

Outreach Plan Training Transcript (09-28-2021)

Speaker – Deb Curtis

So, let us take a few minutes to review the program.

Although most of you are already familiar with it.

Next slide, please.

So, this is a high-level summary of the complete trip ITS4US program.

As you can see there are multiple partners involved with this initiative with the goal of deploying innovative and integrated trips to support mobility for all users with a particular focus on underserved communities.

So, as you can see here, this involves the lead ITS Joint Program Office from the US Department of Transportation, but also involves the Federal Highway Administration and the Federal Transit Administration. This will allow us to take revolutionary steps to integrate advanced technologies, especially those that enable Administration. We are looking to make these large-scale deployments that are replicable and address the challenges of planning.

And executing all segments of the complete trip.

We would like to target all users across all modes regardless of location, income, or disability.

Speaker: Deb Curtis

Next slide, please.

So, we have 5 program goals.

And these program goals are spur high impact, integrated complete trip deployments nationwide, this first goal is to assist the transportation industry in tackling the difficult challenge of providing complete trips for all travelers nationwide by streamlining and expediting solution development.

Through pilot deployment.

Yes.

High impact, replicable integrated solutions developed by these pilot deployments.

Will reduce the cost of future deployments of these critical personal mobility enhancements.

The second goal is to identify needs and challenges by populations.

The needs and of the communities to support mobile mobility options for all travelers, regardless of location, income, or disability are important populations within each community have different needs and challenges for accessing transportation options to improve their quality of life.

The third goal is to develop and deploy mobility solutions that meet user needs.

This will allow us to take revolutionary steps to integrate advanced technologies, especially those that enable adaptive and assistive transportation technologies into the management and operations of the transportation network, including non-motorized modes.

Here we are.

Our goal is to engage key partners within the federal government.

The research community, stakeholder organizations, and private industry to support development of potential solutions for all travelers.

The fourth goal is to quantify and evaluate the impact of the integration of these advanced technologies strategies and applications.

The improvement of safety and mobility of all travelers, quantified impact support, communication of technology benefits to future deployers.

And decision makers.

And finally, the fifth goal is to determine which technologies, strategies, applications and institutional partnerships demonstrate the most potential to address identified barriers to providing complete trips to all travelers in a variety of communities and build environments.

This we also.

The goal is to disseminate the lessons learned from replicable solutions developed by the deployment sites to catalyze additional deployment.

The systems engineering process that we are going to talk about is critical to all of these goals.

Next slide, please.

The US Department of Transportation has awarded five teams with Phase One funding to support the development of their deployment concepts. These five deployment sites include the University of Washington, California Association of Coordinated Transportation, Heart of Iowa Regional Agency.

ICF International in Buffalo, NY, and the Atlanta Regional Commission. Next slide please.

There are three deployment phases, and one post deployment phase.

Participants are currently in the first phase concept development where they will develop their ideas to ensure future success in later phases.

They will test and evaluate their projects.

The deployments are expected to sustain operation for at least five years after the program is completed. Next Slide Please.

Speaker: Danielle Blackshear

Alrighty, next slide please.

Hello everybody and good afternoon. My name is Danielle Blackshear, and I am a transportation specialist with the Federal Highway Administration's Office of Human Environment.

I specialize in the areas of transportation, equity and public involvement, mobility, innovation and emerging technologies, and I lead our national scenic byways program.

Today I will be leading the task 11 training on outreach plans.

Next slide please.

Our agenda today will cover a brief overview of the task 11 outreach activities that were discussed during the kickoff meeting, and the remaining time will be spent covering the major sections of the outreach plan template, which you should have received by email prior to this meeting.

Lastly, we'll wrap up with some helpful resources and ways to reach out in case you happen to have any follow up questions as you develop your plan.

Next slide.

Ok, so let's dive in with our outreach plan overview.

Next slide please.

In general, the outreach plan is a high-level plan that covers all outreach activities for the deployment project to media, researchers, and other stakeholders.

Next slide.

This diagram shows how the outreach plan relates to other key deliverables within the project. For inputs to the outreach plan, we have the stakeholder and objects identified in the ConOps and training plan.

As a reminder, you will be working on your training plan at the same time as the outreach plan.

Then, for outputs, the outreach plan will be used to document the media strategy and schedule for the integrated complete trip deployment plan and deployment briefing.

Next slide.

The outreach task has two deliverables. The first is the draft outreach plan that is due 40 weeks after the kickoff. This falls on November 29th.

And the final outreach plan that addresses all USDOT comments is due on December 27th, which is about one month after the draft plan.

So I just wanted to make a note that both of these due dates are around major holidays, so please plan accordingly and let your COR know in advance in case you foresee any significant challenges.

So that is Thanksgiving and Christmas, for those of you who are not aware.

Next slide.

On September 21st USDOT shared the deliverable template to facilitate efficient document development and review. This template includes the four major outreach plan components outlined in the BAA.

The first is the media strategy which details what you want to achieve with your communication efforts. This includes communication objectives, target audiences, strategy, and actions.

Next is the internal communication strategy which describes how communications will be coordinated with USDOT and between project teams for the deployment.

Then you have the communication platforms. This outlines the stakeholders you are trying to reach with your communication platform and how frequently.

Note, it is important to consider the communication needs of different stakeholder groups, especially for people with disabilities.

And finally, there's the marketing plan which provides a detailed plan and schedule for all active outreach activities, audiences, and platforms.

Next slide, please.

Ok, so the next several slides we will take a closer look at the various sections of the outreach plan template.

Next slide.

The introduction of the outreach plan provides general context for the reader.

As a reminder, the outreach plan addresses the high-level plans for management of outreach activities and development of outreach materials throughout all phases of the project.

For the project overview, briefly provide an overview of the overall project including goals and your intended outcomes, as well as major components of the project.

Also be sure to emphasize the elements where there are planned interactions with participants.

The introduction should also inform readers of the topics that will be covered throughout the plan and make note of any assumptions or risks that are relevant to the outreach plan when appropriate.

Content should be reused or duplicated from previous project reports.

So this is important at the start of the project overview section for the draft version, teams are requested to include a note to the reviewers using italics to indicate where content has already been approved by USDOT for a previous document and where there are changes or new content that the reviewers should be aware of.

So that's italics to emphasize old material and new material.

This may reduce conflict in comments that are received from reviewers who may not have read all prior documents.

Next slide.

Section 2 of the template is the media strategy.

This section should list the communication objectives, target audiences, and media approach for engaging local and national press in coordination with USDOT.

The communication objectives are the key project messages to be delivered by the site team.

The target audience should include key stakeholder groups that the site team has interacted with, as well as other organizations to include media outlets and organizations, advocacy groups and social services organizations, and the general public.

The outreach media approach should include short descriptions of how the site will utilize each piece of the outreach media approach.

You should explain the objective for each outreach and describe the level of site deployment content that you envisioned to be shared.

Also, the media strategy should address outreach strategies to promote the deployment locally, including special outreach efforts to include advocacy and social service organizations.

This section of the plan should describe the strategy for promoting community awareness of the site deployment.

So I just want to give you guys a few quick helpful tips related to the actual template.

So see Section 5.2 of the template for suggested information on the phase two and three outreach that should be incorporated in this section as appropriate.

Section 4 will include an in-depth description of the outreach activities and communication platforms that are identified in this section.

So I know I'm giving you guys a few section references and don't worry about memorizing all of this. You can obviously reference the template and we can discuss it during the question section if you have any follow up to this.

Next slide.

Section 3, communication management, describes how communications for the site deployment will be coordinated within the site team, other site projects, and USDOT.

Under roles and responsibilities, you'll list the roles and responsibilities for developing and implementing the outreach materials and activities identified in this plan.

It is a requirement to identify a site outreach lead and a site outreach spokesperson. Contingency plans and a flow down of responsibilities associated with these two roles, at a minimum, must also be documented in this plan.

A cross indexing of activities and materials, and responsible staff is suggested.

Coordination with the USDOT. This should detail media coordination with USDOT and interactions with other Complete Trip ITS4US Deployment Program efforts. Describe the approval process and include points of contacts and review timeframes.

Sites are responsible for clearing expectations for events with USDOT and how you all believe materials will be reused and redistributed.

As a reminder, deployment sites will need to participate in a coordination call with the USDOT ITS JPO communication lead for logistics and staff arrangements before every USDOT sponsored event.

The outreach team communication plan will outline one or more key use cases where team coordination and the approval process are followed.

A few examples include media request for an on-site visit and stakeholder interview, request for detailed technical material to be shared, vendor and supplier interactions with the media, social media content vetting and distribution, and crisis communications which must be coordinated with the safety management plan.

Next slide.

Section 4, communication platforms outlines which platforms the site team will use and for which audiences, how frequently communications will take place, and how the site team will meet accessibility needs.

Sites should state which outreach activities within the outlined communication platforms fulfill the requirements for the BAA.

Note that Section 5 public relations and marketing plan, which will cover shortly, will address outreach material development, and include specific planned activities and events, dates, locations, and other outreach schedule information.

Please see section 5.2 for suggested information on the phase 2-3 outreach that should be incorporated as appropriate in this section. This slide and the next provide a few examples of communication platforms.

However, this list is not exhaustive and communication platforms should be tailored to reflect the specific plans of the site outreach media approach detailed insight section 2.3.

For example, when public meetings are planned, meetings should be held in buildings that are fully accessible, with meeting rooms that will accommodate wheelchairs and other mobility devices. Microphones should be available and everyone should be required to use them.

Please try to avoid using acronyms, insider jargon, and technical terms to ensure that you are communicating effectively with people who may not be familiar with the deployment.

For workshops, conferences, and tradeshow, if the site proposes a certain outreach activity that may not necessarily be a formal conference open to the public, but could still be a relevant large meeting, for example in all state MPO meeting, please provide a brief rationale for selecting that activity.

Next slide.

Another example is local community outreach.

Describe how the site will engage the local community and recruit participants. Activities can include local meetings and publishing articles in local newspapers.

Next, slide.

As I mentioned earlier, Section 5 should describe the site deployment end-to-end professional development and delivery of materials and events with language and accessibility accommodations.

Accessibility accommodations may include, but are not limited to braille, large print, flash drives, electronic files, accessible web content, closed captioning services, interpretation in multiple languages- including American Sign Language, translation services, and physical accessibility.

This section should describe detailed plans and a schedule for all outreach activities, audiences, and platforms.

For outreach material development and delivery, include whether materials will be developed in electronic and/or hard copy formats.

Also, describe the language and accessibility accommodations that will be addressed and incorporated for each type of material.

For your detailed plan and schedule of outreach activities, the use of tables is highly encouraged to facilitate ease of information presentation, tracking and updating, and review.

Next slide please.

This section provides event and publication options for fulfilling the BAA outreach requirements.

Outside of the mandatory events, there is a responsibility of the sites to propose site specific outreach activities. Sites must provide justification for the proposed activities to receive USDOT approval.

For conferences in future years, where exact dates may not be known, sites should include the approximate timing or best estimate of the conference. So an example of this would be March 2023.

Next slide.

Section 6, outreach effectiveness, describes how the site will assess the impact of the outreach activities.

The deployment outreach plan will be revised in phase two and updated as needed.

Examples of measures for the success criteria include but are not limited to, number of website visits, number of project video views, number of followers on social media, and the number of click throughs from social media blasts.

Next slide please.

Alright, so now we're going to wrap up with a few final thoughts.

Next slide.

This slide provides a series of key references to help with the writing of the outreach plan. Project teams should review Webinar #2 slide deck and recording, which are posted on the ITS4US program website. Additional references include information on 508 accessibility and communicating with people with disabilities.

Next slide.

I just wanted to make a quick note on this slide that the link for a guide to interacting with people who have disabilities has a spelling error in the word disabilities.

But that error is needed for the link to work, so just click on the link and don't try to auto correct because it will not work for you.

Next slide.

Alright and then lastly, for more information and ways to stay connected feel free to reach out to Elina or myself, Danielle Blackshear, and check out the ITS4US Program website.

Next slide.

And that is the end.

Are there any questions?