



U.S. Department of Transportation  
Federal Highway Administration

# Advancing Transportation Systems Management and Operations through Scenario Planning

WEB-BASED INFORMATIONAL SESSION



December 2017

COLLABORATIVE CONSIDERATION OF FUTURE OPTIONS

FHWA-HOP-17-052

## Purpose of the Session

The intent of this session is to inform planners, operators, and other transportation systems management and operations (TSMO) practitioners on the use of scenario planning to advance TSMO, including why and when to use it and how to apply the phases of scenario planning to TSMO. This session will provide a general understanding of scenario planning and a framework for applying scenario planning to advance TSMO. This session includes video presentations by workshop instructors and practitioners. It also includes a video question and answer session and demonstrations of how to apply scenario planning in mock TSMO-related cases. Session viewers can use a mock case as a group or individual exercise.

**Scenarios** are stories about the future that help practitioners consider the “what ifs” of tomorrow. Scenario planning offers an interdisciplinary framework in which to engage stakeholders and encourage knowledge sharing, collaborative problem solving and consensus building about the best way forward. It is an iterative process that compares and contrasts interactions between different factors.

## Why is Scenario Planning Valuable for TSMO?

Scenario planning serves to bridge today’s rapidly evolving needs with tomorrow’s exponential changes and unknowns. Use scenario planning for TSMO to:

- Help communities plan for a range of plausible futures rather than a single forecast.
- Facilitate testing of possible decisions and impacts on the future.
- Accommodate uncertainty and ambiguity.
- Identify more robust strategies with which to move forward.
- Provide a forum for engaging a diverse set of stakeholders.
- Encourage futures-oriented and systems-level thinking.
- Foster a more responsive, adaptive, and resilient organization and associated operations plans.

## Free Web-based Informational Session

Regardless of your level of expertise, it has never been easier to learn to apply scenario planning to your planning for TSMO activities. The Federal Highway Administration’s (FHWA)’s web-based informational session delivers this content to your desk or laptop in three simple modules. Together, the modules are about 3 hours in length but can be browsed by topic.

### Module 1: Introduction to Scenario Planning

### Module 2: Scenario Planning to Advance TSMO

### Module 3: Sample Cases of Scenario Planning for TSMO

At the end of the session, participants should be able to:

- Understand various elements, process goals, and future orientations of scenario planning.
- Identify how and when scenario planning can be used in planning for TSMO.
- Identify specific applications for scenario planning in their State or region.

To access the modules, go to <https://ops.fhwa.dot.gov/plan4ops/resources/training.htm>.

### Contact:

Jim Hunt, FHWA Office of Operations  
[Jim.Hunt@dot.gov](mailto:Jim.Hunt@dot.gov) ▪ (717) 221-4422  
Ralph Volpe, FHWA Resource Center  
[Ralph.Volpe@dot.gov](mailto:Ralph.Volpe@dot.gov) ▪ (404) 985-1268

FHWA Planning for Operations Website:

<https://ops.fhwa.dot.gov/plan4ops/index.htm>

The related FHWA publication, *Advancing Transportation Systems Management and Operations through Scenario Planning*, is available at <https://ops.fhwa.dot.gov/publications/fhwahop16016/index.htm>.