▪ Examples of the “conversation”
  ▪ Current & past research
  ▪ What has AASHTO done in the past?
  ▪ What are other associations doing?
  ▪ Q&A

• Discussing the parts of a communication plan

• Wrap up/Closing comments
The Conversation

• Popular media can serve as a barometer measuring how people perceive the world around them.

• **Remember:** What you say is not as important as what people hear.

• **Two key questions:** What do people WANT to know; and, what do you NEED them to know.
What does the research say?

• Most successful revenue efforts use a combination of common strategies:
  ▪ Commitment to accountability, reform, performance reporting
  ▪ Establish broad coalition beyond self-interest groups
  ▪ Build partnerships between local agencies and state
  ▪ Clearly demonstrated need (RELATABLE TO THE PUBLIC)
  ▪ Clear benefits to people
  ▪ Leadership from executive and legislative branch
NCHRP 20-24(93)C Research

• Reviewed 27 transportation funding campaigns and associated messaging … and learned:

“Successful messages: Mobility, economic benefits, and comprehensive strategy. The campaigns were specific and answered, ‘What’s in it for me.’”
• Participants shared their key themes:
  ▪ Accountability (Past, Present, Future)
  ▪ Individual benefits (What do I get?)
  ▪ Economy (more local the better)
  ▪ Mobility (freedom to move)
  ▪ Organizational transparency
Recent Reauthorization History

AASHTO’s recent ‘campaigns’

• 2007-2011 – “Are We There Yet?”
  Integrated multi-year campaign
• 2014 – “Invest” Infographic & website
• 2015 – “Future of Transportation” video
Without a strong transportation network, America goes nowhere. And without federal investment, our system falls apart.

What happens to our economic future if the Highway Trust Fund (HTF) dead-ends?
Investment hasn’t kept up.

- 30% population growth
- 48% decline in purchasing power

Sources: US Census, Bureau of Labor Statistics, AASHTO
Infrastructure continues to fail.

54% of America's major roads are rated poor or mediocre.

Source: TRIP.
1 IN 4

BRIDGES NEEDS **SIGNIFICANT REPAIR**
OR CAN’T HANDLE TODAY’S TRAFFIC

Source: AASHTO
45% of Americans don't have access to transit.
BY 2030, WE’LL SEE A
25% INCREASE
in overall vehicle travel

64% INCREASE
in travel by large commercial trucks
GRIDLOCK Ahead

Loss of MAP-21 funding and HTF insolvency will endanger our economy and mobility.
$51 BILLION IN MAP-21 funding will EXPIRE IN FY2014

THE HTF IS PROJECTED TO BE INSOLVENT BY SEPTEMBER 2014

Source: FHWA, FTA
660,000
US JOBS WILL BE IN JEOPARDY

That’s more people than live in ...

ATLANTA or BOSTON or SEATTLE

Source: P presentation

AASHTO
TROUBLE FAST APPROACHING FOR STATES

AT LEAST

6,000 PROJECTS MAY STOP IN THEIR TRACKS

Source: AASHTO Member Survey

AASHTO
BECAUSE
WITHOUT FEDERAL INVESTMENT
states can’t
BEAR THE BURDEN

STATE SHARE
WITH MAP-21  55%

STATE SHARE
WITHOUT MAP-21  100%

SHARE OF FUNDING FOR HIGHWAY AND TRANSIT PROJECTS

Source: Congressional Budget Office, AASHTO
DECISION Point

The Highway Trust Fund needs a long-term, sustainable source of funding to keep America on the right path.
What are other associations saying?

• Theme #1: What’s at risk … congestion, loss of jobs, crumbling infrastructure
• Theme #2: Call to action … “Tell Congress to act”
From the AASHTO Journal, June 28, 2019:

The Transportation Construction Coalition and the U.S. Chamber of Commerce-led Americans for Transportation Mobility issued a joint news release that said the campaign would lean heavily on social media to generate grassroots support and to keep pressure on Congress and the Trump administration to collaborate on a permanent fix to the federal Highway Trust Fund, as well as a new transportation infrastructure package.
It's time to permanently fix the Highway Trust Fund

By BLOOMBERG NEWS \nBLOOMBERG NEWS

On the eve of infrastructure week, a new administration is poised to make a historic investment in the nation's transportation system. The bill that could pass this week aims to reform the Highway Trust Fund, which has been underfunded for years.

The fund is designed to pay for critical infrastructure improvements, such as roads, bridges, and public transit systems. However, it has been consistently underfunded, leading to subpar maintenance and repair work.

The bipartisan bill that is expected to pass this week would provide a long-term solution to the funding crisis. It would increase the gas tax, which is the primary source of revenue for the fund, and redirect funds from other programs.

This move is critical, as the nation's transportation infrastructure is in dire need of modernization. Repairs and maintenance are often neglected, leading to a decline in the quality and safety of transportation networks.

Investing in our transportation infrastructure is essential to the nation's economic development. It will create jobs, improve safety, and enhance mobility for all Americans.

Congress must act now to ensure that the Highway Trust Fund is adequately funded. This is a once-in-a-generation opportunity to make a meaningful investment in our nation's future.
Behind Every Product Campaign

5 videos • 391 views • Last updated on Jul 11, 2019
Communication Planning

• Every good plan has:
  ▪ Goal/objective
  ▪ Target audiences
  ▪ Key messages (no more than three)
  ▪ Strategies/tactics
  ▪ Measurement (definitions of success)
What do roads mean to you?
Communication Plan

• **Proposed Goal**: Inform and educate target audiences about AASHTO’s reauthorization priorities
Communication Plan

• Reauthorization Messaging: AASHTO’s Emphasis on Safety; Quality of Life; Economic Opportunity
Communication Plan

- **Target Audiences:**
  - Congress (staff & members)
  - 3rd party advocates
  - general public
  - “media”
Communication Plan

• Strategies/Tactics:

• Measuring Success: