Thousands of workers are out on the highways working to improve our transportation system. Slow down in work zones and make sure everyone gets home safe.

America, let's get moving.

March 2009

AreWeThereYet.transportation.org
Are We There Yet? We Can Be!

Campaign Overview

Renewal of the federal surface transportation programs, which expire September 30, must be a top priority for all of us in the transportation industry. Currently, we are spending half of what it would take to meet the needs of our nation’s growing population, demand for freight, and aging roads, bridges, and transit systems. State DOTs have been working to address these immediate challenges, and they have mapped out a comprehensive approach for the future and a path to achieve that vision. A critical element in this effort is to raise awareness with key decision makers.

So, Are We There Yet? We Can Be!

But it will take the combined efforts of us all.

By working collaboratively across the nation—and by using common language and communications—we can ensure that our messages will be heard. The key is repetition. In this folder and toolkit, we have provided you with the campaign theme, graphics, website, factoids, and other information you can use to help spread our message. All of these campaign elements can be customized by state DOTs and modified to reflect your specific interests and concerns.

We all have an enormous task ahead of us and I hope you will take action today and join us in raising your voice in support of a focused and reasonable plan to support the long-term needs of the nation’s transportation system.

John Horsley
AASHTO Executive Director

All of these materials as well as any updates are available online along with AASHTO’s webinar that provides more details on the campaign. Please visit downloads.transportation.org/AreWeThereYet
National Campaign Website and Template

The core of AASHTO's marketing campaign is the website: AreWeThereYet.transportation.org

The website has been designed to offer factual information on the current state of transportation in the country while highlighting AASHTO's authorization proposals. The site also offers important links to additional information, state websites and examples, and associations working toward our common goals.

AreWeThereYet.transportation.org

America: Let's Get Moving!

Half of all of the nation’s transit rail cars have either exceeded their service life or will do so within the next six years.

Why Aren't We There Yet?
→ Aging infrastructure
→ Years of under-investment
→ Economic downturn

How Do We Get There?
→ Rebuild aging infrastructure
→ Reduce congestion
→ Cut fatalities by half
→ Double transit ridership
→ Eliminate bottlenecks for freight
→ Finish projects faster
→ Build smart projects and use smart technologies

Take Action
→ Get the facts
→ Work through coalitions of like-minded people at the state, local and national levels
→ Sign up for the latest news and information
→ Economic Recovery – Yes We Can!
How to Contribute to AreWeThereYet.transportation.org

AASHTO designed the website to be a “one-stop shop” for the upcoming authorization, including information, policy statements, state examples of successful projects, innovative technology, and focused solutions that can be shared with the public, the media, business and community groups and lawmakers.

AASHTO is encouraging states to submit examples of projects, success stories, innovations, positive press stories and other material that bring life to the efforts of state DOTs. Pictures and personal anecdotes from members of the community are especially useful in driving home the message of accountability. To contribute content, send your information to Sherry Conway Appel (sappel@aashto.org or 202-624-7827).

How to Incorporate the Website into Your Communications Strategies

AASHTO designed the site to be user-friendly and can be used as a model template for states to adapt for their own use. In addition to the adaptable graphic elements (found elsewhere in this toolkit), the site itself can be packaged up for deployment in any web environment. It is programmed to be self-standing and uses simple coding (no database or special support software required). Text and graphic elements are easily changed to match a state website or individual pages can be placed in other environments as needed. Contact David Dubov (ddubov@aashto.org, 202-624-3679) for further details or to arrange for transfers of files.

This small, simple button is available to create a link to http://AreWeThereYet.transportation.org from any web page.
A New Platform for Your Video Content

TransportationTV is a new webchannel, created as part of the Are We There Yet? We Can Be! campaign to showcase the best projects, ideas, information and videos occurring in the transportation world today. At www.TransportationTV.org, you’ll find five channels:

- **Transportation 101**, offering an in-depth look at issues like the Highway Trust Fund;
- **View from the Hill**, with interviews from Members of Congress and their staff;
- **Briefing Room**, featuring backgrounders from top leaders in the transportation field;
- **TransportationTV News**, a weekly news update; and
- **Video State-to-State**, offering videos created by state DOTs. Content will include interviews, full-scale productions, public service announcements, or other visual media.
How Can State DOTs Use This New Video Channel?

The “Video State to State” channel will feature one video prominently each month, such as Interviews with your CEOs or governors; project videos; Webcams of your projects; or your state campaign efforts.

States can also take advantage of our new Banner Ad promotion, to link viewers to your campaigns and promotions.

AASHTO will continue to produce national videos that can be customized for your use, through local shots, interviews or local data. In addition to airing on TransportationTV, your videos can be broadcast on state DOT websites, local cable television stations or government access channels. DVD copies can be shared with state political leaders and displayed at public outreach event.

T-TV is seeking your raw video content for national productions. If you shoot it or store it—please consider making the video available to T-TV. T-TV is also your video source.

How to Connect your Media and Stakeholders to TransportationTV

Equipping your constituents with the latest news and information on national transportation developments is a valuable service. You can spread the word through our $10^2$ E-mail Promotion:

- Paste the following text into an e-mail;
- E-mail this to 10 contacts: five news media and five professionals (AAA/Chamber/Contractor Groups/Labor, etc);
- Ask them, in turn, to contact 10 more; and
- Add a link to your website.

Suggested e-mail promotional text, to be sent to your colleagues and media:

Subject Line: New Transportation Webchannel Offers an Inside Look

The Chairman and Ranking Member of the T&I Committee discuss the upcoming transportation authorization process; the nuances of the Highway Trust Fund are revealed; and the chairman of a national commission calls for a 10-cent a gallon gas tax increase. These stories and more can be found at www.TransportationTV.org—the new webchannel exclusively about and for transportation.

Recently launched by American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO), five channels offer the latest information—from smart investments in transportation and news you can use, to insightful interviews with lawmakers, industry and state leaders and transportation users. The site changes weekly, so come back often for the latest. To contribute information or request an interview, contact T-TV’s news manager, Tony Dorsey, at 202-624-3690 or tdorsey@aashto.org.

www.TransportationTV.org is part of AASHTO’s new campaign to build awareness of transportation issues in the run-up to the authorization of a new transportation improvement program. Go to http://AreWeThereYet.transportation.org for more details.
Everybody wants a reliable, safe and congestion-free trip on America’s transportation system. It’s about our quality of life and about keeping our economy moving forward. Getting there will take an increased maintenance of thousands of rapidly aging highways, roads and bridges and the development of new ones to keep up with the growing demand.

Getting there will take continual smart investment, accountable management of transportation infrastructure projects and high-performance results that will keep America’s transportation system the best in the world. We will see our tax dollars being put to good use. We’ll see the tangible results in our communities, as we commute to work, and on our way home.

America is spending less than half of what it would take to bring our transportation network up to speed. Now imagine the future if we had the investment we need.

Everybody can be.
America, let’s get moving!

See toolkit for sample background photos; these may switched out for state-specific images.

Include your DOT logo here.

State-specific statistics can go here. Please use font Berthold Akzidenz Grotesk Bold, size is 16 over 17, tight tracking.

Every photo should have shaded vignette layer applied so that text is read more easily.

“America” can be changed to your state’s name.

Include the campaign URL and a state-specific URL here. Color must be the same as “America, let’s get moving!” Suggested colors: PMS 639 (blue); 7405 (yellow); 604 (yellow); 7413 (orange); 7417 (red); 199 (red); 584 (green); 376 (green)

Area where text copy can be placed

AreWeThereYet.transportation.org
Graphics Tools

Logo Treatments

Use of the Logo

When all three lines of text are used, punctuation should be as follows:

Are We There Yet? (in bubble or not)

We Can Be. America, let's get moving!

When only two lines of text are used, punctuation should be as follows:

Are We There Yet? We Can Be!

Bubble Rules

Version 1 with Bubble

Version 2 with no Bubble

Version 3 with Sun to Side

The bubble enclosing the Are We There Yet? text should only be used when in relation to a person or vehicle. If no person/auto/vehicle is visible in the photo, then the version of the logo without the bubble should be used. See examples below.
Potential Background Photos

You can find these photos on the enclosed DVD as possible options to use for your state-specific marketing pieces. Please follow the style sheet for logo font, color, and placement rules found on page 7. Also, included on DVD, you will find a PDF with layers of photos that also include the logo and text placed on the image in different layers, so that you can pick and choose what should appear on the photo. These photos and all of the toolkit materials are also available at:

downloads.transportation.org/AreWeThereYet

Here are some of the sample photos that you can use for your campaign:
Graphics Tools

The design samples displayed below can all be modified to include your own state-specific photos or text.

Magazine Advertisement Template

In order to replace our text or photos with your state’s text or photos, design software called Illustrator or InDesign should be used. If you need assistance in making these revisions, please contact Erin Grady at egrady@aashto.org.

Bumper Sticker Template

For purchasing information on bumper stickers or buttons, please contact Erin Grady at egrady@aashto.org for prices and ordering information.

Button Template
Postcard Template

Front

JOIN US!

We can be.
America, let's get moving!

Your one source for transportation information.

AreWeThereYet.transportation.org
Contact: Sherry Conway Appel
202.624.7827 or sappel@aashto.org

Back

New Webchannel For and About Transportation

- Transportation 101
- View from the Hill
- Briefing Room
- TransportationTV News
- Video State-to-State

www.TransportationTV.org
Contact: Tony Dorsey
202.624.3690 or tdorsey@aashto.org
Cannister Bannerstand Template

AASHTO’s Plan

* Rebuild aging infrastructure
* Reduce congestion
* Cut fatalities by half
* Double transit ridership
* Eliminate bottlenecks for freight
* Promote sustainable, green solutions
* Finish projects faster
* Build smart projects and use smart technologies

AreWeThereYet.transportation.org
Trade Fair Backdrop Banner Design Template

We can be. America, let's get moving!
Words That Work

Messaging Recommendations from Our Public Opinion Research

State DOTs and AASHTO must be ready with strong, supporting messages about their programs, examples of effective projects, and facts to back up their positions. The language of these messages is critical, painting word pictures in the minds of the listener and illustrating the key issues of accountability, performance and community. Equally important is the use of repetition to bring these messages home across every communications platform, from printed materials to speeches to media interviews.

“Are We There Yet? We Can Be” has the flexibility of being a rallying cry for both national and state concerns. It is anecdotal, populist and familiar, and cuts across the full range of issues. The object is to take the familiar and link it to questions that concern our priorities—for funding, safety, or for whatever challenges are facing your state and the nation.

AASHTO research found that although people grumble about their individual transportation concerns, there is qualified support for raising funds for better projects, but ONLY IF they are presented with a clear roadmap for how and why things will be different in the future.

Some key communications techniques:

• Be consistent in using the same words in every communication—press releases, speeches, the website copy, media interviews and any other verbal or written statement, such as folder covers, programs or events. This will ensure that the audience will walk away with a few big ideas—and ones you have carefully chosen.

• Communicate the individual benefits to each and every user of your transportation system (driver, transit or bicycle rider, or pedestrian, while assuring them that the DOT is a responsible steward of their finances.

• Build your message around three steps in the communications “ladder”:
  – **Step One:** Guarantee accountability as your first priority.
  – **Step Two:** Show that the project is community driven—reflecting the priorities and needs of the drivers and users of the system (and be sure to include state and local decision-makers as primary spokespersons).
  – **Step Three:** Show that the project is performance-driven—on-time and on-budget.

The Value of “Grasstops” and Key Influencers

• State DOT officials are considered the most credible voices on what needs to be done
• At the same time, research has identified some skepticism about these voices
• Independent voices can reinforce the messages
• Influencers vary by state and issue
• Identify them and provide information and opportunities so they can voice their views
Chose Your Words Carefully

• Every message should be supported by “facts and stats” and local examples

• Just as research has shown words that work, there are words that do NOT appear to move the public. (Note, however, that many influencers may be swayed by them, depending on their own interest.)

• Word references that do NOT appear to work with the general public:
  – Lofty and wistful appeals to history and tradition
  – Do the right thing and honor a commitment
  – References to climate change
  – References to China and India, and large dollar amounts

• Concepts That Work
  – Offer an explicit plan of action—not vague platitudes
  – Personalize the message—my street, my company’s trucks, my driving
  – Localize the benefits
  – Provide context for your proposals—not a two or five-cent gas tax, but “an amount equal to a weekly cup of coffee at your local 7-11”
  – Position yourself as offering smart solutions
  – Challenge their worldview
  – Use commonsense comparisons—roads have a lifespan, just like your car
  – Use facts sparingly—and when you do, personalize them or provide a context people can see or visualize

• Words That Work—These words tested well with both the public and opinion leaders
  – Accountable
  – Community-based
  – Performance-driven; on-time, on-budget; and using innovative technologies
  – Fighting earmarks and wasteful Washington spending
  – Fair, open and non-partisan
  – Safety first—safety on our roads (“Even low-cost simple fixes like rumble strips or cable barrier system will drastically reduce highways fatalities, but only if we have the will to pay for them.”)
  – Smart solutions
  – We must invest now, before it’s too late
  – It’s time for greater and smarter investment of our transportation dollars
Words That Work

Campaign Talking Points

Each of these suggested talking points can be localized for your state by including state data, examples and concerns.

• America’s transportation system is suffering from an aging network of highways, bridges and transit and years of under-investment.

• At the same time, travel demands are only increasing—on our highways and our transit systems, and we are seeing a new emphasis being placed on energy savings and green solutions.

• To meet these challenges, officials at the state, local, and federal levels must increase their investments, and implement smart solutions to reduce congestion for travelers, unplug bottlenecks for freight, and improve safety.

• The federal government has a critical and fundamental role in resolving these challenges by adopting a well-funded, long-term surface transportation plan by September 30, 2009.

• AASHTO, in conjunction with state departments of transportation, have a balanced and thoughtful plan that addresses all aspects of the nation’s transportation system.

• Are We There Yet? We Can Be! is a national campaign to raise awareness with the public and decision makers at every level of business and government about the critical needs of our transportation system.

• The campaign stresses three key points: State DOTs are accountable, their projects are community-driven, and their work is performance based—on-time, on-budget and using the most innovative technologies.

• Through a website, television web channel, reports on critical parts of our infrastructure, and events across the country, the campaign will be a "one-stop shop" for information, state examples of successful projects, innovative technology, and focused solutions that can be shared with the public, the media, business and community groups and lawmakers.

• Community and business leaders as well as elected officials can take action through the campaign to keep updated on legislative events, share information, and offer their own insights into the state of transportation today.

• State transportation departments across the country are participating in the campaign through their own websites, events and activities (localize with examples).
Words That Work

National Campaign Factoids

These are used in conjunction with the logo and slogan. Please feel free to build upon these for your own state-specific facts.

America is spending less than half of what it would take to bring our transportation network up to speed. Now imagine the future if we had the investment we need.

In 2007, one-quarter of major roadways in the nation’s major metropolitan areas—Interstates, freeways, and other principal arterial routes—had pavements that were rated in poor condition and provided an unacceptably rough ride to motorists.

One in four of the nation’s bridges are either in need of significant repair or are too narrow to handle today’s traffic.

In 2008, 12 percent of the nation’s bridges had significant deterioration of their deck, supports or other major components.

The average age of the nation’s bridges is 43 years. Most bridges need significant repairs by the time they reach 50 years of age.

Fifty-nine percent of the nation’s transit buses (40-feet or longer) have either exceeded their service life or will do so within the next six years.

Half of all of the nation’s transit rail cars have either exceeded their service life or will do so within the next six years.

The average rush hour commuter spends an additional 38 hours annually—an average work week—stuck in traffic. This figure is up from 14 hours in 1982.

The length of “rush hour” doubled in the nation’s urban areas from three hours in 1982 to six hours in 2005.

Twenty-eight urban areas experience 40 or more hours of delay as a result of traffic congestion.

Almost one half of the nation’s urban Interstates, highways, or freeways are considered congested.

Nearly 80 percent of the nation’s freight moves by trucks on the roads.

Thirteen percent of the nation’s bridges no longer meet current highway standards, often because of narrow lanes, inadequate clearances, or poor alignment with the approaching roadway.

Freight highway bottlenecks are causing hundreds of millions of hours in delays annually, costing almost $8 billion a year.
Words That Work

Draft Speech Content

(Topic: Congestion)

Are We There Yet? That’s the big question that all of us who design, build and manage our nation’s transportation infrastructure must ask ourselves every day on behalf of the people we serve: the millions who rely on those highways, roads, bridges and transit systems every moment of every day. By “there” I mean, are we at a point where the frustration of congestion that all of us feel becomes an experience of the past?

A point where each of us can set out for work, school or other personal journeys knowing that we will get from Point A to Point B in a reasonable and predictably reliable amount of time?

A point where our system is large and flexible enough to accommodate the ever-growing use of our roads and transit?

A point where our state agencies are able to keep up with the repairs and renovation that our aging roads and bridges need to keep up with the volume of traffic?

A point where we can arrest the chronic problem of congestion before it becomes a crisis or a catastrophe?

We’re not there yet.

But to those who despair that they might never see the day when we find a solution to the frustrating congestion that so many of us experience, I’m here to say that there is a solution.

It’s time for greater and smarter investment of our transportation dollars.

[Some details of revenue-generation proposals and other steps the public and public officials can support, including references to the economic stimulus.]

Transportation officials around the country [or in this state] know that the only way we can win your support for these solutions is to continue to invest in ways that are efficient and accountable; in ways that the public can actually see and feel in their communities; and in ways that are achievable through a performance-driven, on-time and on-budget construction process.

[Offer some examples of projects that have had positive local impacts, that were on-time and on-budget, and talk about the careful planning and budgeting process you went through to bring these projects to fruition.]

No, we’re not there yet, but we can be.

And with your support, sound investment at the federal and state levels, and our joint commitment, we will be.

The users of our transportation systems demand it, and they deserve it.
We can be.
America, let’s get moving!