# U.S. Department of Transportation

# OPEN GOVERNMENT PLAN
# April 2010 – April 2012

## April 7, 2010

**The Deputy Secretary of Transportation**
WASHINGTON, D,C, 20590

April 7, 2010

I am pleased to present the Open Government Plan for the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT). We proudly publish this plan in accordance with the President's January 21,2009, Memorandum on Transparency and Open Government and the Office of Management and Budget's December 8, 2009, Open Government Directive.

The DOT is responsible for ensuring a fast, safe, efficient, accessible, and convenient transportation system that meets our vital national interests and enhances the quality of life for the American people. In order to achieve this core mission and to better serve our citizens, we believe that it is essential to increase transparency, public engagement, and collaboration in our daily operations.

Since its inception in 1967, DOT has emphasized open communication with States, municipalities, public officials, grantees, and others members of the public with whom we conduct business. The initiatives outlined in our Open Government Plan are designed to continue and enhance this tradition by instituting changes in DOT's policy, culture, and technology. We believe that the changes described below will help make the Department even more open and accessible.

Our plan was developed by a diverse, multimodal group with support from both executive leadership and individual employees. The plan serves as a blueprint for making improvements by: encouraging more effective public participation in rulemaking, releasing high-value data sets, soliciting public comment via the Internet, providing tools for employees to discuss their innovative ideas, and instilling Open Government principles in our business culture.

We at DOT view the issuance of this plan as just a beginning. We are committed to ensuring that the DOT Open Government Plan serves as a foundation for continued innovation in the areas of transparency, participation, and collaboration now and in the future. We welcome your comments and encourage you to send your feedback on this plan to open@dot.gov.

John D. Porcari

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## Executive Summary

The President's Open Government initiative represents a significant shift in the way Federal agencies conduct business and engage the public. The Department of Transportation (DOT) recognizes that the Open Government initiative is about more than adopting new tools and emerging technologies—it is about affecting real policy and internal culture change to ensure that our Department truly becomes even more transparent, participatory, and collaborative both internally and externally. Toward that end, our DOT Open Government Plan looks at the culture, policy and technology issues involved in enhancing the DOT's openness.

**Vision for an Open DOT Culture**

To support our strategic goals, the DOT will pursue organizational excellence through greater transparency, increased citizen and employee collaboration, and more effective public participation while managing the risks associated with openness.

The DOT is pursuing a number of Open Government initiatives in the next two years. We are pleased to announce the following activities that will continue to foster openness with our employees, stakeholders, and the general public:

- **Rulemaking:** The DOT's flagship initiative will explore how we can encourage more effective participation in the rulemaking process. See **Section 4.1** for more information.
- **Data Release and Visualization:** The DOT is developing a more mature data inventory and will continue to release high-value data in open formats. The DOT is developing a platform that will allow topical data to be visualized geographically and put into the context of priority DOT initiatives (i.e., distracted driving, highway infrastructure, etc.). See **Section 4.4.1** for more information.
- **Public Comment:** For the first time, the DOT will provide an Internet-based way for the public to comment on and discuss the DOT Strategic Plan. In the past, comments were submitted via email. In this instance the public will be able to see and discuss each other's comments. See **Section 4.2.2** for more information.
- **Ideation:** Learning from the best practices of other Departments, the DOT will provide a platform for employees to submit and discuss innovative ideas for programs, processes, and technologies. See **Section 4.3.2** for more information.
- **Culture Change:** The DOT is committed to setting a firm foundation for future Open Government initiatives, through updating internal processes over the next two years, including policies, communications plans, training programs, performance management, and sustainable governance. See **Chapter 3** for more information about DOT's strategies to manage this change.

In addition, our plan describes the proposed DOT Open Government goals and objectives that will enable the Department to become more open in the coming years, which are:

- **Increase Agency Transparency and Accountability by:**
  - Presenting in a clear manner DOT information about programs and objectives; and
  - Continuing to release DOT data in a timely manner by proactively making it available online in consistent, open formats, while assuring accuracy and protecting privacy, security, and confidentiality.
- **Apply Citizen Knowledge Through Participation to Government Service by:**
  - Maintaining commitment to collecting and responding to public input on DOT policies and programs in innovative ways.
- **Encourage Collaboration and Innovation by:**
  - Enhancing collaboration with other Federal agencies, the private sector, and other non-government organizations in providing mission-related services.
- **Institutionalize an Open DOT Culture by:**
  - Encouraging commitment to Open Government principles at all levels; and
  - Encouraging a cross-modal, interdisciplinary, collaborative, and engaged workforce through enhanced communication, governance, and guidance regarding Open Government tools and programs.

We have organized our efforts into two phases:

- **2010-2012 – Phase One:** This phase will occur within the next two years. The DOT will focus on foundational steps such as developing or fine-tuning policy, creating a data release process, integrating Open Government principles into existing governance bodies, and pursing initiatives that advance priority Open Government objectives, such as those highlighted above.

- **2012-2015 – Phase Two:** The next iteration of the DOT Open Government Plan will be formally released on April 7, 2012. Phase two will occur after a mature foundation has been established. The DOT will focus on revisiting policies as appropriate, refining communication, outreach, and training efforts, refining initiatives, and developing new initiatives that further our Open Government objectives.

The following pages describe the DOT's approach towards formulating the Open Government Plan (**Chapter 1**), proposed Open Government goals (**Chapter 2**) and strategies (**Chapter 3**), and our initiatives, including the flagship initiative, (**Chapter 4**). The final chapter looks at

compliance and information dissemination requirements (**Chapter 5**).

This plan is a living document. As we continue on the path towards increased transparency, participation, collaboration, and innovation, we will be refining and enhancing our strategic efforts. We welcome public comments regarding the content of this plan at **open@dot.gov**.

# Introduction to the United States Department of Transportation

The United States Department of Transportation (DOT) occupies a leadership role in global transportation with 56,757 dedicated professionals stationed in the U.S. and around the world. The President's fiscal year 2011 budget request for the DOT totals $79 billion and targets the Administration's three transportation priorities of improving transportation safety, investing for the future, and promoting livable communities.

The mission of the Department is to serve the United States by ensuring a fast, safe, efficient, accessible, and convenient transportation system that meets our vital national interests and enhances the quality of life of the American people, today and into the future.

Since its first official day of operation in 1967, the DOT's transportation programs have evolved to meet the economic demands of the Nation. Today, the DOT comprises the Office of the Secretary (OST), the Surface Transportation Board,[1] the Office of the Inspector General (OIG), and the operating administrations (OAs):

- Federal Aviation Administration (FAA)
- Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)
- Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA)
- Federal Railroad Administration (FRA)
- Federal Transit Administration (FTA)
- Maritime Administration (MARAD)
- National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA)
- Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA)
- Research and Innovative Technology Administration (RITA)
- Saint Lawrence Seaway Development Corporation (SLSDC)

[1] With passage of the Interstate Commerce Commission (ICC) Termination Act of 1995 (P.L. 104-88, December 29, 1995), Congress established the Surface Transportation Board within DOT, effective January 1, 1996. Although formally associated with the DOT, the Board is decisionally independent of the DOT and by law "shall not be responsible to or subject to the supervision or direction . . . of any other part of the Department of Transportation." (49 U.S.C. § 703(c)).

## Chapter 1: Formulating the DOT Open Government Plan

The DOT began preparing for the OMB Open Government Directive by designing an Open Government framework to guide the development of our Open Government Plan. This framework is illustrated in **Figure 1**.

**Figure 1: The DOT Open Government Framework**

**Assess:** Understand the current state

**Plan:** Determine direction and tie strategies to outcomes

**Implement:** Make change

**Measure:** Monitor changes in performance metrics

**Improve:** Iterate on the plan and approaches to improve performance

**OCIO:** Office of the Chief Information Officer
**OPD:** Office of Policy
**OGC:** Office of General Counsel
**OCFO:** Office of the Chief Financial Officer
**HR:** Human Resources
**OPA:** Office of Public Affairs
**PMs:** Program/Project Manager

This framework, described in detail on the DOT Web site at http://www.dot.gov/open/, enabled us to quickly identify planning steps; analyze and address the relevant technology, policy, and cultural issues that would impact Open Government activities; and get the best-suited people

involved in Open Government efforts from the very beginning. The organizational chart shown below in **Figure 2** shows the DOT executive sponsors, steering committee, and working groups that helped create the Open Government Plan.

**Figure 2: The DOT Open Government Planning Structure**

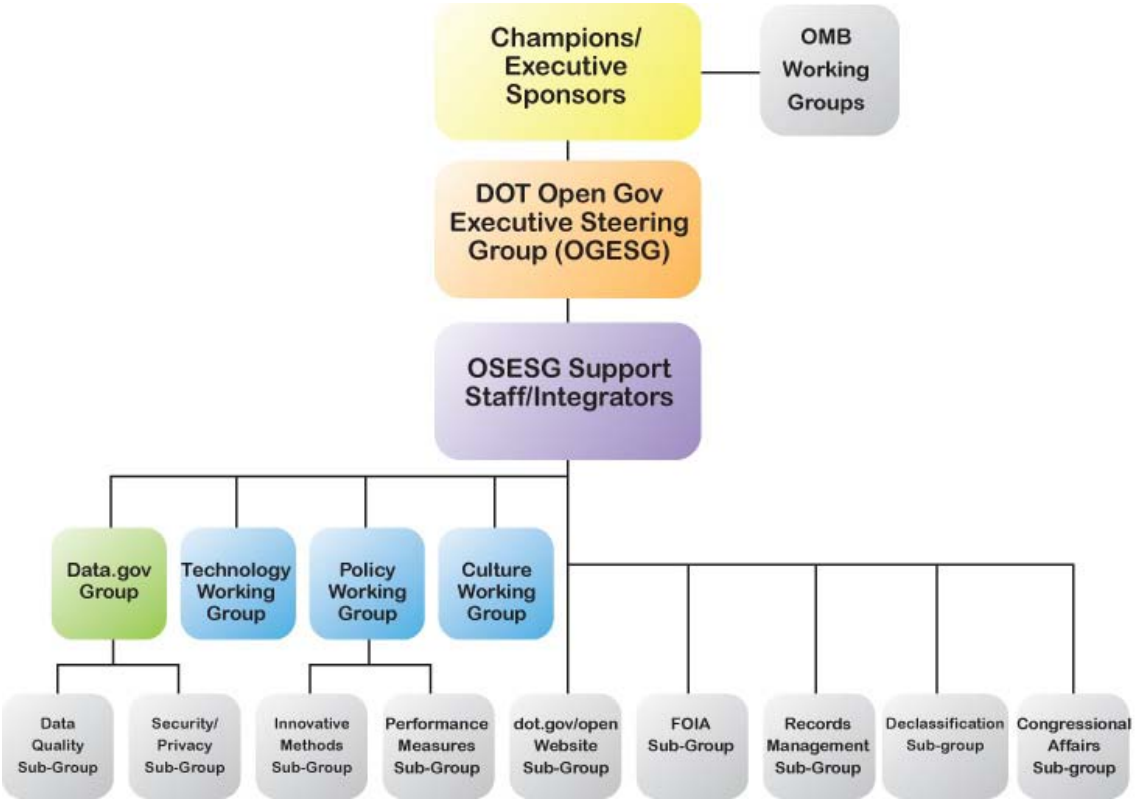



**Table 1: Open Government Groups, Membership, and Focus**

| Name of Group | Membership | Focus |
|---|---|---|
| **Champions/ Executive Sponsors** | Office of the Chief Information Officer (OCIO), Budget and Performance, Administration (Human Resources, Procurement, and Security), Legal, Public Affairs, Policy, and RITA | Sustained agency-wide attention on Open Government activities and promotion of increased transparency, collaboration, and innovation |

| Name of Group | Membership | Focus |
|---|---|---|
| **Open Government Executive Steering Group (OGESG)** | Budget and Performance, Policy, Legal, Administration, Public Affairs, OCIO, FAA, FHWA, FMCSA, FRA, FTA, MARAD, NHTSA, PHMSA, RITA, and SLSDC | Agency-wide technology, policy and culture decisions relating to Open Government efforts |
| **Data.gov Group** | OCIO, Budget and Performance, Legal, Security, Administration, Public Affairs, FAA, FHWA, FMCSA, FRA, FTA, MARAD, NHTSA, PHMSA, RITA, and SLSDC | Data-related issues (quality, confidentiality, privacy, and security) of Open Government efforts |
| **Technology Working Group** | OCIO, Public Affairs, Legal, FAA, FHWA, FMCSA, FRA, FRA, NHTSA, and RITA | Security, infrastructure, and tool implications of Open Government efforts |
| **Policy Working Group** | Budget, Legal, OCIO, Public Affairs, Administration, Policy, Disability Resource Center, FAA, FRA, NHTSA, and RITA | Legal, strategic planning, performance and internal directive components of Open Government efforts |
| **Culture Working Group** | OCIO, Administration, Public Affairs, Dockets, FAA, FHWA, FMCSA, FTA, FRA, and RITA | Stakeholder outreach, employee culture, and new media implications of Open Government efforts |
| **Open Government Sub-Groups** | Subject Matter Experts from all DOT Operating Administrations | Issues of security/privacy, innovative methods, performance measures, Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) compliance, Web site and records management, declassification, and Congressional affairs in relation to Open Government efforts |

Executive sponsors combined with representation from across the Department and across disciplinary fields (i.e., policy, legal, technical) to sustain agency-wide attention to Open Government activities throughout the planning period. The DOT also convened an Open Government Executive Steering Group to oversee the creation of the plan and assign working groups and sub-groups to focus on specific requirements within the Open Government Directive. Overall, nearly 200 DOT employees participated in the effort.

The Open Government Directive also required two senior accountable officials to be selected. Those officials are:

- **Open Government**: H. Giovanni Carnaroli, Associate CIO, Business-Technology Alignment & Governance
- **Financial Quality**: Chris Bertram, Assistant Secretary for Budget and Programs/CFO
- **Email:** open@dot.gov

The DOT will share materials and tools relating to our Open Government framework on the DOT Open Government Web site at http://www.dot.gov/open/ and the OMB MAX portal.

## Section 1.1: Employee Engagement

The DOT adhered to the principles of transparency, participation, and collaboration in developing our Open Government Plan by using the DOT's intranet as a collaboration platform. Taking advantage of SharePoint's ability for immediate site development, the OCIO set up workgroup sites for each of the major Open Government activities, and later set up subgroup sites for teams to openly collaborate. A number of methods were deployed to promote collaboration, transparency, and participation:

- The Open Government sites were set up to allow transparency into the groups' mission, goals, discussions, and work, but restricted day-to-day collaboration and document editing only to group members.
- Non-members could also participate via submission of questions or comments during the groups' ongoing activities, utilizing the prominently displayed group membership rosters.

Document libraries were created to store and display the groups' final work products for all DOT employees to see.

**The Open Government Directive Playbook Workshop Series**

DOT is committed to facilitating collaboration with other federal agencies and the public to arrive at the best solutions for complex issues. In this spirit, DOT hosted the second in a series of workshops about the Open Government Directive on January 11, 2010. There were nearly 250 attendees at the conference from over 3 dozen federal agencies and even more private sector organizations. This gathering helped kick-start critical information sharing and collaboration activities to equip agencies with the best practices methods to be more transparent, participatory, and collaborative. For more information about the series please visit: http://opengovdirective.pbworks.com/

## Section 1.2: Public Engagement

DOT also solicited and incorporated public feedback into our Open Government Plan. The DOT used the IdeaScale online citizen engagement tool (www.opendot.ideascale.com) provided by the General Services Administration (GSA) to collect ideas and comments from the public related to open government issues during the development period. We received a total of 65 ideas and 103 comments, many of which were incorporated into the plan.

For example, we received an excellent idea to develop a holistic strategy to help our agency keep up with the rapid pace of new technology development. The idea author rightly noted that many new technologies are emerging at a faster pace than some Federal agencies can keep up with. This often results in government utilizing obsolete technologies that disrupt business and reduce efficiency. To address this, the DOT Open Government Plan includes developing a comprehensive Strategy for Sustainable Change to help with the adoption of new and emerging technologies that can enable more open and effective operations. This strategy is described in more detail in **Chapter 3**. We also received the suggestion to continue looking into using various types of internal and external collaboration tools to improve information sharing, communication, and morale both with internal DOT employees and the public. The DOT included an entire section (Innovative Methods of Enhancing DOT Public Collaboration, **Chapter 3**) devoted to establishing processes for identifying innovative ways of enhancing collaboration with the public.

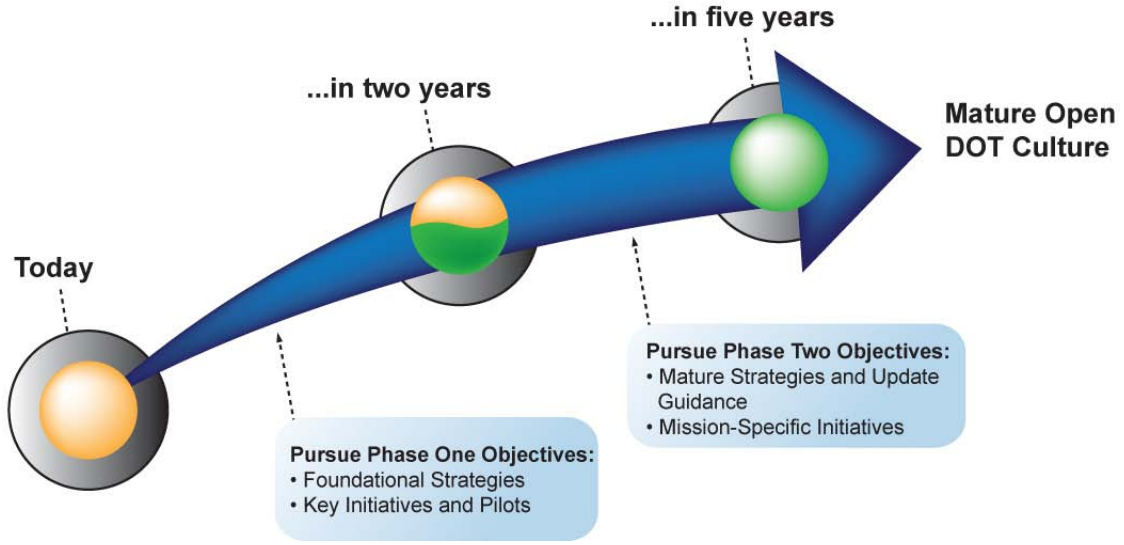
The DOT IdeaScale public engagement tool was an excellent opportunity to employ the Open Government principles of public transparency and collaboration during the development of our Open Government Plan itself. As detailed in **Chapter 4**, the DOT is actively pursuing using online engagement tools to solicit public feedback during the development other DOT plans, such as the 2010-2015 DOT Strategic Plan.

# Chapter 2: Open Government Strategic Goals, Objectives, and Measures

The DOT's Open Government Plan supports the Department's strategic goals to ensure that the principles of transparency, participation, and collaboration are tied to the DOT's core mission priorities. Recognizing this important relationship, Open Government-related strategies are included in the FY 2010-2015 draft DOT strategic plan within the Organizational Excellence goal. The Organizational Excellence goal supports all of the strategic goals. Open Government principles are a part of ensuring Organizational Excellence. This integration is important since the strategic plan guides the budgeting and performance activities of the department. The strategic plan will be available for public comment on www.dot.gov during the late spring/summer of 2010.

The DOT used the methodology described in **Chapter 1** to develop the goals and objectives for the Open Government initiative. In particular, the DOT considered the technology, policy, and cultural issues that could help or hinder Open Government initiatives. We followed the guidance from the Open Government Directive and the proposed DOT Strategic Plan. We also considered employee and public recommendations, and guidance from Open Government experts. Achieving a more open DOT is a large task. Furthermore, the DOT-specific Open Government objectives are complex and will require a phased implementation. **Figure 3** illustrates the DOT's approach to Open Government over the next five years. The phased objectives referenced in **Figure 3** are discussed in more detail in **Section 2.1.**

**Figure 3: The DOT Open Government Initiative Five Year Path Forward**

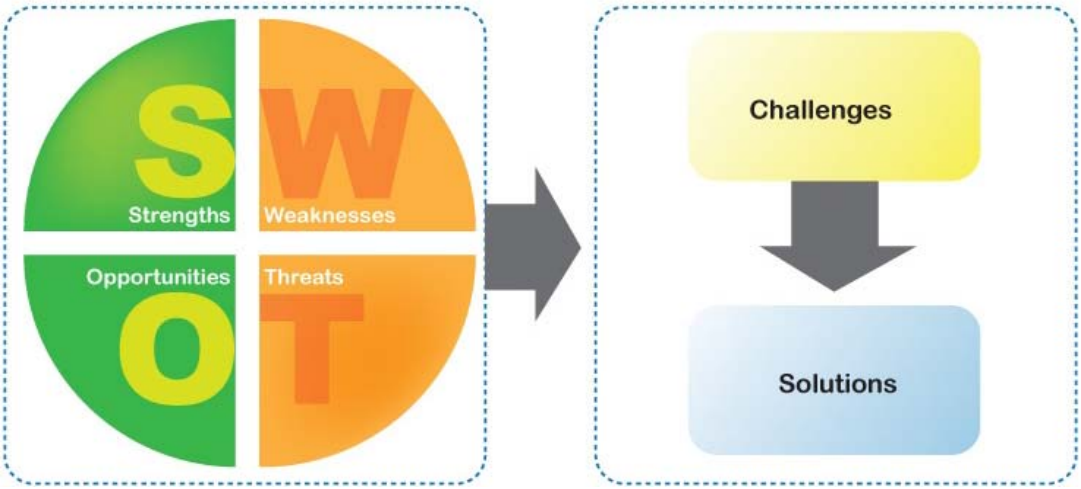


Open Government objectives will be integrated into the programs of the DOT and adopted at every level within the Department. DOT has several planning and management tools at our disposal to create sustainable change throughout the Department. DOT will evaluate how those tools could best stimulate the change required to encourage openness, as appropriate, into the core functions of the DOT and adopted at every level. These tools include performance reports, mission and function statements, organizational assessments, the annual budget process, and program performance. **Section 2.2** describes the integration of these principles at every level within the DOT, from Department to individual employees. **Section 2.2** also describes the performance framework that the DOT is considering to track progress in achieving the Open Government goals.

## Section 2.1: Prioritizing Open Government Goals, Outcomes, Strategies, and Initiatives

To assist in developing the plan, the Technology, Culture, and Policy Working Groups conducted a joint SWOT analysis of the DOT's readiness for further transparency, participation and collaboration. A SWOT analysis is a strategic planning tool used to assess the internal and external environment in which organizations operate. It identifies an organization's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT) in relation to a specific program or goal. In response to identified issues, the working groups also formulated methods for taking advantage of existing opportunities and addressing potential challenges.

**Figure 4: Identifying Challenges to Openness**



The following are the DOT's critical technology, policy, and cultural challenges that were noted during the SWOT analysis. Also included are strategies for mitigating risks posed by these issues.

- **Culture and Policy Challenge:** Long-term improvement in the DOT work culture towards more public openness and transparency requires a sustained commitment, robust change management, and clear guidance to employees.
    - **Solution:** The DOT will evaluate the extent to which Open Government principles and activities can be integrated into the existing governance structure. The DOT Open Government Executive Steering Group will advise senior leadership on how to ensure continued adoption of Open Government principles. We will explore developing a change management plan that will increase communication, outreach, and training to promote openness. A unified Open Government policy will identify the objectives of the Open Government initiative and set forth the guidance on how employees can be more open, while managing risks. Employee training will emphasize the messages in the policy.
- **Technology and Policy Challenge:** Many of the DOT's work processes and technologies (e.g., records management, policy, software) will need to be modernized, and will require significant resources.
    - **Solution:** The DOT will prioritize the most important processes or technologies to modernize first, and develop a longer-term plan for remaining work processes and tools.
- **Technology and Policy Challenge:** Releasing DOT data sets will require executive commitment to ensure that processes are formalized to review, prioritize, and post data for publication.
    - **Solution:** The DOT has established a Data.gov working group, which will be formalized and advise senior leadership on data transparency strategies, policies and processes for releasing public data.

The SWOT analysis also identified several strengths that DOT can leverage in meeting the goals of Open Government:

- The DOT has valuable data sets on hand that can be released to the public.
- The DOT is already using a variety of Web 2.0 technologies and can expand its use of these technologies to further engage citizens.

- The DOT can expand training on existing knowledge management tools to encourage transparency and collaboration.
- The DOT has been a leader in several Open Government-related areas for years including e-Rulemaking and performance management transparency.

As a result of this process, we developed the following high-level goals for the DOT's Open Government initiative:

- Increase Agency Transparency and Accountability;
- Apply Citizen Knowledge through Participation to Government Service;
- Encourage Collaboration and Innovation; and
- Institutionalize an Open DOT Culture.

To meet these goals, DOT identified many specific objectives. The DOT prioritized these objectives by applying a filter that considered criteria such as: whether or not there are critical foundational activities that must be completed within the next two years; whether or not those foundational activities can begin relatively quickly; whether or not the activities associated with the objective were requested, either by employees or non-DOT individuals and entities; and whether or not the activities associated with the objective area have already been assigned owners and resources.

Objectives that were determined to be high priority based on this filter are considered phase one objectives and are listed in the green boxes in **Figure 5**. Phase one objectives will be the focus of the DOT Open Government related work over the next two years, as displayed in **Figure 3**, earlier in this chapter. Phase two objectives will require more maturity in foundational areas and thus may be pursued in years two to five, as the foundation for openness at DOT develops.

**Figure 5: Prioritizing the DOT Open Government Objectives**

The phase one objectives for DOT's Open Government initiative are:

- Present in a clear manner DOT information about programs and objectives;
- Continue to release DOT data in a timely manner by proactively making it available online in consistent, open formats, while assuring accuracy and protecting privacy, security, and confidentiality;

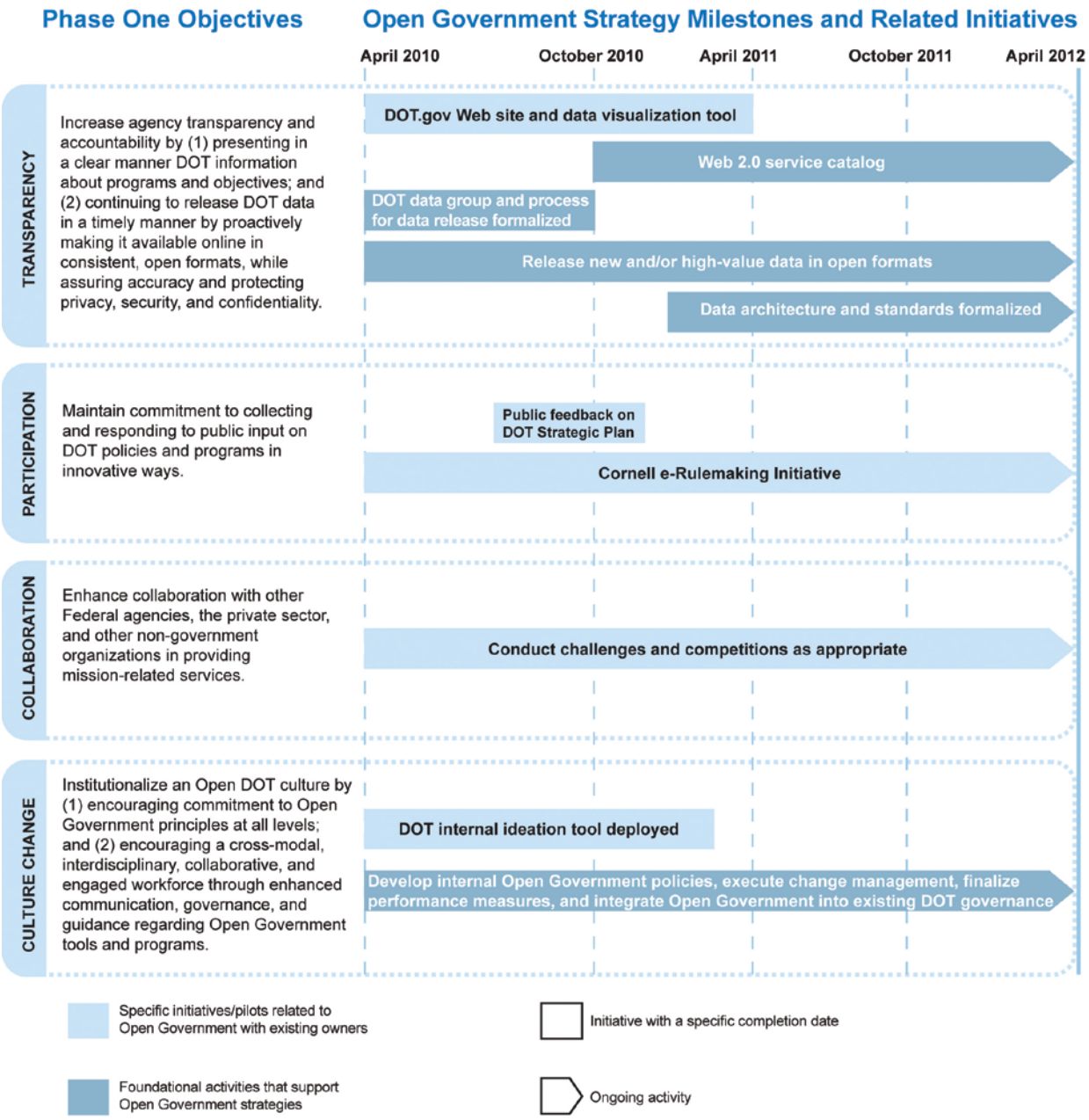
- Maintain commitment to collecting and responding to public input on DOT policies and programs in innovative ways;
- Enhance collaboration with other Federal agencies, the private sector, and other non-government organizations in providing mission-related services;
- Encourage commitment to Open Government principles at all levels; and
- Encourage a cross-modal, interdisciplinary, collaborative, and engaged workforce through enhanced communication, governance, and guidance regarding Open Government tools and programs.

The phase two objectives for DOT's Open Government initiative may include:

- Continuing to create opportunities for public participation in problem identification and idea generation;
- Enhancing efforts to stimulate innovation from DOT data and information; and
- Maintaining commitment to data-driven DOT decision making, by increasing employee awareness of DOT data and information.

To make progress in the phase one objectives in the next two years, the DOT has identified activities on which to focus its efforts. **Figure 6** lists the strategy milestones and Open Government-related initiatives that will be prioritized in the next two years. The dark blue lines in **Figure 6** designate activities that are foundational. These activities, once completed, are considered milestones of the policy, change management, data transparency, and innovative methods strategies. They are discussed in more detail in **Chapter 3**. The light blue lines in **Figure 6** designate Open Government initiatives that have owners and resources assigned. Initiatives that are ongoing are designated by an arrow whereas initiatives with completion timelines are designated by a vertical end. These initiatives are described in more detail in **Chapter 4**.

**Figure 6: Milestones for the Phase One DOT Open Government Objectives**




It is important to note that there are more long-term initiatives and milestones that are not listed above in **Figure 6**. **Table 3** shows all the strategies and initiatives that are being considered to

meet the phase objectives. All of these strategies and initiatives are described in the following chapters of this plan. Strategies will be updated for the next revision of the DOT Open Government Plan in two years. Also, in preparation for that revision, the DOT will re-evaluate its initiatives and determine what is required to meet the phase two objectives.

**Table 2: Open Government Objectives, Strategies, and Initiatives**

| Phase One Objectives (Ch.2) | Strategies (Ch. 3) | Related-Initiatives (Ch. 4 and 5) |
|---|---|---|
| **Increase Agency Transparency and Accountability:**<br>• **Present in a clear manner DOT information about programs and objectives**<br>• **Continue to release DOT data in a timely manner by proactively making it available online in consistent, open formats, while assuring accuracy and protecting privacy, security, and confidentiality** | • Plain Language Efforts<br>• Strategy for Internal Change Management<br>• Public Outreach<br>• Data Transparency Strategy<br>• Unified Policy Framework | • New Web Site to Display Maps Illustrating DOT Data<br>• Web 2.0 Business Service Catalog<br>• DOT Web site redesign<br>• Supporting aviation consumer protection<br>• Compliance with USAspending.gov, IT dashboard, data.gov, and Recovery.gov initiatives<br>• Data.gov Rating System<br>• FOIA plan |
| **Apply Citizen Knowledge through Participation to Government Service:**<br>• **Maintain commitment to collecting and responding to public input on DOT policies and programs in innovative ways** | • Public Outreach<br>• Rulemaking Strategy | • Targeted Citizen Feedback Tool<br>• Public feedback on Strategic Plans<br>• Flagship initiative: Cornell e-Rulemaking Initiative |

| Phase One Objectives (Ch.2) | Strategies (Ch. 3) | Related-Initiatives (Ch. 4 and 5) |
|---|---|---|
| **Encourage Collaboration and Innovation:**<br>• **Enhance collaboration with other Federal agencies, the private sector, and other non-government organizations in providing mission-related services** | • Strategy for Internal Change Management<br>• Public Outreach<br>• Innovative Methods Strategy | • Flagship initiative: Cornell e-Rulemaking Initiative<br>• Secure video teleconferencing and Web conferencing<br>• Conducting challenges and competitions as appropriate as illustrated in **Figure 6**. |
| **Institutionalize an Open DOT Culture:**<br>• **Encourage commitment to Open Government principles at all levels**<br>• **Encourage a cross-modal, interdisciplinary, collaborative, and engaged workforce through enhanced communication, governance, and guidance regarding Open Government tools and programs** | • Strategy for Internal Change Management<br>• Unified Policy Framework | • Internal ideation and collaboration platforms<br>• Develop internal Open Government policies, execute change management plan, finalize performance measures, and integrate Open Gov into existing DOT governance (**Figure 6**) |

## Section 2.2: Managing the DOT's Performance in Open Government Practices

DOT has several planning and management tools at our disposal to create sustainable change throughout the Department. DOT will evaluate how those tools could best stimulate the change required to encourage openness, as appropriate, into the core functions of the DOT and adopted at every level. These tools include performance reports, mission and function statements, organizational assessments, the annual budget process, and program performance.

To embed these principles in the DOT business culture, we will explore how to best balance the use of compliance activities such as program reporting and performance management, and

employee incentives, such as through Secretary level awards for Open Government. We understand that for Open Government principles to be effective, they must be applied in the mission-based programs of the DOT. This could be accomplished through leveraging existing activities that are integral to managing our programs and our workforce. Therefore, the DOT will evaluate how to best infuse Open Government components into management practices. This performance framework starts at the Departmental level and flows down to the OA and program level through various performance tools. **Figure 7** illustrates those tools.

**Figure 7: The DOT's Strategic Approach to Open Government**

**Performance Reports:** Each year the DOT completes a high-level review of its performance against the goals described in the strategic plan. The Open Government objectives included in the DOT Strategic Plan and selected performance indicators will be tracked and reported.

**Organizational Assessment:** Each DOT OA completes an annual self-assessment of its performance in both mission and support functions. These assessments contribute to the determination of performance ratings for career members of the Senior Executive Service (SES). These assessments will be evaluated to determine how they could consider Open Government principles.

**Program Performance:** Each DOT program is described using a simple model that evaluates program performance. We will explore how to integrate Open Government activities, outputs and outcomes into that model.

**Individual Level/ Employee Incentives:** To change behavior on an individual level, many activities are crucial. These include: employee education and training, creating Secretary's Open Government awards, modeling desired behaviors, changing work processes, completing high profile demonstration projects, and conducting pilot lessons to share lessons learned. DOT will explore the best ways to equip employees to be more open, as appropriate, through many of these activities.

The goals and objectives of Open Government are difficult to measure. However, to understand how well we are meeting our objectives and goals, measures are crucial. Furthermore, Open Government-related measures should relate to the performance measures in the DOT strategic plan. DOT is considering many performance measures to possibly include in its performance dashboard. This dashboard will be reviewed by DOT senior leadership on a monthly basis and adjustments to strategies and initiatives will be made based on performance.

**Table 4** shows the relationships among each Open Government goal, phase one objective, and a sample of the possible measures that have been discussed. Once the final performance measures are identified, their values will be provided on the www.dot.gov/open Web page and updated consistent with Departmental and program reporting cycles.

**Table 3: Open Government Goals, Objectives, and Sample Measures**

| Objectives | Sample Performance Measures |
|---|---|
| **Open Government Goal #1: Increase Agency Transparency and Accountability** | |
| Present in a clear manner DOT information about programs and objectives | Increased traffic to and interaction with the DOT's Web pages |
| Continue to release DOT data in a timely manner by proactively making it available online in consistent, open formats, while assuring accuracy and protecting privacy, security, and confidentiality | Number of releases of new and/or high-value, mission-driven data in an open format |
| | Number of DOT data sets using Web services and/or in open format |
| **Open Government Goal #2: Apply Citizen Knowledge through Participation to Government Service** | |

| Objectives | Sample Performance Measures |
|---|---|
| Maintain commitment to collecting and responding to public input on DOT policies and programs in innovative ways | Increased use of initiatives that collect and respond to public feedback |
| **Open Government Goal #3: Encourage Collaboration and Innovation** | |
| Enhance collaboration with other Federal agencies, the private sector, and other non-government organizations in providing mission-related services | Use of innovative methods (e.g., challenges, competitions), stratified by the DOT strategic goal, that further the DOT's mission |
| **Open Government Goal #4: Institutionalize an Open DOT Culture** | |
| Encourage commitment to Open Government principles at all levels | Number of all personnel, including executives and managers, trained in Open Government principles |
| Encourage a cross-modal, interdisciplinary, collaborative, and engaged workforce through enhanced communication, governance, and guidance regarding Open Government tools and programs | Increased use of Department-wide collaboration portal for knowledge management (i.e., SharePoint) |
| | Positive employee perception of value of Open Government efforts |

# Chapter 3: Open Government Strategies

This chapter details the strategies the DOT will employ to meet the Open Government objectives. This chapter describes steps the DOT will take to increase transparency and make agency information more available to the public. It also describes how we will develop a high-value data inventory that will provide additional national transportation data sets to the public. In addition, this portion of the plan includes efforts to enhance public feedback, participation, and collaboration. It also covers internal policies and processes that will allow the DOT operations to be more open, transparent, and collaborative with the public while managing the risks associated with openness.

## Section 3.1: Strategic Action Plan for Data Transparency and the DOT Data Inventory

The DOT performs a wide range of business services aimed at solving the complex safety issues associated with our Nation's transportation systems. The DOT relies heavily on its data resources to drive business and investment decisions. These include data compiled by State, local, and tribal governments, as well as private sector entities. The Department is committed to unlocking more public data to:

- Drive innovation by tapping into the ingenuity of the American people;
- Increase agency accountability; and
- Solidify the connection between the Department's services and individual citizens, business, governmental bodies, universities, and other non-government organizations.

The Department's leaders have identified a number of fundamental issues that must be considered in order to provide sustained access to high-value transportation data. Many of these issues will be addressed and managed through internal policies. These issues include:

- Determining a process to release data and contextualize that data;
- Creating a data inventory and selecting the right data sets to release;
- Determining how to approach developing a DOT-wide data architecture;
- Providing data in a format usable by industry and individuals, consistent with security, privacy and confidentiality interests;
- Portioning and organizing the data so that it is manageable and searchable; and
- Maintaining the quality of the data and creating and maintaining a dialogue with stakeholders about changes in data availability.

## Section 3.1.1: Data Release Process

The DOT has a long history of releasing mission-driven information to the public. There is a proven existing process for clearing information that is regularly released from the Department that includes review from the relevant and highest levels. The DOT will build on this process to manage the release of new and/or high-value mission-driven data. Formalizing the data release process is a priority and must be finalized well in advance of the first data release. The process will ensure that all data released from the Department considers security, privacy, confidentiality, and quality.

**Releasing Data through the Open Government Directive**

DOT published three high-value data sets in an open, machine-readable format (XML Web Services) on January 21st. All three are registered on Data.gov and available for free download here: http://www.data.gov/ogd. These data sets are:

**"Child Passenger Safety (CPS) Ease of Use Ratings"**: The Ease of Use program has the potential to drive consumer purchasing decisions of child restraints by providing star ratings that reflect the ease of using child restraint features. Manufacturers strive to meet the standards that the Ease of Use program promulgate, which materially affects the health and well being of every child occupying a safety seat. Considering that crashes are the leading cause of death for children aged 3 to 6, the value of the dataset is well established by the entire child safety seat market.

**"Uniform Tire Quality Grading System (UTQGS)"**: The information supports the Department's strategic goal of Customer Service. The information in the dataset is used to assist consumers in purchasing new replacement tires. NHTSA has rated more than 4,200 lines of tires, including most used on passenger cars, minivans, SUVs and light pickup trucks using a grading system known as the Uniform Tire Quality Grading System (UTQGS). UTQGS allows consumers to compare tire tread wear, traction performance and temperature resistance of these replacement tires. The UTQGS is the de facto tire grading protocol in the industry and is highly integrated into automotive culture on a world-wide level.

**"New Car Assessment Program (NCAP) – 5 Star Safety Ratings"**: The New Car Assessment Program serves to drive vehicle manufacturers to make safety improvements to their vehicles without regulation through the 5-star safety ratings program. The safety ratings are a matter of commercial pride by manufacturers that utilize those ratings in their promotional marketing efforts. The 5-star safety rating is the de facto safety rating in the world today and is also highly integrated into automotive culture, making it a valuable US Government information asset.

In addition, it is important to provide the proper context for data that is released from the Department. All data has a story about how it relates to the DOT mission and it is important to provide the data in the context of that story. The OST Office of Public Affairs will determine what methods are appropriate to provide that context, such as press releases, fact sheets, data visualization tools or the like.

### Section 3.1.2: Data Set Selection and the DOT Data Inventory

As of April 7, 2010, the DOT has released 13 datasets that are accessible on Data.gov. The DOT is developing a more mature data inventory and considering ways to break down barriers that make data inaccessible. As such, the DOT is exploring tools that can read structured data sets and produce data and the associated metadata in open formats such as eXtensible Markup Language (XML). (The XML language is a set of rules about the structure of data or documents. It makes the information interchange among a wide variety of systems easier.) The current inventory identifies approximately 50 data sets across the Department, including some that have never been released. A large proportion of the data sets in the current inventory are publicly available, but not in an open format. It is important to note that not every data set in the inventory may be suitable for release. However, the presumption shall be in favor of openness, to the extent permitted by law and subject to valid privacy, confidentiality, security, or other restrictions.

Some examples of high-value data sets that are publicly available now, but not in open formats, include data on safety defects, car recalls, transit ridership, selected air carrier data, and selected transportation fatality data. These data sets will be considered in the data inventory prioritization process that is currently underway.

The DOT will complete a comprehensive Department-wide data inventory, to support the data set selection and release process, by September 30, 2010. After completing this inventory, the DOT will establish timelines for publication of appropriate information not yet available for download in open formats and set specific target dates for release. Once those target dates are formalized, they will be included in the next iteration of the DOT Open Government Plan.

In addition to creating a process for releasing data from the Department and developing a data inventory, the Department will also develop a method to prioritize data sets for release. We are considering enhancing usability by also indicating whether a high-value data set was previously unavailable, available only with a FOIA request, available only for purchase, or available but in a less user-friendly format.

It is also important to designate what DOT data is considered high-value. The Open Government Directive defines high-value data as data that can be used to:

- Increase agency accountability and responsiveness;
- Improve public knowledge of the agency and its operations;
- Further the core mission of the agency;
- Create economic opportunity; or
- Respond to need and demand as identified through public consultation.

## Section 3.1.3: Data Architecture

Transparency, collaboration, and participation depend upon information which is available, easy to find, and easily manipulated, aggregated, and/or re-published. Achieving these efficiencies is the explicit goal of data architecture and should be considered amongst the Department's highest technical priorities. While this task is daunting for an enterprise such as the DOT, it can be achieved incrementally. Each step or milestone will yield tangible gains in the three Open Government goals of transparency, participation, and collaboration.

A long-standing obstacle to the implementation of Federal data architectures has been the lack of robust, yet flexible, metadata standards suitable to the Government's diverse data requirements. This obstacle has now been overcome within the National Information Exchange Model (NIEM) co-developed by the U.S. Departments of Justice and Homeland Security. Departments can leverage NIEM to build upon a collection of metadata repositories that are global in their applicability but also narrowly defined into domains. Over the next year, DOT will consider working with the NIEM Program Management Office (PMO) to develop a Transportation Domain for inclusion in established NIEM data standards. An immediate outcome of applying the NIEM to existing Department datasets is the ability to create a cross-modal data catalog that business users, developers, and the public to identify, locate, and obtain information more easily and intuitively. A Departmental cross-modal data catalog would assist in transitioning existing non-open data sets into more open formats. These could then be more easily shared within the Department as well as externally to the public.

The Department will consider establishing policies and procedures for the rigorous inclusion of all Data.gov submitted datasets within the Department's data catalog. In accomplishing these steps, the Department will incrementally build its capacity to support increased transparency, collaboration, and participation by providing steadily improving access to the information our customers depend upon.

## Section 3.1.4: Format and Usability

The format of the data plays a role in its usability. The Department will work to strike an appropriate balance between formats (such as XML) that serve organizations and Web based presentations that can be used and understood by the general public. The public can current rate the utility of DOT data sets that are on data.gov through the 5-star rating system on Data.gov.

## Section 3.1.5: Data Set Size

Some data sets can be range upward to several hundred megabytes. Their large size can undermine their usefulness for most people or organizations. Also large numbers of data sets can make it difficult to find particular data of interest. Data should be searchable by topic. A way to bring together data from different sources on similar topics is also important. The Department will explore available techniques such as the use of tagging or metadata to enable the public to aggregate information on specific topics.

## Section 3.1.6: Data Quality and Public Feedback

The release of the data sets has also prompted discussions about how to determine the value of data and maintain its quality. While repackaging available information in more usable formats is of some value, we are developing a process to identify previously unpublished high-value data assets. We are also directing attention to the overall quality and usefulness of the data. The DOT will need to ensure sustained attention is paid to making some of the data sets available as live feeds rather than as static sets that are pulled down and reposted on an occasional basis. All data to be released by the DOT must comply with the statutory mandates in the Data Quality Act.

The DOT understands the importance of being accountable for the quality of information publicly disseminated through venues such as Data.gov, Recovery.gov and USASpending.gov. We will work to improve the quality and integrity of that information.

The Department also realizes the importance of having a responsive feedback mechanism. This allows the public to alert an agency to data sets that are not working, lack information, or are missing explanatory material. The mechanism then allows the DOT to respond to concerns within a reasonable timeframe. It might be feasible for an agency point of contact to address problems. This person would have the ability to resolve database issues or provide information regarding the database. Tests of this mechanism will occur to verify the quality of these agency-specific dialogues to ensure that they are having an impact and to develop recommendations on best practices to improve the responsiveness. Additionally code sheets should be used for data sets posted on Data.gov.

The Department also realizes the need to give public notice when data is removed from sites, particularly the raw tools and data on Data.gov. Many of the above concerns apply across all or many of the agencies' data sets. Accordingly, it would be wise to use the existing interagency workgroup structure to propose effective and beneficial solutions for the Department.

Lastly, the Department's Data Quality Plan is currently being developed in response to the OMB's Open Government Directive. This directed agencies to maintain a plan with details of the internal controls implemented over information quality, including system and process changes, and the integration of these controls within the agency's existing infrastructure. The Data Quality Plan includes two sections: implementation of the Data Quality Framework and USASpending.gov data. It sets forth a framework for monitoring progress and performance, and includes actions taken to identify areas of risk and complete corrective actions.

## Section 3.2: Enhancing the Role of Public Feedback, Participation, and Collaboration in Key Mission Areas

In order to continuously improve efforts to communicate with the public and stakeholders, the DOT prioritizes training for employees and customers in order to promote partnership in our transportation efforts. The DOT has prioritized openness and transparency in the rulemaking process for the last 25 years. There are several opportunities where the public can engage with the DOT on existing programs, and the DOT strives to use easy-to-understand (i.e., plain language) and two-way communication when interacting with the public.

### Section 3.2.1: Strategy for Internal Change Management

To embed Open Government principles into our business processes, the DOT has started to develop a strategy for internal change management. The DOT will build off this strategy to develop an implementation plan, ensuring that the desired outcomes of our strategy are realized.

The strategy for internal change management will be critical to meeting the following objectives:

- Encouraging commitment to Open Government principles at all levels; and
- Encouraging a cross-modal, interdisciplinary, collaborative, and engaged workforce through enhanced communication, governance, and guidance regarding Open Government tools and programs

The strategy for internal change management calls for a variety of technology, communication, and training strategies to be leveraged to advance the objectives of Open Government amongst employees at DOT. For example, some agencies are already using collaborative software such as SharePoint, which provides a central location for information that enables employees to find

relevant Open Government information (e.g., policies, standards, tools, training, handbooks) easily and collaborate more effectively. Furthermore, as the DOT implements Open Government initiatives, specific strategies must be created to inform, engage, and mobilize the DOT workforce through targeted communications and training.

Open Government will leverage the dynamic range of communication technologies to deliver information faster to diverse audiences. The DOT will need parameters for the effective and appropriate use of these technologies to prevent an increase in employee interactions from fragmenting the Department's messages. The DOT will develop tools to monitor the usefulness and effectiveness of communications. The DOT will seek feedback from its end users on content, delivery methods, accessibility, understandability, relevancy, consistency, and usability.

The Department also seeks to provide incentives (i.e., internal distinctions and financial awards) for employees and modal administrations that demonstrate excellence and leadership in the areas of transparency, collaboration, and participation. By creating these incentives and recognition opportunities, the DOT will showcase and celebrate incremental Open Government successes.

The strategy for internal change management calls for a shift in training methodologies that encourages innovation and collaboration. The Department has already established training on a number of topics for both its employees, including self help tutorials, videos, new employee orientations, and seminars/user forums. Some of this training is also provided in the form of recorded webinars available on our OA Web sites for the general public and other agencies to access.

With the Open Government initiative, the DOT will enhance existing training classes and tools as well as remove barriers, which will enable us to maximize our existing training venues. The Department will include a marketing element in the training plan that will incentivize adoption. Training will stress that employee use of social media tools must comply with Departmental policy.

## Section 3.2.2: Public Outreach

Open Government outreach to various audiences will be coordinated with other DOT communications efforts and seek to ensure that the initiative is meeting its intended results. For the purpose of this strategy, the DOT identified four high-level stakeholder categories for which Open Government outreach messages and goals are established: the general public, the media, DOT employees, and the transportation industry.

The DOT engages the public through numerous new communication and traditional communications channels managed and led by OST's Public Affairs Office. Through new media opportunities such as blogging, webcasting, Facebook and Twitter, the Department's message can be further amplified. However, these same opportunities also present the potential for inaccurate and inappropriate release of information and misrepresentation of the DOT. It is important that when communicating with the public, we speak with one consistent, cohesive voice. The Department faces the competing pressures of maximizing accurate and authorized information broadcast to the public, and minimizing inaccurate and unauthorized information distribution and inappropriate outreach. Any new outreach approaches must be approved through both Modal and OST Public Affairs offices.

**The DOT's Triad of Social Media**

By developing the public information triad of our Facebook page, Twitter feed, and Fast Lane blog, the Office of Public Affairs has increased by over 500% the number of people we regularly engage online. Just this March, for example, Secretary LaHood unveiled a new bicycle-pedestrian full-inclusion policy directly through the social media triad instead of through a conventional news release. The response was tremendous.

To maximize efforts already underway, the DOT's Open Government Web site links to several public affairs outreach channels:

- Briefing Room on DOT.gov
- News sections of each agency's Web site;
- The Secretary's blog, Fast Lane; and
- The Secretary's Facebook page, YouTube channel and Twitter account.

**Interacting with Public via Twitter**

"@RayLaHood and @LanceArmstrong discussing bike infrastructure on twitter? How can you not like Web 2.0?"

Modal public affairs offices can coordinate with OST Public Affairs to boost the Open Government initiative by:

- Webcasting based on available resources and podcasting events and live-streaming events, briefings and town halls which are open to the public;
- Working with OST Public Affairs to find guest opportunities for the Secretary's blog,

Fast Lane, which can also be applied through the Secretary's Twitter account; and
- Maximizing RSS feeds for official notifications.

**Webcasting, Podcasting, YouTube and Live Streaming:** With available resources, the most transparent simultaneous outreach medium currently available is webcasting. This tool allows the DOT to not only include a larger audience, but a more diverse audience with no geographic boundaries. Both webcasts and podcasts can be posted for repeated viewing at the public's convenience. New additions to a video channel can trigger an RSS announcement for stakeholders and other subscribers. This has been done successfully by OST and RITA with the Secretary's Distracted Driving Summit and by FRA with its High Speed Rail Manufacturing Summit. The Distracted Driving Summit not only reached viewers across the country, but also across the world.

In addition to webcasting, live streaming allows users the opportunity to submit questions and comments to event participants. These activities can be moderated. Live streaming extends the value of webcasting beyond transparency into participation and collaboration. This can include Web chats with a DOT principal regarding an upcoming event or other major DOT announcements. YouTube can also be used to promote DOT initiatives and programs.

**Interacting with Public via Facebook**

"Mr. LaHood - I really appreciate your efforts to keep us informed through social networking tools. I've never been so up to speed on transportation issues!"

**Fast Lane Blog, Other Social Media Outlets:** Working with OST Public Affairs and modal public affairs contacts, each mode can present guest blogs on Fast Lane as appropriate. The OST Public Affairs Office already heavily utilizes this tool, as well as other social media opportunities such as Facebook and Twitter to publicize major events and news announcements. As previously mentioned, the DOT's Open Government Web site should link to all of these media to highlight work already underway.

**Really Simple Syndication or RSS Feed:** Already in use across the DOT, RSS offers the simplest avenue for public notification. Users self-identify as stakeholders by subscribing to an Operating Agency's RSS feed. With the approval of OST Public Affairs, significant action or business activity can be published quickly. The OAs will be encouraged to maximize their use of this important tool.

## Section 3.2.3: Rulemaking

Some of the DOT's major efforts are detailed below; for more information, please visit regs.dot.gov.

### Section 3.2.3.1: Negotiated Rulemakings

Negotiated rulemaking follows a clear process. First, Federal agencies identify potential stakeholders in a rulemaking. Then they bring stakeholders together with facilitators to establish a foundation for a proposed rule. The end result is hopefully a product of consensus among the stakeholders. This expands the voice that the public has in crafting regulations that may affect them and ensures that agencies have accurate information to draw up a reasonable regulation. The DOT was the first Federal agency to use negotiated rulemakings, beginning in the 1980's, and we continue to use them today. Currently, almost all modes at the DOT maintain standing Federal Advisory Committees, with representatives from interested parties, to assist the rulemaking process.

### Section 3.2.3.2: Electronic Docketing

Regulations.gov started in 2007 to improve public access to all documents relating to Federal agency rulemakings and to allow agencies to maintain totally digital dockets. Regulations.gov was based on a system created by the DOT in 1995. It became publicly available on the Internet in 1997, and had eliminated the use of paper dockets for the entire DOT by 1998. The DOT took this electronic docket further by using it for adjudications, data quality requests, and other documentation, in order to give the public even greater accessibility to DOT records. In 2007, the DOT's electronic docket migrated to Regulations.gov, and the DOT continues to use it for more than rulemaking information.

### Section 3.2.3.3: Rulemaking Management System and regs.dot.gov

Since rulemaking is an important public function of the DOT, we sought early on to harness advances in technology to accurately manage the process. In 2001, the DOT created a database to track the status of our rulemakings throughout their lifecycle. Much more than a standard tracking database, however, it allows the DOT to provide useful reports to the public through our rulemaking Web site, regs.dot.gov. The information that the DOT shares from the database includes the monthly status report of all of our significant rulemakings and which rulemakings will have effects on, for example small businesses, foreign countries, energy, or federalism. These reports have been available on the regs.dot.gov Web site since 2003. Also available on our Web site are a rulemaking point of contact for each DOT mode, information on plain language, a primer on the rulemaking process, and instructions for crafting effective comments on rulemakings.

### Section 3.2.3.3: Pilot Project on e-Rulemaking with Cornell University

A description of this current project can be found in **Section 4.1** where the flagship initiative is discussed.

### Section 3.2.4: Public Participation and Collaboration Opportunities

**Reaching out to Grantees about the Recovery Act**

The FTA sponsored more than 20 webinars focused on the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) that reached thousands of potential grantees and stakeholders representing every facet of the transportation community. These webinars explained the provisions of the act, the FTA's guidance for submitting successful proposals, and provided the basis for an extensive library of Questions and Answers posted on the Web.

With over 80 percent of its budget delivered through grants, the DOT is externally focused. As a result, the DOT's ability to engage effectively with partners is crucial. There are currently many ways for the general public and stakeholders to participate with the DOT via low- and high-tech methods. Some of the most commonly used high-tech methods of encouraging participation are Facebook, GoToMeeting, SharePoint, and Twitter; other notable high-tech methods include Geographic Information System (GIS) applications and webinars. Most opportunities for collaboration and participation are ongoing, lending to the application of high-tech and Web 2.0 tools. However, some DOT organizations are not using high-tech methods that could enable greater participation by both the general public and stakeholders. For example, many programs list only mail and telephone contacts on their Web sites.

Open Government provides an opportunity to improve collaboration not only with the general public, but also with specialized groups with transportation interests. For the latter, the DOT can use high-tech engagement methods tailored to a group's needs. Additionally, DOT operational areas could improve opportunities for collaboration with the general public. Many opportunities for the general public to participate with the DOT are not readily visible on agency Web sites. Simple upgrades to public facing Web sites could spur increased public participation with the DOT. Many opportunities exist to upgrade low-tech opportunities to high-tech engagements. Conferences and forums could be augmented with webinars and/or live streaming.

The following list contains examples of current opportunities to participate and collaborate with the DOT categorized by OA:

**OST:** Fast Lane Blog
Blog of U.S. Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood
http://fastlane.dot.gov

**DOT:** Federal Docket Management System
General Public can comment and view proposed DOT rules, adjudications, peer review material, guidance, and data quality releases
http://www.regulations.gov

**FAA:** Petitions for Exemption or Rulemaking
Citizens can request the FAA to adopt, amend, or repeal a regulation; or ask for relief from the requirements of a current regulation
http://www.faa.gov/regulations_policies/rulemaking/petition

**FHWA:** General FHWA Contacts
Contact information for general comments and questions about FHWA
https://fhwaapps.fhwa.dot.gov/foisp/hqphone.do

**FMCSA:** Protect Your Move
Citizens can obtain information on commercial moving services and file complaints with FMCSA
http://www.protectyourmove.gov

**FRA:** Research Needs Workshop
Stakeholders can learn about FRA's current research needs
http://www.fra.dot.gov/Pages/1735.shtml

**Distraction.gov**

Secretary Ray LaHood has used social media tools to let the public know about one of his signature issues, the dangers of distracted driving. He announced his Distracted Driving Summit on his Fast Lane blog and has continued blogging on efforts to improve driving safety. The Summit itself was streamed live, and the Secretary took questions from the online audience. The microsite Distraction.gov, a public information clearinghouse, added to his toolkit, and he interacts frequently with safety organizations and ordinary citizens through Facebook and Twitter. The public has responded positively to this engagement, and the campaign to end distracted driving has reached critical mass with states across the country banning texting behind the wheel.

**FTA:** Best Practices Procurement Manual
Citizens and stakeholders can submit questions about Federal procurement requirements and best practices of specific interest to the transit community and receive a personal response from a subject matter expert. Questions and answers are posted online
http://www.fta.dot.gov/funding/thirdpartyprocurement/grants_financing_6040.html

**MARAD:** General MARAD Contacts
Contact information for general comments and questions about the Maritime Administration
http://www.marad.dot.gov/about_us_landing_page/contact_us/About_us.htm

**NHTSA:** Traffic Safety Marketing
State and local highway safety leaders can access creative materials, advertisements, radio scripts, posters and other marketing materials to promote campaigns such as Click It or Ticket; Drunk Driving. Over The Limit. Under Arrest; Child Passenger Safety Week and many more.
www.trafficsafetymarketing.gov

**PHMSA:** Stakeholder Communications
Provides state-by-state information on pipeline locations
http://primis.phmsa.dot.gov/comm

**RITA:** U.S. DOT Reference Service
Citizens can ask any question about the DOT, request help finding information, or provide ideas for the DOT and its projects
http://www.dot.gov/contact.html

**SLSDC:** The St. Lawrence Seaway: Gateway to North America
Binational Site of the Great Lakes St. Lawrence Seaway System
http://www.greatlakes-seaway.com

## Section 3.2.5: Plain Language Efforts

Before the DOT can effectively collaborate with our partners, we must able to clearly communicate. We have a commitment to transparency and clarity. Both OST and FAA have taken the lead with our plain language efforts. Plain language is a writing technique that makes information easier for general audiences to understand. The FAA has a plain language writing

order (FAA Order 1000.36) and provides training to the DOT about plain language. This effort also supports FAA's new "Consistency and Standardization Initiative." http://www.faa.gov/news/fact_sheets/news_story.cfm?newsID=10802

Also, in 2000, working with a team of DOT agency program managers and counsel, the DOT's Office of Drug and Alcohol Policy and Compliance (ODAPC) rewrote and published in the Federal register the "Procedures for Transportation Workplace Drug and Alcohol Testing Programs." ODAPC and its DOT agency team members received then Vice-President Gore's Plain Language Award in recognition of their outstanding work in making this very complex set of rules easy to understand. This was also the first DOT regulation written in a question and answer format. Since then, the ODAPC regulation, guidance documents, and Web site have been noted for their ease in understanding. For a good example of the ODAPC effort to make guidelines understandable and inviting, please see: http://www.dot.gov/ost/dapc/testingpubs/Employer%20Guidelines%20August%2031%202009.pdf

Training on plain language as utilized by the ODAPC and as adopted by the FAA should be made widely available to employees in order to further encourage its adoption.

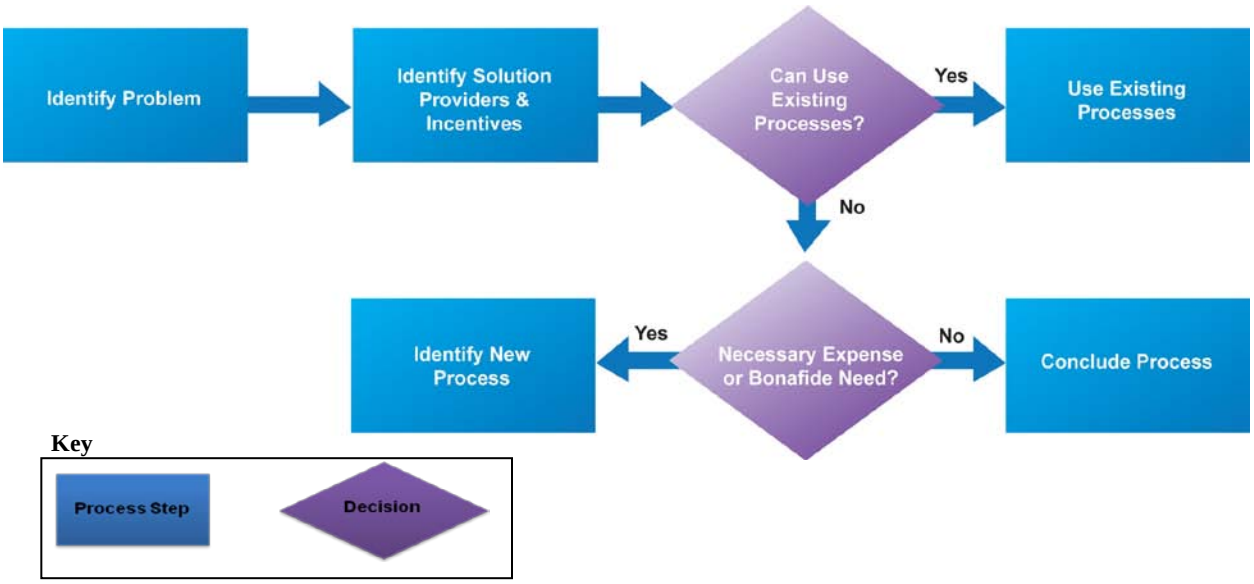
## Section 3.3: Innovative Methods of Enhancing DOT Public Collaboration

In addition to public input, below are some of the methods that the DOT may use to generate ideas related to transportation issues, as well as to determine better ways of operating:

- Utilize acquisitions
- Fund research and development
- Support challenges and competitions
- Negotiate intellectual property rights agreements that encourage innovation
- Recognize innovative transportation efforts

**Figure 8** shows the decision flowchart that DOT employees may use to initiate a public collaboration project.

**Figure 8: The DOT Innovative Methods Decision Flowchart**




The following sections describe these categories and outline some of the legal, ethical, and procedural issues that must be considered when utilizing these methods.

## Section 3.3.1: DOT Public Collaboration Methods

### Acquisitions

The DOT currently engages with the public to gain expertise through contracts. To procure resources we must follow the Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR), and, in FAA's case, the Acquisition Management System (AMS)

### Research and Development

The DOT also currently engages in many research and development initiatives both within the OAs and Department-wide. RITA coordinates these activities across all modes. Individual modal administrations within the DOT have varying authority to award grants, cooperative agreements, and contracts to sponsor research activities in support of their missions. These vehicles provide ways of stimulating the creation and development of good ideas.

## Intellectual Property Rights

Federal rules or policies describe how intellectual property rights will be shared based on the type of agreement involved. An agreement can be a procurement contract, grant, cooperative agreement, Cooperative Research and Development Agreement (CRADA), or other arrangement. DOT representatives have some discretion within these rules and policies for negotiating rights. Authorized representatives can come from the Contracting Office, Grants Office, or Legal Counsel. Often the goal is to tailor the intellectual property rights to encourage additional innovation.

## Innovative Transportation Efforts

This is closely related to challenges and competitions, but instead of the DOT running a contest to determine a winner, the DOT learns of a significant innovation that furthers an agency mission through some other means. The DOT may decide to recognize that achievement by issuing a press release congratulating the manufacturer for the achievement or by some other means of publicly recognizing the accomplishment. Care must be taken to avoid an improper endorsement of the product, and the Government's authority to use appropriated funds to give a tangible award is restricted. However, when the accomplishment furthers the DOT's mission, the Department may publicly recognize the achievement.

Not all challenges and competitions use money as the incentive. Other incentives that the DOT could use to encourage innovation and collaboration include:

- Awards of recognition or distinction from the Administrator or Secretary;
- Recognition from the DOT via Web sites or social media channels.

In addition, the DOT could partner with other organizations that would either be the primary or co-funders of the challenge or competition, thus minimizing the cost of involvement in the effort for the agency.

**The DOT's Contests and Challenges: Promoting Innovation through Public Collaboration**

The DOT has a long history of tapping into the vast potential of our nation's researchers and innovators to pursue new ways of making travel safer and faster. One great example of this is RITA's Clarus Research Challenge – a research competition that will award up to $80,000 to help develop and implement the seven best new ideas for using the Clarus weather information system to improve roadway safety during severe weather. Clarus is a program that provides data about the weather along the nation's roads. Through this contest, DOT is collaborating with the public to help improve the safety and efficiency of America's roads.

## Challenges and Competitions

The DOT has supported challenges and competitions in the past. Summaries of some of those efforts are provided in a later section of this chapter. We will strive to increase employee and management awareness of collaboration and innovation opportunities within the agency, and will develop guidance describing how employees can utilize these opportunities. To this end, the DOT will ensure employees are:

- Aware that appropriate collaboration with non-DOT entities is encouraged and expected;
- Educated about the methods that are available to encourage collaboration; and
- Empowered to recommend challenges and competitions, as appropriate, by developing guidance that describes when and how to use them.

## Section 3.3.2: Process for Establishing a Challenge or Competition for Engaging the Public

Challenges and competitions have been used by the DOT in partnership with citizen groups, businesses, other government entities, and individuals to generate ideas on how to enhance collaboration and innovation. Unlike other agencies that administer innovation programs, such as NASA, the Department of Energy (DOE), and the DOD, the DOT does not have direct statutory authority (i.e., Congressional approval and funding) to administer challenges and competitions with monetary incentives.[2] However, the DOT, like most Federal agencies that do not have specific funding for challenges or competitions, may be able to use appropriated funds for challenges and competitions as long as they directly relate to the mission of the agency and are considered a "necessary expense" under appropriation law (i.e., they are considered expenses that help reach the specific purpose for which the funds are appropriated). Even if the challenge or competition does not call for a cash award, planning a competition requires funding and resources to stand up and manage the effort. Therefore, when considering a challenge or competition effort, DOT programs should consult their budget and legal offices first to determine if the intended funding source can be used.

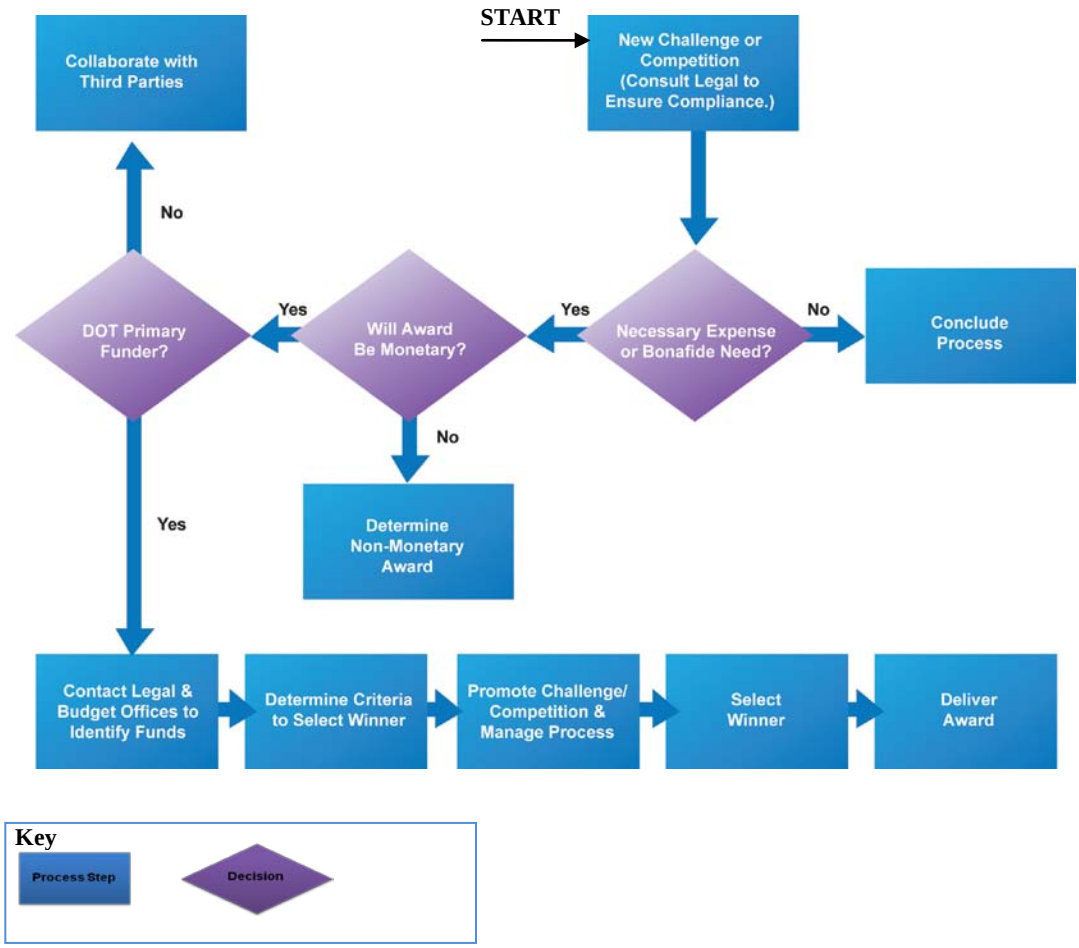
In addition to funding and authority limitations, Government-wide ethics and acquisition requirements need to be considered when planning a challenge or competition. These requirements prohibit the DOT from endorsing commercial products or services or unfairly selecting a particular provider of a product or service. The Government is expected to conduct

[2] DOT does have authority pursuant to 15 U.S.C. § 3711c to make and present a medal to certain qualified motor vehicle manufacturers, suppliers, or laboratory personnel who "have substantially improved domestic motor vehicle research and development in safety, energy savings, or environmental impact." 15 U.S.C. § 3711c(b). A cash prize may be awarded in this instance, if funded by a private source. This authority could be used in the future to support a prize or competition in collaboration with other entities.

business in an impartial manner. For this reason, the DOT must clearly establish the rules and selection criteria, and make them publically available prior to starting a competition. Agency legal counsel should be consulted to ensure that the framework for the competition is consistent with these considerations.

**Figure 9** shows the decision flowchart that DOT offices may use to guide how to start a challenge or competition. It portrays what needs to be considered when standing up a challenge or competition and the various steps to go through, from determining whether the challenge or award will be monetary to promoting the competition and selecting a winner. This process will be further refined and communicated across the DOT so employees are empowered to recommend challenges and competitions to enhance specific public collaboration and innovation goals, as appropriate.

**Figure 9: The DOT Challenges & Competitions Decision Flow-Chart**



## Section 3.3.3: Current DOT Challenges and Competitions

Several OAs within the DOT are already actively involved in supporting challenges and competitions. The FAA and NHTSA are leaders at the DOT in conducting challenges and competitions. Some examples of challenges and competitions that the DOT has led or participated in include:

**FAA Design Competition for Universities:** In partnership with several aviation associations and councils, the FAA sponsors a national Design Competition that engages university students in addressing issues related to airports. This competition was done as a necessary expense in furtherance of the FAA's aviation education mission. The competition challenges individuals and teams of undergraduate and graduate students and faculty advisors to consider innovative approaches to improving the management, safety, capacity, and efficiency of the nation's airports. 2010 is the fourth year of the competition. Cash incentives are awarded to the first, second, and third place teams in all major competition categories. Two representatives from the first-place team are also invited to accept their award and present their design at the FAA Headquarters in Washington, DC. To learn more visit http://faadesigncompetition.odu.edu.

**NHTSA Rural Youth Traffic Safety Competition:** In partnership with the National Organization for Youth Safety (NOYS), NHTSA and the Office of the Secretary of Transportation sponsored the DOT's Rural Youth Traffic Safety Message Competition in 2008. The contest was funded by NHTSA and conducted by NOYS, under a cooperative agreement with NHTSA. The contest invited school- or community- supported youth organizations to compete in developing a traffic safety campaign aimed at rural youth. The campaign message was to include a tagline or theme to be used in a variety of media (e.g., print, Web, etc.) and had to be implemented in at least one community. Incentives included cash awards to the top 10 finalist teams. The top three teams received larger cash awards and a trip to Washington, DC for an award ceremony at the DOT headquarters. This contest was aimed at reducing traffic crashes in rural areas, supported safety as a top DOT priority and NHTSA's mission, which is "Save lives, prevent injuries, and reduce economic costs due to road traffic crashes, through education, research, safety standards and enforcement activity." To learn more visit http://www.noys.org/YouthTrafSafe/Rural.html.

**RITA *Clarus* Research Challenge:** In March 2010, RITA kicked off a research competition to solicit innovative ideas for using the Clarus weather information system to improve roadway safety during severe weather. Launched in 2004 by the FHWA's Road Weather Management Program and the Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) Joint Program Office, Clarus provides a comprehensive picture of the weather along the

nation's roads that is available to any user, at anytime, anywhere in the U.S. The Department will sponsor up to seven innovative ideas, and intends to provide up to $80,000 per award in an open competition. This contest is designed to help improve road safety through new utilization of Clarus' unparalleled, live weather data in furtherance of the DOT's mission to serve the U.S. by ensuring a fast, safe, efficient, accessible and convenient transportation system.

In addition, the DOT has participated in challenges and competitions sponsored by other organizations including:

**Real World Design Challenge:** The Real World Design Challenge (RWDC), sponsored by the DOE, is an annual competition that provides high school students the opportunity to work on real-world engineering challenges in a team environment. Each year, student teams are asked to address a challenge that confronts our nation's leading industries. Students utilize professional engineering software to develop their solutions and also generate presentations that convincingly demonstrate the value of their solutions. The winning team from each State-level competition receives an all-expenses-paid trip to Washington, DC to participate at the national event. The FAA does not fund this effort, but is a crucial partner, providing aviation engineering mentorship and expertise to students. Funding for FAA participation was secured as a necessary expense in furtherance of the FAA's aviation education mission. Participation in this challenge allows the FAA to further its mission of providing the safest, most efficient aerospace system in the world by fostering innovation and learning in tomorrow's aerospace engineers and innovators. To learn more visit http://realworlddesignchallenge.org.

**National Aviation Art Contest:** The National Aviation Art Contest, sponsored by the National Aeronautic Association and supported by Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University, in association with the National Association of State Aviation Officials, National Coalition for Aviation Education, and the FAA, is an annual competition that encourages children to create artwork inspired by themes in the aviation world. The theme for the 2010 Contest is "Flying with the Sun." Children ages 6 - 17 are eligible to participate, and the top entries from each State are sent to Washington, DC, to compete in the national competition. National winners receive ribbons and a framed reproduction of their artwork. International winners receive certificates and gold, silver, or bronze medals. Funding for FAA participation was secured as a necessary expense in furtherance of the FAA's aviation education mission. Participation in this challenge allows the FAA to further its mission of providing the safest, most efficient aerospace system in the world by fostering awareness and appreciation of aviation in tomorrow's leaders. To learn more visit http://aviationartcontest.org.

The DOT is also in the process of developing new challenges and competitions that would help further our mission and enhance public collaboration:

- The FAA has teamed with the DOT's Volpe National Transportation Systems Center to develop an alternative-aviation fuel challenge, and is currently defining and developing the process for conducting the competition and identifying sponsorship and funding. This challenge will encourage the development of an alternative aviation fuel to help control or eliminate harmful aviation emissions.
- The FAA is also in the earliest stages of considering whether to establish a challenge in the commercial space transportation area. This challenge would encourage and promote commercial space launches and reentries by the private sector, including those involving space flight participants, and promote public-private partnerships to build or operate a space launch and reentry infrastructure. The FAA is currently exploring potential funding sources for such a challenge.

The DOT is dedicated to further exploring opportunities to collaborate with our employees, stakeholders, and citizens through these and other innovative methods. We will continue to explore ways to expand upon our existing efforts, and start new efforts to identify the best ways to make our Government more open, transparent, and collaborative, and improve the quality and effectiveness of the DOT's operations.

## Section 3.4: Changes to Internal Governance and Policies to Improve Transparency, Participation, and Collaboration

In developing policies and guidance to support and manage Open Government, the DOT will consider many issues pertaining to business transformation, structured and unstructured information, forums and methods, and Web-related policy. We recognize that policies should be living documents since emerging technologies regularly open new forms of communication between Government and the people. The DOT's internal policy process requires annual reviews of all policies to ensure that roles and responsibilities are current and to evaluate if policy statements should be revised. Thus, the DOT will evaluate the effectiveness of the policies and practices developed pursuant to the Open Government Directive on a regular basis. The DOT plans to make changes to internal management and administrative policies to further those principles by April 2011.

A policy group will be reconstituted very soon to make recommendations to senior leadership about many of the policies described in this section. The segments described in the timeline below represent a prioritized approach to policy development. These segments are discussed in more detail in the next section.

- Policies and/or guidance to be completed by October 2010:
    - Develop Web policy segment.
    - Develop structured information transparency segment.
    - Develop digital methods segment.

- Policies and/or guidance to be completed by April 2011:
    - Develop business methods segment.
    - Develop unstructured information transparency segment.
    - Develop non-digital methods segment.
    - Identify and formalize governance structure.

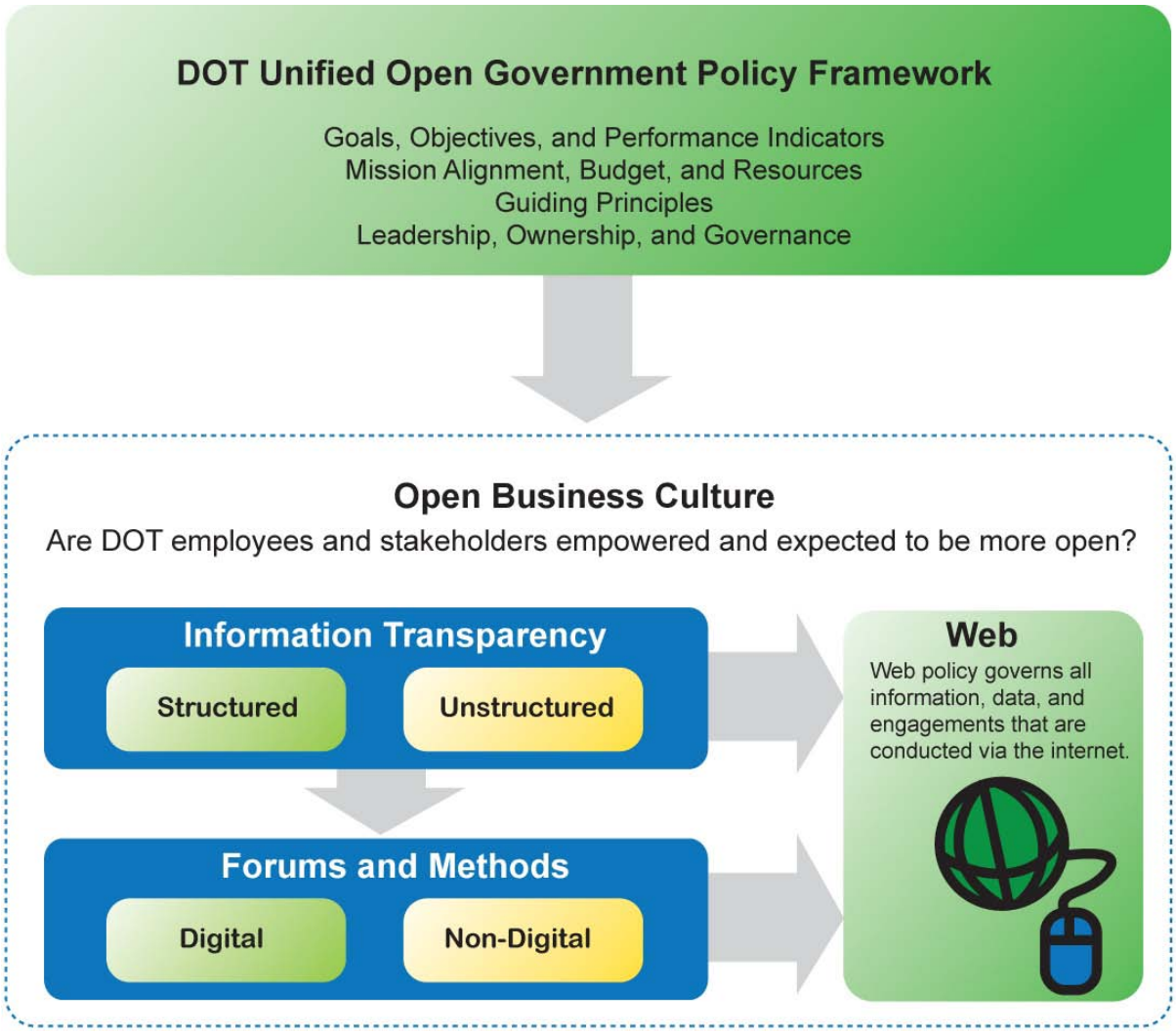
## Section 3.4.1: DOT's Unified Open Government Policy Framework

The DOT's Open Government Policy Working Group, that was convened to recommend a policy development strategy to senior leadership, consisted of subject matter experts from policy, budget, performance, strategic planning, human resources, technology operations, and legal. This group has identified that pursuing a unified Open Government Policy at the DOT can accomplish many things:

- Direct employees to a "one-stop-shop" for policy areas they must consider when using Open Government principles to meet their business needs;
- Identify governance bodies that will be accountable for ensuring compliance and approving data release, technology adoption, and shifts in strategic direction, as appropriate; and
- Manage the risks associated with openness by identifying what employees must to do to be more transparent, participatory, and collaborative.

Developing a unified Open Government policy for the DOT is a large task. Some major policy areas are well understood, including policies around data transparency and the selection and use of social media tools. However, to create a policy framework that drives towards the DOT's strategic goals for Open Government, a unified policy should consider more than those well-understood areas. **Figure 10** illustrates the scope of what a comprehensive Open Government policy could look like. The DOT will develop and/or update policies in the better understood areas first (e.g., data transparency, digital tools, and Web) and will evaluate the need for more novel policies next (e.g., business culture, information transparency, and non-digital methods).

**Figure 10: The DOT Unified Open Government Policy Framework**




The DOT has existing policies in many of the areas described in this section. However, in order to make them more useful and accessible to employees in the context of openness, by April 2011 DOT will consider updating and tying them together, as appropriate. The segments that have been explored are described in more detail below. These may be "policies" or "guidance," depending on the nature of the issues. Please note that the final products may look significantly different from the framework introduced in **Figure 10.** However, this illustrates our preliminary recommendations and roadmap. For more information about all the specific principles (e.g., plain language, records management, security) described in this section, please see **Section 3.4.3**.

## Open Business Culture

An evolving, open business culture is fundamental to ensuring that the principles of Open Government are woven into the way the DOT does business. It will likely answer the question of "why" Open Government is important. This portion will likely include employee behavior and ethics policies, plain language policies, guiding principles, and a description of governance.

## Information Transparency

Once the stage is set for employees to understand what tools are available to increase public engagement in their daily work, the Department will explore establishing processes for decision makers to prioritize the Department's resources in posting information. Moreover, those processes must ensure that information posted is "releasable" and "usable" both in content and format. Content releasability is determined with value, quality, security, privacy, and confidentiality interests in mind. Format guidelines will differ depending on whether the information is structured or unstructured. Policies in this area will be tied to the data release process work described in **Section 3.1.1**.

The DOT will continue to release DOT data in a timely manner by proactively making it available online in consistent, open formats, while assuring accuracy and protecting privacy, security, and confidentiality. This will require that the data transparency segment considers content and format releasability in the following areas: infrastructure, records management, enterprise architecture, accessibility, quality, security, privacy, confidentiality, and format.

## Forums and Methods

Once the content and format releasability of the information to be shared is considered, the Department should evaluate which forums and methods it will use to convey information, enable participation and encourage collaboration. There are both digital and non-digital methods for transparency, participation, and collaboration. Accessibility, security, information collection, records management, and privacy issues should be considered regardless of the method chosen.

The digital methods segment is largely understood across the Federal Government. Many Departments call these policies "social media" or "Internet based capabilities" policies. Thus, the DOT will leverage those best practices and start developing the digital methods policy in the near term.

The non-digital methods segment will be more difficult to develop. Non-digital methods for engagement may include conferences, forums, conference calls, or advisory group meetings (consistent with the Federal Advisory Committee Act). Policies and guidance exist, but can be

difficult for employees to locate. This segment will consider locating references to all the policy considerations in one location, making it easier for employees to know the scope of the principles they must consider when transparently engaging the public.

Web/Internet

The final large segment that will be considered and updated in the unified DOT Open Government policy is the DOT Web policy. Most information that is shared with the public is made available via the Internet. Valuable information is information that is useful, searchable, and findable. Thus, all information that is posted via the Web must follow the DOT's Web policy. The updated Web policy may consider the following principles: accessibility, uses and development standards, security, privacy, confidentiality, links, cookies, banners/disclaimers, terms of service, site mapping, OMB requirements, intellectual property, and use of the DOT seal or signature.

## Section 3.4.2: Sustainable Governance Approach

A strength of the DOT's Open Government initiative is that we have several established governance bodies that can absorb some of the responsibilities associated with openness. This is crucial to ensure the sustainability of this effort. The DOT will leverage the strength of its existing governance bodies to ensure Open Government principles are incorporated with our every-day principles. Without a formalized governance structure aligned with the policy framework, the roles and responsibilities associated with the policies will be difficult to enforce. Thus, identifying and formalizing a governance structure is critical to managing and enforcing the policies associated with the Open Government initiative.

As required by the Open Government Directive, the DOT has designated two DOT Open Government officials: a senior accountable official (SAO) for financial data quality and a senior official to serve on the interagency Open Government working group established by Executive Office of the President officials. The two DOT officials are listed on the www.dot.gov/open Web site. In addition, there are many DOT governance bodies already in existence that may be able to absorb the responsibility for oversight in the policy segments described above. Where possible, the DOT does not intend to create new governance bodies for Open Government. Instead, the DOT will incorporate the accountability for Open Government segments into the charters for existing and operational governance bodies. The governance bodies accountable for each segment area will be identified as the policy segments are developed. There are several existing bodies that may be included in this sustainable governance structure:

**Performance Management Council (PMC):** The DOT PMC consists of senior leadership from across the Office of the Secretary and the OAs. The PMC is accountable

for creating the performance scorecard that DOT executives use to evaluate progress in strategic areas. Open Government performance measures will be considered by senior executive to be incorporated into the organizational excellence section of the scorecard and monitored by this group. This group has unique visibility into how transparency, participation, and collaboration efforts affect mission specific performance measures as well as organizational excellence. Thus, this body is a natural candidate to oversee the strategic direction of the DOT's Open Government efforts as it monitors the Department's performance.

**Chief Information Officer (CIO) Council:** The CIO Council's membership consists of the CIOs from each OA as well as the DOT CIO. This group will play a role in any information technology-related policies developed at the DOT.

**Technology Control Board (TCB):** The TCB reviews, evaluates, and tests new tools required for the DOT to meet its business needs. Digital methods for Open Government will be technically evaluated based on the same criteria as other tools considered for implementation at the DOT. Thus, this body is being considered as the responsible body for the digital methods segment.

**DOT Data.gov Group:** The DOT created a Data.gov group when Data.gov was launched in the summer of 2009. This group has identified and vetted the data sets that have been released through Data.gov in open formats thus far. Therefore this group will be involved in the data transparency aspects of the DOT's Open Government initiative. However, this group is not currently formally chartered. Thus, a near-term milestone of the DOT Open Government initiative is to formalize a data strategy group, which may or may not be known permanently as the data.gov group.

This governance and leadership structure will be successful and sustainable only insomuch as employees adhere to the Open Government policy. Employees will not be able to adhere to the policy if they are not properly informed of its existence and trained in its use. The DOT must develop a policy and governance framework that provides guidance to DOT personnel on Open Government principles.

## Section 3.4.3: Principles to Consider in Open Government Efforts

This section provides a summary of the principles important to Open Government.

- **Accessibility:** Open Government must include people with disabilities. Federal law requires that programs and resources provide comparable access and equivalent communications to people with disabilities, including alternative methods and formats, unless it would be an undue burden on the agency.

- **Acquisition:** To acquire services in support of this initiative the DOT must follow policies identified in the Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR), and the FAA must follow policies in its AMS.

- **Confidentiality:** Web pages must not publicly display sensitive information of any kind (e.g., confidential business, personally identifiable, financial, acquisition-sensitive, security-sensitive, law enforcement/investigative-sensitive, or information that could enable the public to circumvent the law). Redaction software can be used to remove sensitive information, but only with appropriate controls to ensure the redactions are "locked."

- **Employee Behavior/Ethics:** When engaged in Open Government initiatives, employees should be mindful that they are representing the interests of the DOT and should act with the highest level of professionalism and integrity and in accordance with Government standards of ethical conduct.

- **Enterprise Architecture:** A complete enterprise architecture (EA) will help to identify the current and future state of the agency and assist in laying out a plan for transitioning to a more open and transparent organization.

- **Infrastructure:** The DOT will determine what the demands on the network infrastructure will be. Some tools require significant bandwidth to use and may require adjustments and funding.

- **Information Collection:** An Information Collection Request (ICR) to and approval from the OMB may be required when collecting information from ten or more members of the public. This activity is governed by the Paperwork Reduction Act (PRA). An ICR can include surveys, focus groups, and other feedback mechanisms.

- **Intellectual Property** (e.g., copyright, trademark, patents, and licensing): New information may be created. The DOT will monitor information coming in to ensure compliance with copyright and trademark law, which includes appropriate attribution to the owner/creator/artist. Copyright protection is not available for any work of the U.S. Government. Providers releasing third party information shall properly attribute to the owner/creator/artist.

- **Open Formats:** The DOT will utilize open formats that are platform independent, machine readable, and made available to the public without restrictions that would impede the re-use of that information.

- **Plain Language:** Transparency means we make information available. Clarity means we make that information easy to understand and use. Plain language is our pathway to clarity.

- **Privacy:** Web pages must not collect Personally Identifiable Information (PII), except as necessary to achieve program purposes, and must not publicly display PII. A Privacy Impact Assessment (PIA) is required for any IT system that will contain PII. A System of Records Notice (SORN) is required for any paper-based or IT system of records that will contain PII if the PII will be regularly retrieved by name or personal identifier.

- **Quality:** Data collected by the DOT for statistical, financial, programmatic, or other such purposes will be subjected to standardized data quality assurance and internal control practices to ensure its integrity and accuracy. Each data collection and maintenance protocol will be documented and routinely evaluated and assessed to ensure its compliance with laws and regulations and that adequate controls are in place and functional. Data quality standards, measures, and clearance processes should be included to ensure the DOT's current and future dissemination of consistent, high-quality, and high-value information and data, consistent with the Data Quality Act.

- **Records Management:** The Federal Records Act requires that all Federal agencies make and preserve records to document their organization, functions, policies, decisions, procedures, and essential transactions. The use of Open Government tools may create Federal records. Program offices need to be aware that the creation and management of these records are governed by the records management policies of the DOT.

- **Security:** All Federal departments are required by law to ensure that their IT systems are secure. The DOT must ensure that new systems are certified and accredited and meet the regulations set forth by Federal Information Security Management Act (FISMA) and National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) standards. Also, data sets have

the potential to be combined to reveal sensitive information. Thus any data set that is released from the DOT must be carefully reviewed against the "mosaic" of data publicly available to ensure its release does not compromise any sensitive information.

- **Sensitive Security Information (SSI):** Information classified as SSI is a protected form of information, like classified or Sensitive But Unclassified (SBU) information. The DOT OST and designated organizational elements, including the FAA, have authority provided by Congress (49 U.S.C. § 40119 and 49 CFR Subpart A, Part 15) to designate/protect certain security information meeting the definition/criteria of SSI. Furthermore, under the FOIA process, SSI information is withheld under exemption three of FOIA.

- **Terms of Service/Terms of Use:** Terms of Service (TOS) and Terms of Use (TOU) establish the agreement between the provider and the Government for use of, for example, social media such as Facebook. Many provider terms of service agreements are not acceptable for Government use unless modified. Even when common terms have been negotiated, legal and CIO review must be obtained prior to use to ensure DOT policies and guidelines are not nullified or superseded by the TOS or TOU.

- **Web/Internet:** Any information posted on the Web must align with the DOT Web policy, which contains information about uses and development standards, links, cookies, banners/disclaimers, terms of service, site mapping, OMB requirements and DOT seal/signatures. Presentation of data will conform to the requirements of Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act as amended.

# Chapter 4: DOT-Specific Open Government Initiatives

This chapter describes the DOT's Open Government initiatives, designed to enhance openness and collaboration in mission areas. The DOT's flagship initiative is the "Regulation Room." It is a pilot project in partnership with the Cornell e-Rulemaking Initiative (CeRI) to discover the best ways of using Web 2.0 and social networking technologies to further rulemaking efforts. This project is the first of its kind anywhere in Federal rulemaking and DOT hopes that it will help identify ways to make it easier for everyone to comment on regulatory topics that impact their lives, such as distracted driving or being bumped from an oversold airline flight. The goal is to increase public understanding of proposed rules and the rulemaking process and encourage more effective public input and collaboration. In addition, this chapter includes proposals for new feedback mechanisms and collaboration platforms designed to increase interaction and communication between the DOT and citizens. Finally, this chapter describes several Open Government related initiatives that are underway to enhance transparency.

## Section 4.1: Flagship Initiative: Regulation Room

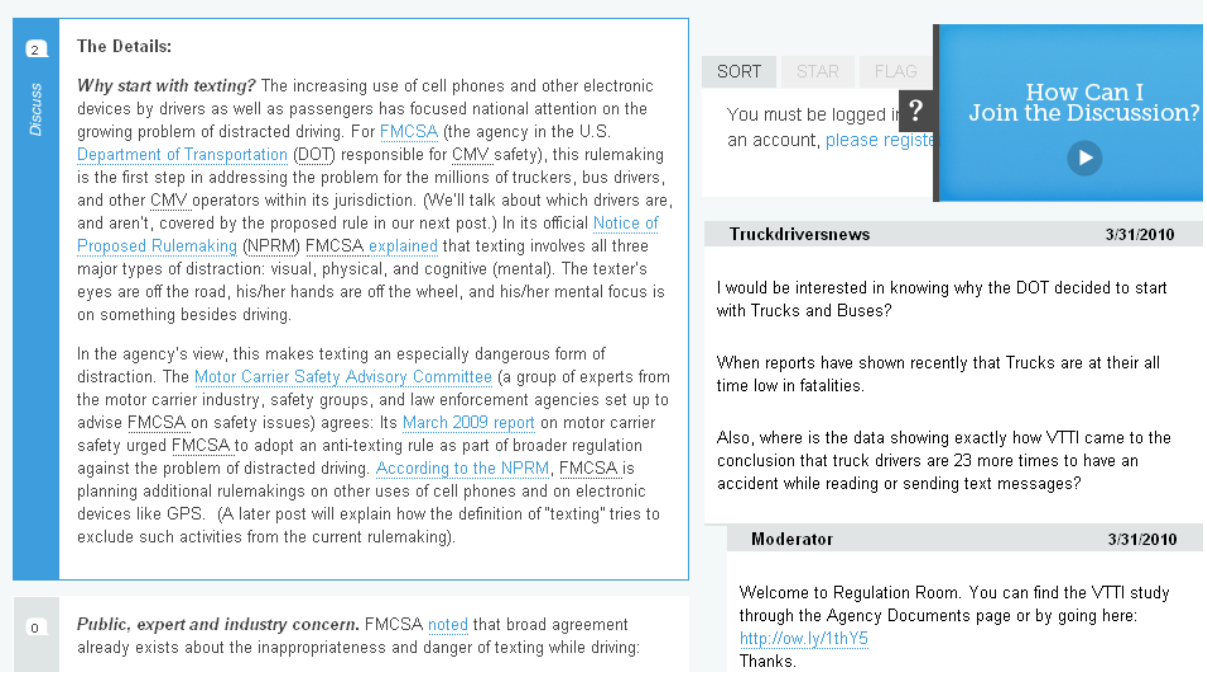
To support the President's Open Government initiative, the DOT has partnered with CeRI in a pilot project, Regulation Room, to discover the best ways of using Web 2.0 and social networking technologies to:

- More effectively alert the public that rulemaking is occurring in areas of interest to them;
- Increase public understanding of each proposed rule and the rulemaking process; and
- Help the public formulate more effective individual and collaborative input to the DOT.

Over the course of several rulemaking proposals, CeRI will use different Web technologies and approaches to try to increase public understanding and participation regarding rulemaking, work with the DOT to evaluate the advantages and disadvantages of these techniques, and report their findings and conclusions on the most effective use of Web 2.0 and social networking technologies in this area to the DOT and the public.

**Figure 11** illustrates how CeRI encourages participation in rulemaking through the FMCSA proposed texting rule that began on March 31, 2010.

**Figure 11: Regulation Room Screen Shot**




## Section 4.1.1: Background

The DOT's work on this project began in the early days of the current Administration. As a recognized Government leader in using the Internet to proactively inform the public on all aspects of its rulemakings, the DOT was asked to experiment with Web 2.0 tools as a way to increase public involvement and collaboration in the rulemaking process. While the DOT was exploring internal options, CeRI approached the DOT with an idea to conduct a pilot project in e-Rulemaking that would do everything and more than we were considering doing internally. Cornell University is widely respected for its work at the intersection of the Internet and the law. This is evidenced by projects such as the Legal Information Institute, one of the first and still most widely used free sites for researching legal information. Therefore, the DOT was eager to work with CeRI to benefit from the combined talents of both organizations. The CeRI's multi-disciplinary team contains law professors, social scientists, computer programmers, and trained facilitators to complement the DOT's administrative law and transportation expertise.

## Section 4.1.2: How does the public normally get involved in the rulemaking process?

Currently, an agency issues its proposed rulemaking in the Federal Register and may take such additional steps as issuing a press release and posting the document on its Web site. The public then has notice of the proposal and can submit comments on it by uploading a document to Regulations.gov, mailing in a letter to the agency, or occasionally by attending a public meeting. The design of this process results in a series of one-way communications, where the Government speaks to the public and then various members of the public speak back to the Government. The process generally does not allow for a back-and-forth dialogue, nor does it allow the public an opportunity to respond to comments from others.

**Announcing CeRI on the Fast Lane Blog on March 31, 2010**

"Proposing a new rule opens a 30-day period when we want to hear input from the public. Typically, people submit their comments to the DOT docket at the Web site Regulations.gov.

But we have begun a groundbreaking partnership with Cornell University to make commenting on this proposed rule easier and more transparent with a new Web site, Regulation Room (http://www.regulationroom.org). This new Cornell e-rulemaking initiative (CeRI) provides an online public participation environment where people can learn about and discuss proposed federal regulations and provide useful feedback to DOT.

With its interactivity, the Regulation Room is even more accessible and dynamic than Regulations.gov.

About the proposed rule itself, I want to point out that those who text while driving are more than 20 times more likely to get in an accident than non-distracted drivers. FMCSA's research shows that drivers who send and receive text messages take their eyes off the road for an average of 4.6 seconds out of every 6 seconds while texting. At 55 miles per hour, 4.6 seconds is enough time to travel the length of an entire football field plus both end zones.

Now, imagine a truck or bus hurtling that distance at that speed with a driver whose attention is not on the road ahead. I think you can see that there would be consequences. Maybe not every time, but it only takes one time to do the kind of horrific damage I've been writing about on this blog and we've been talking about on Distraction.gov."

## Section 4.1.3: How will this project engage the public differently from the normal rulemaking process?

1. **Outreach:** CeRI will attempt to reach the public where they are, rather than relying on them to come to the Government as the process currently requires. So, in addition to attracting the "usual" participants that would comment when the DOT issues a proposed rulemaking in the Federal Register, CeRI will also attempt to reach the vast majority of the public that does not read the Federal Register or routinely visit DOT Web sites. CeRI will search for advocacy groups likely to be interested, blogs that deal with the subject matter area, relevant social networking pages, and any other online venues that can help to spread the word virally about the proposed regulation.

2. **Two-way communication:** The Regulation Room Web site will be set up to explain the rulemaking process to members of the public who may be unfamiliar with it and then to stimulate discussion on the proposed rule through regular blog postings on aspects on which the DOT is seeking input. However, CeRI facilitators will also monitor the discussion and follow-up with commenters to make sure that supporting data is provided with comments, which greatly improves the worth of the information for the DOT. Too often, we receive comments on proposals that have no supporting data, which makes them difficult to evaluate or rely on.

3. **Responding to others' comments:** Regulation Room will openly show comments from everyone who chooses to participate. Commenters will then be able to respond to each other, deepening discussion of the issue and hopefully leading to greater collaboration in reaching a consensus that could be useful for the DOT.

4. **Collaboration between commenters:** In order to have the discussion between commenters in Regulation Room help influence the rulemaking process, CeRI staff will prepare a summary of the discussion that will then be posted to the site for commenters to collaboratively edit prior to its final version being submitted to the DOT on behalf of the commenters. Of course, those people who participated in Regulation Room are still free to file their own comments with the DOT as well. The DOT will not participate in any activity on the Regulation Room Web site.

### Section 4.1.4: Which DOT strategic goals does this project support?

By investigating how to improve the quality and amount of data received from the public in response to rulemaking proposals, this project supports each and every one of the DOT's primary strategic goals because rulemaking is such an integral part of all DOT operations. This initiative also supports all the Government-specific goals and several objectives of the Open Government initiative, including:

- Present in a clear manner DOT information about programs and objectives;
- Maintain commitment to collecting and responding to public input on DOT policies and programs in innovative ways; and
- Enhance collaboration with other Federal agencies, the private sector, and other non-government organizations in providing mission-related services.

### Section 4.1.5: What types of proposed rules will be used in this pilot project?

For this project, the DOT and CeRI will concentrate on proposed rules that would impact large segments of the public, such as those dealing with distracted driving and consumer issues.

### Section 4.1.6: How are the three principles of Open Government supported by this project?

CeRI supports the principles of transparency, participation, and collaboration as detailed in **Table 4**.

**Table 4: Regulation Room Support for Open Government Principles**

| Open Government Principle | Regulation Room Support |
|---|---|
| **Transparency** | • Explores ways to make DOT information more accessible through graphics, videos, etc.; and<br>• Investigates another potential way to reach the public and solicit their comments. |

| Open Government Principle | Regulation Room Support |
|---|---|
| **Participation** | • Reaches people who otherwise might not know about a proposed rule;<br>• Engages the public in a less formal and intimidating way by going beyond traditional Government communication channels;<br>• Uses facilitators to bring out more detailed and better-supported information from the public; and<br>• Supports a new process that, with facilitation, may achieve consensus. |
| **Collaboration** | • Demonstrates collaboration with the public and Cornell University;<br>• Enables members of the public to collaborate with each other and with Cornell; and<br>• Enables other Federal agencies to collaborate with the DOT and Cornell. |

### Section 4.1.7: Other Project Partners

The DOT and Cornell have met with other Federal agencies including the DHS the U.S. Coast Guard, the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, the Federal Communications Commission, and the EPA, to solicit suggestions on how to improve the project and gauge interest in incorporating rulemakings from other agencies into the project.

### Section 4.1.8: Measuring Project Success and Project Sustainability

As mentioned, this is a pilot project to test the viability of Web 2.0 tools and social networking technologies to put the Government in better touch with the public. The end product of this project will be a publicly available report from CeRI on the value of this approach to increasing openness in Government, including lessons learned and any identified best practices. This will ensure that every Government agency has the option to learn from the work done here and adopt this approach to further open its doors to the public. Even where resources are not available to allow Government agencies to use this approach, interested members of the public could take the lessons learned from this project to use the same collaborative approach to involving others in developing better comments for submission to the Government. The project also further refines a software platform built specifically for this project that Federal agencies could use in the future to facilitate public commenting on rulemakings and any other documents.

In evaluating the success of the project, Cornell and the DOT will take advantage of the following:

- Evaluation of more than one rule, allowing the use of different outreach and collaboration techniques to best evaluate which is most effective;
- The CeRI's neutral objectivity in evaluating best practices and lessons learned;
- Objective evaluation measures, such as site traffic, trends, and navigation behavior;
- Subjective evaluation measures, such as the quality of submissions or data and the amount of consensus achieved in a particular summary; and
- Possible American Bar Association evaluation and recommendations on the pilot project.

## Section 4.2: Proposals for New Feedback Mechanisms

The DOT has several proposals for new feedback mechanisms and technology platforms to increase public engagement and improve collaboration. The DOT will continue to explore how open source software could provide economical and useful tools to its employees and its interactions with the public. The following initiatives all support DOT Open Government efforts. However, not all of these initiatives will be immediately pursued. The DOT will prioritize initiatives based on our highest priority objectives.

### Section 4.2.1: Targeted Citizen Feedback Tool

As part of the Open Government Directive requirements, the DOT used the GSA's IdeaScale online citizen engagement tool to solicit public feedback on the DOT's Open Government Plan. The DOT IdeaScale site (www.opendot.ideascale.com) asked the public to share ideas and comments on how the DOT could improve performance in the areas of transparency, participation, collaboration, and innovation. Individuals also had the ability to vote for ideas they thought were important, flag ideas as off-topic, and share ideas with other people via email or social media channels to help promote increased attention to topics they considered pressing. The site was open for public comment from February 6 through March 19, 2010 for the purpose of collecting public feedback to consider during the development of our Open Government Plan, as detailed in **Chapter 1**. The public can now review the ideas and comments that came in on the site and see how people voted.

This initiative supported the following Open Government objective: "Maintain commitment to collecting and responding to public input on DOT policies and programs in innovative ways."

### Section 4.2.2: Public Feedback on Strategic Plans

The DOT is also pursuing using a brainstorming platform in 2010 to solicit public feedback on

the DOT Strategic Plan, which outlines the Department's goals and strategies for improving the U.S. transportation sector over the next five years. The DOT will ask the public to share ideas and comments on policy goals and strategic initiatives. Individuals will again be able to flag ideas as off-topic and share ideas with other people via email or social media channels to help promote increased attention to topics they consider important. The DOT is committed to engaging the public during the development of crucial DOT plans in a transparent fashion, and will continue to promote the use of online tools to collect feedback and collaborate with citizens.

This initiative supports the following Open Government objective: "Maintain commitment to collecting and responding to public input on DOT policies and programs in innovative ways."

### Section 4.2.3: Data.gov Rating System

The DOT is considering mechanisms to better collect feedback on the quality and perceived value of data released by the DOT. The DOT is proposing two ways to collect this feedback on data value and data quality.

The first is to provide a formal recommendation to the Data.gov Project Management Officer (PMO) to expand their current "5-star" rating system from just allowing citizens to rate on data utility, usefulness, and ease of access to allowing citizens to rate data sets on data quality and data value. Making this update to the Data.gov rating system would not only provide benefits to the DOT, but would allow for consistent ratings across the Federal Government.

The DOT will also develop a feedback mechanism on our DOT site so that our stakeholders can more easily access and rate our data sets. This will drive more ratings by the individuals used to coming to our Web site for transportation information. The DOT would do this by encouraging the development of a Data.gov widget that would allow us to pull in the Data.gov look and feel to our Departmental Open Government Web site to display with our existing data sets. This widget would pull in the 5-star rating system and the comment box for citizens to comment about the specific data sets. Citizens would be able to vote on our data sets and provide comments in one central location, since not all DOT data is on Data.gov.

This initiative supports the following Open Government objective: "Continue to release DOT data in a timely manner by proactively making it available online in consistent, open formats, while assuring accuracy and protecting privacy, security, and confidentiality."

### Section 4.2.4: Supporting Aviation Consumer Protection

The DOT proposes to use on-line video to provide consumers and the flying public with "How To" videos on consumer protection topics such as how to fly safely, or flying with animals, etc.

It could provide another avenue of access to a wealth of information for the flying public that is currently on our Web site.

This initiative supports the following Open Government objective: "Present in a clear manner DOT information about programs and objectives."

## Section 4.3: Proposals for New Collaboration Platforms

The DOT has several proposals for new collaboration platforms to increase public engagement and improve collaboration. The DOT will continue to explore how open-source software could provide economical and useful tools to our employees and their interactions with the public. The following initiatives all support DOT Open Government efforts. However, not all of these initiatives will be immediately pursued. The DOT will prioritize initiatives based on our highest priority objectives.

### Section 4.3.1: Use of Internal and External Collaboration Platform and Social Networking

The DOT is exploring how we can increase internal collaboration by making better use of our existing internal collaboration tool and intranet (SharePoint). There is potential for this platform to be used for knowledge management as well. This will require increased employee training and awareness of site capabilities and features.

The DOT will also explore employing an internal social networking capability, either in combination with the existing internal collaboration platform or in addition to the existing platform. Connecting employees with one another will encourage the development of communities of interest around specific subject areas (e.g., data, enterprise architecture, performance measurement, project management). These tools could better equip employees to problem solve and develop business transformation efforts organically.

Finally, DOT will also evaluate how we can increase external collaboration through an outward facing portal. This would equip us to increase participation and collaboration with the public and our stakeholders.

This initiative supports the following Open Government objectives:

- Enhance collaboration with other Federal agencies, the private sector, and other non-government organizations in providing mission-related services; and
- Encourage a cross-modal, interdisciplinary, collaborative and engaged workforce through improved communication, governance, and guidance regarding Open Government tools and programs.

## Section 4.3.2: Ideation

Another area the DOT will focus on is employing tools for internal ideation. IdeaHub is an online community concept that has been led by the FAA that enables innovation and cross-organizational collaboration. Employees can "build" ideas in a collaborative environment that provides a medium for great ideas to make it upstream to management. Using IdeaHub (or other tools like it), we can empower employees to develop, rate, and improve innovative ideas for programs, processes, and technologies.

The overall goal for using a collaborative process is to leverage our employees' ideas and to increase communication channels, to help DOT organizations to accomplish their mission, and to help make the DOT be a great place to work. The IdeaHub program is one way that we can enable employees to participate in changing their workplace and to have an active, visible role in improving the organization.

IdeaHub empowers all employees to contribute directly to the entire community. Employees can:

- Build a new idea;
- Participate in conversations about their idea and the ideas of others;
- Read the most recent comments and ideas posted;
- Rate other employees ideas; and
- See the best ideas acted upon in a transparent and open forum.

The DOT is currently exploring options for DOT-wide internal ideation. This initiative supports the following Open Government objective: "Encourage a cross-modal, interdisciplinary, collaborative, and engaged workforce through enhanced communication, governance, and guidance regarding Open Government tools and programs."

## Section 4.3.3: Secure Video Teleconferencing and Web Conferencing

Another mechanism the DOT will continue to use in a cost efficient manner is inviting collaboration with internal and external stakeholders through secure Web conferencing and video teleconferencing. With current Internet technologies, it is important that the DOT be a partner with the public in using these forms of communications channels to invite participation in the DOT decision-making process. In order to achieve this, it is important that the DOT explore expanding the capability in a robust and secure manner. The DOT will consider how to ensure that external outreach to stakeholders is segregated from regular DOT networks, enabling a direct digital channel to the public.

This initiative supports the following Open Government objective: "Enhance collaboration with other Federal agencies, the private sector, and other non-government organizations in providing mission-related services."

## Section 4.4: Other Open Government Related Initiatives

In addition to the previous initiatives, the DOT will consider piloting a new Web site to display maps illustrating DOT data, compile a Web 2.0 Business Service Catalog and conduct a redesign of its public Web site, DOT.gov. The topical data visualization pilot will explore how DOT can best contextualize its mission related data to provide a useful interface for the public. The Web 2.0 catalog will list services in the style of an applications store. The goal is to enhance transparency and participation with its service offerings. The update to the DOT's public Web site will implement Web 2.0 tools to increase collaboration.

### Section 4.4.1: New Web Site to Display Maps Illustrating DOT Data

The DOT is developing a platform that will allow topical data to be visualized geographically and contextualized in relation to priority DOT initiatives. This platform will allow the public to interface graphically and visually with transportation related data sets. Furthermore, the capability of this powerful visualization platform to display complex data "mash-ups" and dynamic presentation techniques is expected to motivate DOT programs to collect and share data in ways previously considered overly complex.

The system will focus on one topical set of data initially in order to design, develop, test and refine the platform. However, DOT is envisioning a platform that is scalable and rich in capability. The platform will ultimately be capable of expanding the number of data sets and will potentially integrate authoritative, relevant data from partners from across the Federal, state, and local Government landscape. This platform takes data availability a step further by providing a mechanism to contextualize data with respect to DOT mission priorities.

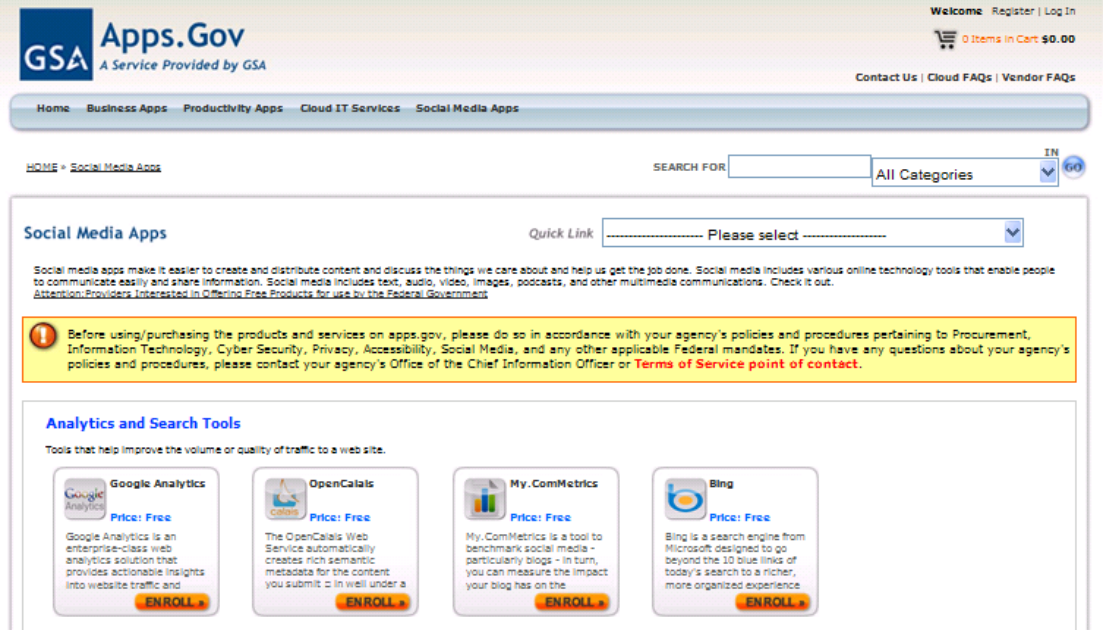
This platform will advance specific DOT objectives including:

- Present in a clear manner DOT information about programs and objectives; and
- Continue to release DOT data in a timely manner by proactively making it available online in consistent, open formats, while assuring accuracy and protecting privacy, security, and confidentiality.

## Section 4.4.2: Web 2.0 Business Service Catalog

As part of the ongoing DOT IT Business Services Catalog initiative, Web 2.0 tools could be a subset of services offered alongside other internal services such as desktop technical support. The initiative's concept is to display services in a similar look and feel as GSA's Apps.gov, complete with shopping cart and order fulfillment status. For those services not yet approved for use, they could be listed as future services with an expected availability date. This is an internal initiative for the DOT.

**Figure 12: Apps.gov Screen Shot**




Implementation of the DOT IT Business Services Catalog will not only create transparency in what the DOT does by displaying its service offerings, but also will create a participatory environment by which employees better utilize the DOT's capabilities.

This initiative supports the following Open Government objectives:

- Present in a clear manner DOT information about programs and objectives; and
- Continue to release DOT data in a timely manner by proactively making it available online in consistent, open formats, while assuring accuracy and protecting privacy, security, and confidentiality.

## Section 4.4.3: DOT Web site Re-design

The DOT has a wide range of stakeholders. The diversity of these stakeholders drives the need for a "best in class" Web site that is both dynamic and easily managed. The DOT's public facing Web page must be able to provide relevant information to other Government agencies, private sector businesses, and independent citizens. At the same time, the DOT's intranet must be able to supply vital information to employees, communicate throughout intradepartmental OAs. The DOT will update its Web presence by April 2011.

To meet those goals, the DOT's Web presence will align with and bring utility to the achievement of the Department's strategic goals. To align with the principles of Open Government, the DOT's updated Web presence will also strategically use crowd-sourcing tools, smart-phone applications, Facebook, Twitter, and other Web 2.0 mediums through multi-media pages.

An important step in enabling Web 2.0 tools to provide strategic utility to the Department is to ensure users see www.dot.gov as a valuable source of information. Users must have confidence in the quality, timeliness, and usability of the material on the DOT's Web site, and the content available must be current, functionally intuitive, and bring utility to the public's own missions or interests.

It is important to note that site loyalty is created by providing benefit to those using the implemented Web technologies. Users must feel inspired for critical thought through the creation of an informative and engaging experience while on www.dot.gov. This can be achieved by properly delivering everything from the visual uniformity of Web pages or tools, to stating the significance of specific data or tools and tying them back to the DOT's vision and mission. Implementing an intuitive Web solution that conveys the impact and significance of user feedback on the DOT's mission will help create stakeholder buy-in and create the site loyalty and openness that the DOT seeks to achieve.

In return, the DOT will benefit from the insight of crowd-wisdom through the public's continuous and repeated interaction with its public facing tools, applications, data, and other Web 2.0 mediums. The DOT must utilize this to its advantage in order to effectively capture the thought processes of tomorrow through its Web presence.

This initiative supports the following Open Government objectives:

- Present in a clear manner DOT information about programs and objectives; and
- Continue to release DOT data in a timely manner by proactively making it available online in consistent, open formats, while assuring accuracy and protecting privacy, security, and confidentiality.

# Chapter 5: Compliance with Information Dissemination Requirements

This chapter gives an overview of the DOT's compliance activities. It describes the agency's transparency initiatives that enhance communication internally and externally with citizens, including Data.gov, e-Rulemaking, IT Dashboards, Recovery.gov, and USAspending.gov. The chapter also discusses the DOT's records management program, Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) program, Congressional requests for information, and DOT's declassification program.

## Section 5.1: Compliance with Transparency Initiatives

The DOT has developed, participated in, and responded to transparency programs that enhance communication internally and externally with citizens, including Data.gov, e-Rulemaking, IT Dashboards, Recovery.gov, and USAspending.gov.

The following sections discuss these programs and the DOT's current steps towards meeting the program requirements. This section also discusses any current and significant gaps in compliance with program requirements.

### Section 5.1.1: Data.gov

A priority Open Government initiative for the Administration, Data.gov allows the public to easily find, download, and use data sets that are generated and held by the Federal Government. Data.gov provides a storefront for raw data sets, tools that leverage Federal data sets, and geo data. The site provides descriptions of the data, information about how to access the data sets, and an opportunity to rate their utility. The data catalogs will continue to grow as data sets are added. Federal Executive Branch data are included in the first version of Data.gov.

The DOT met the Open Government Directive requirement to publish data sets by January 21, 2010. The DOT has a Data.gov working group that plans and implements the DOT's Data.gov program. This working group also coordinates closely with other working groups on information declassification, data privacy and confidentiality, and information security to identify and propose solutions to hurdles to Open Government and data transparency in their respective areas.

### Section 5.1.2: e-Rulemaking

The Federal Docket Management System (FDMS) is an enhanced Federal-electronic docket management system. This system provides public access to Federal regulatory, adjudicatory, and other information by providing a one-stop Internet site for the public to search, view, download, and submit comments/submissions on them all. The FDMS is a major component of

the e-Rulemaking Presidential Initiative. The e-Rulemaking Initiative provides citizens and businesses easy access to the rulemaking process while streamlining and increasing the efficiency of internal agency procedures. The FDMS offers a standard online procedure for Federal Departments and agencies to handle and process rules. Regulations.gov allows the public to obtain information and to provide comments/submissions on proposed rulemakings and non-rulemakings that are open for comment or other public participation.

Led by the EPA, Regulations.gov is designed so that the public has a single point of access to regulatory and other information across the Federal Government. The initiative also reduces the cost generated by duplicate information systems and technical infrastructures.

Currently, the DOT documents are posted to Regulations.gov through the DOT Docket Operations Center. The DOT then uses an internal process for distribution and review. Employees in the DOT Dockets Office review the documents and approve them for permanent storage onto Regulations.gov.

## Section 5.1.3: IT Dashboard

In June 2009, the OMB launched the on-line IT Dashboard, which allows the American people to monitor IT investments across the Federal Government. The dashboard tracks performance of "major" IT investments as reported by Federal agencies and departments. Major IT investment means a system or an acquisition requiring special management attention because it: has significant importance to the mission or function of the agency, a component of the agency or another organization; is for financial management and obligates more than $500,000 annually; has significant program or policy implications; has high executive visibility; has high development, operating, or maintenance costs; is funded through other than direct appropriations; or is defined as major by the agency's capital planning and investment control process[3]. This site is administered by the OMB, and the DOT provides information on a monthly basis as required.

The IT Dashboard furthers "open" initiatives by allowing citizens to examine major IT investments and provide input concerning the effectiveness of each. Specifically, citizens are actively involved in TechStat accountability sessions. A TechStat accountability session is a face-to-face, evidence-based review of an IT program with OMB and agency leadership, powered by the IT Dashboard and input from citizens. TechStat sessions enable the Government to turnaround, halt or terminate IT investments that do not produce dividends for the American people. Investments are carefully analyzed with a focus on problem solving that leads to concrete action to improve performance.

[3] OMB Circular No. A-11 (2008), page 6 of Section 53

## Section 5.1.4: Recovery.gov

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (Recovery Act) was signed into law by President Obama on February 17th, 2009. It is an unprecedented effort to jumpstart our economy, create or save millions of jobs, and put a down payment on addressing long-neglected challenges so our country can thrive in the 21st century. The Act is an extraordinary response to a crisis unlike any since the Great Depression, and includes measures to modernize our nation's infrastructure, enhance energy independence, expand educational opportunities, preserve and improve affordable health care, provide tax relief, and protect those in greatest need.

To provide the public with greater transparency and create greater accountability the Administration created the recovery.gov Web site. The DOT provides this Web site with weekly updates on financial data and grant information. The DOT also posts much of this information on its own DOT.gov Web site. The DOT has established a number of working groups to review and develop policies to ensure that the information being released is valid and accurate. In addition to providing information to Web sites, the DOT also provides weekly updates to the Secretary, the Vice President's office and the Recovery Office at the White House on the progress of Recovery projects and the number of jobs created as a result of the Recovery Act.

In response to the volume of e-mail and telephone inquiries on the DOT's Recovery Act activities, the IT work group has brought the National Transportation Library's (NTL) Reference Service into the Recovery Act effort. The NTL has developed a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) Web site solution to address the most common concerns, and telephone and e-mail inquiries are routed to the NTL's Reference Service for response. This reference service is offered between 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. ET, Monday through Friday. The DOT responds to all inquiries within 24 hours. Performance metrics for the NTL's Reference Service are also being captured, reported, and used to identify additional candidates for FAQs.

## Section 5.1.5: USAspending.gov

This site is designed to provide the citizen insight into how the Government spends taxpayer dollars. The data in this site is largely from two sources: the Federal Procurement Data System (FPDS), which contains information about Federal contracts; and the Federal Assistance Award Data System (FAADS), which contains information about Federal Financial Assistance such as grants, loans, insurance, and direct subsidies like Social Security.

USASpending.gov furthers Open Government initiatives by ensuring that the financial information provided to the public is correct. The DOT has a Grants Information System (GIS) that provides the recipient's name, address, zip code, and identifying information to verify that data is correct.

The DOT will also perform a gap analysis shortly so the systems can be better integrated. Integrating the systems ensures that the DOT will provide consistent and accurate reporting both internally and externally at reduced cost. Within a year, the DOT plans to begin a modernization and integration effort to deploy a single, integrated Departmental acquisition platform through the Department to link all procurement functionality with the Department's Financial Management Business Transformation effort.

## Section 5.2: Records Management Program

### Roles and Responsibilities

Under the Federal Records Act, the DOT Secretary is responsible for the Department's records management (RM) program. This responsibility is delegated to the OCIO, who has overall responsibility for providing leadership, planning, policy, procedures, and guidance for managing information.

### Providing Benefits to the Public

The DOT was evaluating its RM program prior to issuance of the Open Government Directive. As a direct result of the Open Government Directive, we will be providing the public the opportunity to comment on the effectiveness of our program and recommend types of information they are interested in accessing through the Internet. Increasing the transparency of our RM program and improving the program will provide these benefits to the public:

- Improve public knowledge of our RM program;
- Improve DOT's ability to publish timely and accurate agency information;
- Increase agency accountability and responsiveness in decision making;
- Preserve public trust;
- Maintain continuity of DOT operations in the event of a disaster; and
- Protect records from inappropriate and unauthorized destruction and access.

### Section 5.2.1: Planning for Transparency

The DOT began its FY 2010 RM improvement activities by collaborating among stakeholder organizations, including the OCIO, representative OA program offices, the Office of the General Counsel, and IT Services. We plan to address RM planning efforts from an integrated, Department-wide perspective.

The DOT plans to assess the state of its RM program in FY 2010, in part, by comparing it to the RM programs of other Federal agencies. The DOT will collaborate with other agencies and study their RM Internet sites to leverage best practices and lessons learned from those agencies

The DOT elevated the priority of improving basic aspects of its RM Program as a near-term goal. The inclusion of RM as an area in the Open Government Directive emphasizes the importance of RM in the transparency of government.

## Section 5.2.2: Meeting Records Management Requirements

### Policy and Governance

The DOT has issued an RM Directive, in accordance with 36 Code of Federal Regulations, Subchapter B – Records Management, and the E-Government Act of 2002, that identifies the principles, responsibilities, and requirements for managing DOT records. The DOT's RM Directive provides the framework for DOT OAs to follow in complying with Federal laws, regulations and best practices for managing their records.

The DOT plans to facilitate employees' compliance with the principles of the Open Government Directive by increasing employees' awareness of RM requirements, improving the DOT's RM program, and providing additional supporting policy and governance to address any new RM issues that arise. We will also continue to identify opportunities for integrating RM into the planning processes for new business needs, projects and programs.

### Training

In January 2010, OGC provided e-discovery training to IT and RM stakeholders. Trainers emphasized the importance of maintaining complete inventories of the DOT's databases and records and the retention periods and practices applicable to them. As stated above, the Department plans to improve its RM implementation through increased employee awareness, including training.

### Improving Dissemination Practices

The DOT is improving its dissemination practices using existing and newly implemented Web capabilities. In March 2010, we developed an RM intranet and by April 2010, as part of the Open Government Directive, we plan to launch an Internet site to provide foundational information reflecting how DOT is addressing RM requirements. Both the intranet and Internet Web sites will provide a "one-stop shop" to view a variety of materials related to DOT's RM mission and practices, as well as policies, guidance, and training opportunities.

## Internal Dissemination

In 2009, the DOT conducted an internal survey to determine the types of information RM stakeholders wanted to see on the RM intranet site. Thus far, we have posted a subset of the information the RM stakeholders requested, and we are continually working to post more. Examples of information posted to the RM intranet site thus far:

- DOT RM policy;
- Links to National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) guidance and training;
- Working documents;
- Activity calendar;
- Records inventory and schedules; and
- DOT Records Officer contact information.

The DOT will use the RM intranet site to standardize RM processes and streamline the ability to collect and share timely and accurate RM information throughout the Department. Making RM information available on the intranet increases our ability to collaborate with employees and RM personnel across the Department and facilitates their compliance with RM requirements.

## External Dissemination

The DOT will make more information about its RM program publicly available through the new DOT RM Internet site, which will be linked to the DOT's Open Government Web site. Via the new DOT RM Web site, external entities, such as NARA and the general public, will have access to the same foundational RM information reflecting the state of our RM program that we maintain on the intranet site, excluding working documents and information inappropriate for release due to privacy, security, or other reasons.

We plan to use our external email box, DOTRecords@dot.gov, to allow citizens to comment on the effectiveness of our RM program and recommend the types of information they are interested in accessing through the Internet. During the first quarter of FY 2010, citizens had the opportunity to provide ideas to the DOT on the following RM-related topics: improving the availability and quality of information; improving working relationships between those inside and outside the government; and improving efficiency and innovation. By receiving and assessing the ideas and comments captured through these avenues of public participation, we can enhance the types of RM information we post internally and externally. This will reflect what our audience finds most useful, which will not only provide transparency, but increase the value of the information.

## Minimizing Duplication

The DOT is closely monitoring NARA's effort to implement an Electronic Records Archive (ERA), as the ERA will affect future DOT RM IT investments. The ERA will allow NARA to preserve virtually any kind of electronic record, free from dependence on any specific hardware or software. When operational, ERA is expected to support NARA's mission by making it easy for the public and Government officials to find, use, and rely on electronic federal records, and to make it easy for NARA to deliver those records in formats that people can readily use.

We plan to use RM tools and resource materials that NARA makes publicly available on its Web site, rather than creating duplicative tools and materials; and we plan to provide links to the tools and materials on NARA's Web site, rather than creating duplicative postings on the DOT's RM Web sites. Because NARA recently posted Federal agency records schedules on its Web site, it is not necessary for DOT to post DOT's records schedules on the DOT's RM Web sites. We are studying NARA's Web site to determine what information to collect and maintain on DOT's RM Web sites.

## Section 5.3: Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) Program

The DOT has a DOT-level FOIA office located in OST and FOIA offices in each of its components. In FY 2009, throughout DOT, 100 staff-years were spent in administering its FOIA programs. The 100 staff years include 34 full-time FOIA employees, and 66 staff-years of effort by people who worked part-time in performing FOIA-related functions. (The 66 staff-years include FOIA staff and attorneys who worked part-time on FOIA, program office staff who searched for and reviewed responsive records, and the time spent on FOIA by FOIA Public Liaisons, supervisors, and managers.)

The following is a breakdown of FOIA organizational structure by component:

- Several OAs, including FMCSA, FRA, FTA, MARAD, OIG, OST, PHMSA, and SLSDC, have centralized programs, where all FOIA responsibilities and activities are conducted by a central FOIA office. These centralized FOIA offices obtain records from their various program offices, review the documents, and make determinations regarding release of the documents.
- The FAA and FHWA operate their FOIA programs in a decentralized fashion, in which FOIA responsibilities and activities are shared among numerous field and headquarters program offices. Each of the decentralized offices receives FOIA requests, searches for records, reviews records, and makes releasability determinations. In these decentralized programs, there is an office at headquarters that oversees the implementation of the FOIA program and coordinates its component's portion of the Department's annual FOIA report.

- NHTSA's FOIA responsibilities and activities are conducted by the primary FOIA office, as well as one other headquarters program office.
- RITA's FOIA responsibilities and activities are primarily shared between a headquarters FOIA office and a field office (Volpe), with a second field office performing a small number of FOIA activities. The headquarters FOIA office coordinates RITA's portion of the annual report.

Additional FOIA Roles in the Department:

- Departmental FOIA Office: The DOT-wide FOIA Office provides direction, leadership, guidance, and assistance to the FOIA offices throughout DOT. This office hosts a monthly DOT-wide meeting for FOIA offices throughout DOT. The DOT FOIA Officer also serves as the FOIA Officer for the OST FOIA office. This office coordinates the overall FOIA annual report for the Department, as well as the Chief FOIA Officer report.
- Chief FOIA Officer: The Department's Chief FOIA Officer provides high-level oversight and support to the Department's FOIA programs, and "recommends adjustments to agency practices, personnel, and funding as may be necessary" to improve FOIA administration, including through an annual Chief FOIA Officer Report submitted to the U.S. Department of Justice.
- The FOIA Public Liaisons: The DOT has FOIA Public Liaisons throughout the Department, who serve as officials to whom FOIA requesters can raise concerns about service they have received from the FOIA Offices. FOIA Public Liaisons report to the Chief FOIA Officer on their FOIA-related activities.

## Section 5.3.1: FOIA Process for Analyzing and Responding to FOIA Requests

The process for all components except FAA and FHWA:

1. The FOIA Office that receives the request asks the appropriate program office(s) to search for responsive records.
2. Pertinent employees in the program office(s) search for responsive records and, to the extent records are located, provide them to the FOIA Office to undergo a review.
3. If an employee who provides responsive records believes that any of the records, or portions thereof, may be subject to an exemption from release, the employee indicates that to the FOIA Office when providing the records.
4. The FOIA Office reviews the responsive records in coordination with program office subject matter expert(s), and takes into consideration the subject matter expert(s)' input regarding whether particular information may be exempt from release.
5. The FOIA Office makes the ultimate determination regarding release.

When full disclosure of a record is not possible, the FOIA Office makes a partial disclosure of any reasonably segregable non-exempt portions.

When the FOIA Office determines that portions of a record are technically exempt from release, but the exemption is a discretionary exemption (e.g., Exemption 2 ("low 2") or Exemption 5 (deliberative process privilege)), the FOIA Office makes a further determination of whether the exempt portions nevertheless can be released as a matter of discretion. This requires that the FOIA Office make a "foreseeable harm" determination.

In determining whether harm is reasonably foreseeable to result from releasing information subject to a discretionary exemption, the FOIA Office considers such factors as the age of the record, the sensitivity of the content, the nature of the decision at issue, the status of the decision, and the personnel involved.

The FOIA Office does not withhold information merely because public officials might be embarrassed by disclosure, because errors and failures might be revealed, or because of speculative or abstract fears.

The FAA and FHWA FOIA programs are decentralized. The FOIA requests are accepted by FOIA coordinators and assigned to offices that hold responsive records throughout the country. Those offices are responsible for searching for responsive records and for making disclosure determinations, as well as for responding to the requester.

The FOIA guidance is available to all FAA employees through regional FOIA coordinators and through the National FOIA program office. The FOIA guidance is available to all FHWA employees through the headquarters FOIA program office. In both the FAA and FHWA, legal advice is available at the regional and headquarters level.

Like the other DOT FOIA offices, the decentralized FOIA offices throughout the FAA and FHWA make partial disclosures of any reasonably segregable non-exempt portions when full release is not possible. The decentralized offices also make discretionary disclosures, as appropriate, when no "foreseeable harm" is found.

## Section 5.3.2: Recent Actions Taken to Assess and Strengthen the DOT's FOIA Programs

In November 2009, the Chief FOIA Officer issued a memorandum entitled "FOIA and Creating a New Era of Open Government" to the heads of OAs. The memorandum addressed the roles played by all agency personnel in identifying information to affirmatively disclose to the public on the Internet, streamlining the processing of documents responsive to FOIA requests, and promoting the presumption of disclosure.

In December 2009, DOT FOIA legal and program staff gave a presentation on FOIA to Administration appointees and FOIA personnel at DOT. The presentation included an overview of the Department's responsibilities under FOIA, its FOIA programs, FOIA exemptions, and other matters covered in the Chief FOIA Officer's November 2009 memorandum.

In January and February 2010, the DOT FOIA Officer conducted comprehensive reviews of each component's FOIA program, under the direction of the Chief FOIA Officer. When the reviews were completed, the Chief FOIA Officer met with one or more senior level officials in each component to discuss the findings and any component-specific recommendations and to encourage their support of the FOIA program.

On February 3, 2010, the Chief FOIA Officer met with the DOT's FOIA Public Liaisons to talk about their responsibilities and the Administration's FOIA policies.

## Section 5.3.3: Timeliness Assessment

From FY 2008 to FY 2009, we reduced our backlog of initial requests by 12 percent. During that same time, our backlog of appeals increased by 8 percent. At the end of FY 2009, the DOT had a backlog of 1,284 initial requests and 96 appeals. We consider these backlogs significant and are taking steps to reduce them.

One way the DOT is measuring timeliness is to see how many requests were answered in 1-20 days and in 21-40 days. In FY 2009, we processed 59.2 percent of initial requests in 1-20 days and 20.4 percent of initial requests in 21-40 days. This is up slightly from FY 2008 (58.9 percent processed in 1-20 working days and 17.6 processed in 21-40 days). Our goal is to continue this upward trend. We believe the implementation of our recommendations will make this possible.

## Section 5.3.4: Actions Already Taken in Fiscal Year 2010 to Reduce Backlogs and Improve Timeliness

At the beginning of FY 2010, FRA made its own assessment of its program and implemented actions to correct the direction of their backlog. Steps included a thorough review of the agency's FY 2009 process and a renewed focus on addressing the agency's oldest pending requests. Additional agency resources were devoted to supporting various aspects of the FOIA program (e.g., exemption for business information-related requests and personnel information-related requests) and to addressing pending appeals. Additional resources will continue to be devoted to FOIA processing throughout FY 2010 to assure that additional backlog reductions are achieved.

The OIG FOIA office increased resources to better manage its backlog and improve the timeliness of both initial and appeal responses.

PHMSA created a shared FOIA file on the network server allowing PHMSA's regional offices to upload responsive records, which saves regional staff time and resources that would be needed for duplication and postal or courier fees.

### Section 5.3.5: Actions to Be Taken in FY 2010 to Reduce Backlogs and Improve Timeliness

The FHWA plans to fill one FOIA vacancy by June 30, 2010, and fill a second FOIA vacancy by September 30, 2010. The FHWA also will begin scanning all incoming FOIA requests so they can be received and processed by the various headquarters and field offices more quickly.

The FAA headquarters FOIA team plans to conduct supplemental FOIA training sessions for the FAA's headquarters FOIA coordinators in the program offices. The purpose of the series of training sessions is to reiterate the openness policy and provide advice and best practices on processing FOIA requests in a timelier manner.

Several DOT components are already using electronic redaction software. The DOT FOIA office will explore electronic redaction options available to, and facilitate their use by, the remaining components.

### Section 5.3.6: Additional Actions Recommended to Reduce Backlogs and Improve Timeliness

As explained in the Chief FOIA Officer Report recently completed and submitted to the U.S. Department of Justice, we have made the following recommendations to the following components based on the reviews of their programs. The recommendations are aimed at improving streamlining, resources, cooperation, and communication.

1. The FAA should devote additional resources to its headquarters FOIA Team. This will allow the FAA to continue making required backlog reductions in both initial requests and appeals.
2. The MARAD and the FHWA should re-delegate the FOIA Officer title and responsibilities in their components from the Division Chief level to the subject matter expert level. We believe this streamlining will allow those components to process requests more efficiently, which will help improve timeliness and reduce backlogs.
3. The four DOT components not currently using multi-track processing (FRA, FTA, NHTSA, and SLSDC) should begin using multi-track processing (simple/complex/expedited) by the beginning of FY 2011.

4. The MARAD and FRA Administrators should direct their program office staffs to cooperate more with FOIA staff (e.g., in searching for and providing responsive documents). We believe increased cooperation will improve timeliness in responding to requests.
5. The OST should identify FOIA points of contact in all OST program offices by June 30, 2010 and begin issuing search memos to them electronically by October 1, 2010.
6. The OST should fill a detail position in the OST FOIA office by May 30, 2010. This is a redirection of existing OST resources. The detailee would supplement the resources of the OST FOIA office during the detail and will gain expertise during the detail that will assist his or her program office with FOIA after the detail ends.

### Section 5.3.7: Milestones to Reduce Pending Backlog of Outstanding FOIA Requests

The DOT's goal is to reduce our backlog of both initial requests and appeals by 10 percent each year for the next several years. We believe we can accomplish this goal based on the previously-described "Actions Already Taken" and by implementing the previously-described "Actions to Be Taken" and "Additional Actions Recommended."

The DOT FOIA Officer will check components' progress in implementing the "Actions to Be Taken" and "Additional Actions Recommended" at the DOT's monthly FOIA meetings. By December 30, 2010, the DOT FOIA Officer will make a final evaluation of progress in meeting backlog reduction goals and make further recommendations to the Chief FOIA Officer, as appropriate.

## Section 5.4: Congressional Requests for Information

For more information about the process DOT uses when Congress requests information from DOT, please see the DOT's Governmental Affairs Web page at http://www.dot.gov/ost/govaffairs/. This Web page was updated to include the following requirements of the Open Government Directive: descriptions of staffing, organizational structure, and process for analyzing and responding to Congressional requests for information. You can also access this page through www.dot.gov/open.

## Section 5.5: Declassification Program

For more information about DOT's declassification program, please see the DOT's newly created declassification Web page at http://www.dot.gov/security/declassification.html. This Web page was updated to include the following information, as required by the Open Government Directive: information about the agency's declassification programs, information about how to access declassified materials, and information about how to provide input about

what types of information should be prioritized for declassification, as appropriate. You can also access this page through www.dot.gov/open.

## Appendix A: Acronym List

| Abbreviation/Acronym | Definition |
|---|---|
| **AMS** | Acquisition Management System |
| **ARRA** | American Recovery and Reinvestment Act |
| **BTS** | Bureau of Transportation Statistics |
| **CeRI** | Cornell e-Rulemaking Initiative |
| **CFO** | Chief Financial Officer |
| **CFS** | Commodity Flow Survey |
| **CIO** | Chief Information Officer |
| **CRADA** | Cooperative Research and Development Agreement |
| **CSA** | Compliance Safety Accountability |
| **DHS** | Department of Homeland Security |
| **DOD** | Department of Defense |
| **DOE** | Department of Energy |
| **DOI** | Department of the Interior |
| **DOJ** | Department of Justice |
| **DOT** | Department of Transportation |
| **EA** | Enterprise Architecture |
| **E.O.** | Executive Order |
| **EPA** | Environmental Protection Agency |
| **ERA** | Electronic Records Archive |
| **ET** | Eastern Time |
| **FAA** | Federal Aviation Administration |
| **FAADS** | Federal Assistance Award Data System |
| **FAQ** | Frequently Asked Question(s) |
| **FAR** | Federal Acquisition Regulation |
| **FCC** | Federal Communications Commission |
| **FDMS** | Federal Docket Management System |
| **FHWA** | Federal Highway Administration |
| **FISMA** | Federal Information Security Management Act |
| **FMCSA** | Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration |
| **FOIA** | Freedom of Information Act |
| **FOUO** | For Official Use Only |
| **FPDS** | Federal Procurement Data System |
| **FRA** | Federal Railroad Administration |
| **FTA** | Federal Transit Administration |

| Abbreviation/Acronym | Definition |
|---|---|
| **GIS** | Geographic Information System<br>also, Grants Information System |
| **GSA** | General Service Administration |
| **HR** | Human Resources |
| **HUD** | Department of Housing and Urban Development |
| **ICC** | Interstate Commerce Commission |
| **ICR** | Information Collection Request |
| **IT** | Information Technology |
| **ITS** | Intelligent Transportation Systems |
| **MARAD or MarAd** | Maritime Administration |
| **MCSAP** | Motor Carrier Safety Assistance Program |
| **NARA** | National Archives and Records Administration |
| **NAS** | National Airspace System |
| **NASA** | National Aeronautics and Space Administration |
| **NCAP** | New Car Assessment Program |
| **NHTSA** | National Highway Traffic Safety Administration |
| **NIEM** | National Information Exchange Model |
| **NIST** | National Institute of Standards and Technology |
| **NOYS** | National Organization for Youth Safety |
| **NRC** | Nuclear Regulatory Commission |
| **NTL** | National Transportation Library |
| **OA** | Operating Administration |
| **OCFO** | Office of the Chief Financial Officer |
| **OCIO** | Office of the Chief Information Officer |
| **ODAPC** | Office of Drug and Alcohol Policy and Compliance |
| **OGC** | Office of General Counsel |
| **OGESG** | Open Government Executive Steering Group |
| **OIG** | Office of the Inspector General |
| **OMB** | Office of Management and Budget |
| **OPA** | Office of Public Affairs |
| **OPD** | Office of Policy Development |
| **OST** | Office of the Secretary of Transportation |
| **PHMSA** | Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration |
| **PIA** | Privacy Impact Assessment |
| **PII** | Personally Identifiable Information |
| **PM** | Program/Project Manager |

| Abbreviation/Acronym | Definition |
|---|---|
| **PMC** | Performance Management Council |
| **PMO** | Project Management Office or Officer |
| **PRA** | Paperwork Reduction Act |
| **RITA** | Research and Innovative Technology Administration |
| **RM** | Records Management |
| **RSS** | Really Simple Syndication |
| **RWDC** | Real World Design Challenge |
| **SAO** | Senior Accountable Official |
| **SES** | Senior Executive Service |
| **SLSDC** | Saint Lawrence Seaway Development Corporation |
| **SORN** | System of Records Notice |
| **SSI** | Sensitive Security Information |
| **STB** | Surface Transportation Board |
| **SWOT** | Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats [Analysis] |
| **TCB** | Technology Control Board |
| **TOS** | Terms of Service |
| **TOU** | Terms of Use |
| **U.S.** | United States |
| **USCG** | United States Coast Guard |
| **UTQGS** | Uniform Tire Quality Grading System |
| **VGI** | Volunteered Geographic Information |
| **XML** | eXtensible Markup Language |

## Appendix B: Requirements Mapping to the Open Government Directive

| Section | Description | Plan Section |
|---|---|---|
| **1** | Formulating the Plan | 1, 2 |
| **2** | Publishing the Plan | N/A |
| **a** | Transparency | 3.1, 5 |
| **a** | Changes to internal management and administrative policies | 3.4 |
| **a.i** | Strategic action plan for transparency | 3.1 |
| **a.i.1** | Inventory of high value data sets for download | 3.1 |
| **a.i.2** | Foster public's use of this information | 3.1, 3.2, 4 |
| **a.i.3** | Identify high value information not previously been released | 3.1 |
| **a.ii** | Plan for timely publication of data | 3.1 |
| **a.iii** | Complying with transparency initiative guidance | 5.1 |
| **a.iv** | Inform the public of significant actions and business of your agency | 3.2 |
| **a.v** | Records management requirements | 5.2 |
| **a.vi** | FOIA | 5.3 |
| **a.vi.1** | FOIA: description of your staffing | 5.3 |
| **a.vi.2** | FOIA: assessment of your agency's capacity | 5.3 |
| **a.vi.3** | FOIA: backlog and plans to reduce backlog | 5.3 |
| **a.vii** | Congressional requests for information | 5.4 |
| **a.viii** | Declassification programs | 5.5 |
| **b** | Participation | |
| **b** | Changes to internal management and administrative policies | 3.4 |
| **b.i** | Links to participatory websites | 3.2 |
| **b.ii** | Plans for feedback and innovative tools | 4.2 |
| **c** | Collaboration | |
| **c** | Changes to internal management and administrative policies | 3.4 |
| **c.i** | Technology platforms | 4.3 |
| **c.ii** | Links to collaborative websites and tools | 3.2 |
| **c.iii** | Plan for innovative methods | 3.3 |
| **d** | Flagship Initiative | |
| **d.i** | Overview of initiative | 4.1 |
| **d.ii** | Plan for engaging public | 4.1 |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **d.iii** | External partners for initiative (if appropriate) | 4.1 |
| **d.iv** | Plan for improved transparency, participation, and collaboration | 4.1 |
| **d.v** | Plan for sustainability | 4.1 |
| **e** | Public and agency involvement | 1.2, 1.3 |