

Scenario Planning Program Video Narrative Text

Hello. This video will provide you with a brief overview of scenario planning. It will also share some of the resources that we, the United States Department of Transportation (DOT), Federal Highway Administration, (FHWA), offer to agencies interested in conducting scenario planning.

Scenario planning is a technique that helps assess and prepare for possible future conditions. Each scenario tells a different, plausible story about the future. Using input from the public and other stakeholders, agencies can create scenarios that incorporate a wide variety of factors, such as housing, employment, socioeconomic trends, environmental features, vehicle miles traveled, and others. The specific factors incorporated in scenarios will depend on what the agency hopes to accomplish in its scenario planning effort.

By creating several different scenarios, agencies can better assess what might occur in the future for a given region or area. As a result, agencies are able to make more informed decisions about how to plan for the future.

FHWA supports scenario planning as an enhancement of the traditional transportation planning process. The technique can help agencies and stakeholders compare choices and consequences to make better decisions; identify change affecting communities and regions; and better understand the complex relationships that exist between transportation and social, environmental, and economic factors.

We established our scenario planning program in 2004 as part of an initiative associated with the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users. The program is supported by FHWA's Surface Transportation Environment and Planning Cooperative Research Program. It is also part of the Transportation Planning Capacity Building Program (TPCB) sponsored by FHWA and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA). TPCB provides information, training, and technical assistance to transportation professionals across the Nation. More information on TPCB is available at the following website: www.planning.dot.gov.

FHWA and FTA already work closely together on TPCB efforts and plan to collaborate more on scenario planning in the future. Additionally, FHWA and FTA are working with the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) on scenario planning as part of the USDOT, EPA, and HUD Partnership on Sustainable Communities.

As part of our program, we offer customized workshops for agencies interested in scenario planning. Peer speakers typically attend these workshops to share lessons learned, tips, and success factors with a host agency. We also offer biannual webinars on a variety of scenario planning topics and share resources, such as a scenario planning guidebook, with agencies across the country. More information about our workshops, webinars, and other resources are available on our website at:

http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/planning/scenario_and_visualization/scenario_planning/index.cfm.

The website includes a link to an online application for agencies interested in applying to receive a customized scenario planning workshop or webinar. Clicking the link will take you to the application on the TPCB website. We encourage interested agencies to view this website for more details and to apply.

The next scenes illustrate a workshop that FHWA co-sponsored in April 2011 along with the Southwest Washington Regional Transportation Council, or RTC, located in Washington State. The RTC is the metropolitan planning organization for Clark County in Vancouver, Washington and the regional transportation planning organization for Clark, Skamania, and Klickitat Counties. The workshop included several sessions and involved

about 60 participants. Vancouver Mayor Pro Tempore Larry Smith kicked off the workshop by welcoming participants. Dean Lookingbill, Director of RTC, explained some of the key issues that Clark County is facing, the workshop's goals, and why RTC believes scenario planning can help the region. Several of our staff then introduced scenario planning and shared examples of notable efforts from around the country. Next, Alan Matheson, the FHWA-sponsored peer speaker, talked to participants about Envision Utah's scenario planning efforts. Envision Utah is a nonprofit organization that works with communities across the state of Utah to help them manage population growth.

In the afternoon, workshop participants had the opportunity to discuss how Envision Utah's approach might be applied to Clark County, and what Clark County could do to get started with scenario planning. As a result of the workshop, RTC plans to work with community partners to engage in scenario planning in the near future.

This video has provided a brief summary of the resources we offer to agencies interested in scenario planning.

We remind you to visit our website to learn more about scenario planning resources or to apply for a customized workshop or webinar. The website also includes contact information for technical staff involved in the program.

We look forward to hearing from you.