



Connected Vehicle Technology County-Wide Implementation Community Engagement Plan

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I. Community Engagement Plan Overview

In 2023, the Road Commission for Oakland County (RCOC) received a Strengthening Mobility and Revolutionizing Transportation (SMART) Stage 1 Planning and Prototyping grant from the U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT) to pilot connected vehicle technology in Oakland County in 2024 and develop a plan for deploying the technology throughout Oakland County in the future. The USDOT Stage 1 Notice of Funding Opportunity required that, "The proposed solution demonstrates a community-centered approach that includes meaningful, continuous, accessible engagement with a diverse group of public and private stakeholders."

To that end, a key component of the Stage 1 planning is consideration of how to engage the community if (and when) a Stage 2 grant is received. This document does just that. It provides a model for how a community engagement plan could be developed for any community seeking to deploy connected vehicle technology as well as a plan, specific to Oakland County, should a Stage 2 grant be received.

To recap. . .

Stage 1 activities: Pilot technology and develop a plan for county-wide deployment, including how the community will be communicated with during deployment

Stage 2 activities: County-wide deployment and broad communication with the community

Community engagement is critical to advance connected vehicle technology in order to foster comfort with and enthusiasm for the technology within Oakland County and beyond. This community engagement plan encompasses essential elements for meaningful communications, including stakeholder identification, messaging, and engagement strategies. This plan further emphasizes the identification and engagement of organizations and stakeholders as champions, leveraging their advocacy to amplify project impact and community involvement. Additionally, the plan ensures that the project remains aligned with community needs and values, enhancing collaboration and trust-building.

This plan was written for the RCOC and their partners, who will be implementing the Stage 2 grant, to communicate with the community during Stage 2 implementation. The plan is intended to be a living document, to be refined as the team learns, new information becomes available, and circumstances evolve.

II. General Model for Developing a Community Engagement Plan

Every community is different and every deployment of connected vehicle technology will be unique. At the same time, when developing a plan to engage the community on deployment of connected vehicle technology, following the process steps described below will provide for the most likely success.

1. Articulate the desired outcomes of the community engagement.

Defining the boundaries and desired outcomes of engagement at the outset of the project, as well as the level of authority or importance that will be conferred to feedback received, is a critical first step. These parameters will shape all facets of community engagement, and will need to be

communicated broadly and repeatedly to make the best use of everyone's time and minimize the potential for frustration and disappointment as the project unfolds and stakeholders do (or do not) see their perspectives reflected in the design.

2. Convene an Advisory Board to leverage community members' knowledge.

The expertise needed to answer the questions about who to engage, how best to engage them, and with what messages often reside within the community itself. Convene an Advisory Board of approximately 5-9 representative stakeholders to serve as co-creative thought partners throughout the development of the plan. The Advisory Board will serve to provide input, function as a sounding board, and offer candid feedback as the community engagement plan is developed. This group could also serve as champions of implementation of the community engagement plan as well.

3. Identify the stakeholders to be engaged to achieve the desired outcomes.

The first task of the Advisory Board should be to determine the most important individuals and groups to engage in order to achieve the desired outcomes for the community engagement. The stakeholder identification process is often best done in steps, starting with a brainstorming session that identifies all possible stakeholders, then grouping those stakeholders based on common attributes or interests, and finally prioritizing the stakeholders in terms of the chronology with which they will be communicated:

- First: Those who will care most about this technology being implemented and/or whose buy-in is needed to ensure smooth implementation.
- Second: Those whose buy-in would be helpful to have but isn't critical; those who will be enthusiastic advocates such that communicating with them will help reach a broader audience.
- Third: All others.

4. The key messages to be communicated and/or topics on which feedback is sought, as well as the manner in which the feedback will be used to influence the project's design.
5. The most efficient and effective communication sequencing and method(s) of engaging each of these stakeholders, capitalizing whenever possible on pre-existing forums to meet stakeholders where they are.

III. Community Engagement Plan: Connected Vehicle Technology in Oakland County

The following applies the model described above to community engagement in support of a county-wide deployment of connected vehicle technology in Oakland County.

Desired Outcomes

As the project champion and Stage 1 grantee, RCOC was responsible for articulating the desired outcomes for the community engagement. They articulated the desired outcomes as follows:

Oakland County residents and businesses understand, are prepared to experience, and are excited about this new technology.

Advisory Board

RCOC convened a community engagement Advisory Board comprising parties knowledgeable about communicating with key constituencies in the Oakland County community and/or translating highly technical information to the general public. The goal was to get a diversity of perspectives from people with a wide range of familiarities with connected vehicle technology. With this in mind, participation from each organization was limited to one representative. The following individuals were identified as good candidates and elected to serve on this Advisory Board:

- Bridgeport Consulting - *Design Team facilitator*
- Oakland County Mobility Innovations Coordinator

- RCOE Communications & Public Information
- RCOE Director of Traffic-Safety
- MDOT Connected Vehicle Specialist
- City of Southfield City Administrator
- SEMCOG Transportation Modeling & Mobility Planner
- City of Oak Park City Engineer
- Lawrence Technical University Director of Transportation Institute
- Lawrence Technical University Mechanical, Robotics, and Industrial Engineering Faculty

The Advisory Board convened six times January through April 2024 via Zoom, each for up to 90 minutes.

The role of the Advisory Board was part of the Stage 1 work to prepare a plan for a Stage 2 county-wide deployment. With this document, the Advisory Board has officially concluded its work. However, the members of the Advisory Board remain enthusiastic about the work and have generously agreed to help implement this community engagement plan during Stage 2 by sharing communications collateral with their networks and residents as described below.

Stakeholders

The Advisory Board identified many potential stakeholders with whom to communicate about the technology. These stakeholders are organized by the chronology with which they will be engaged. Additional details about individual groups within each category can be found in Appendices A and B.

Stakeholders to be communicated with first:

- Residents
- Media
- Local government elected officials
- Local government staff, including first responders
- Transit organizations
- School districts
- Professional associations

- Original Equipment Manufacturers (OEMs) - *a separate industry engagement process is underway*

Stakeholders to be communicated with second:

- Transportation safety advocates
- Private company first responders
- Disability organizations
- Students
- Senior service organizations

Stakeholders to be communicated with third:

- New drivers
- Pedestrian/biking advocacy groups
- Business organizations
- Companies with fleet vehicles - *a separate fleet engagement process is underway*
- Insurance companies
- Tier I suppliers
- Ridesharing companies
- Judicial system
- Youth sports organizations

Key Messages

One of the biggest challenges of connected vehicle technology is helping people understand what it is, given the complexity of how it works. The general public is not likely to be interested in the technical nuances or inner workings, but would greatly benefit from information to help them understand that it improves safety.

What is this technology?

The connected vehicle technology to be deployed in Oakland County is a form of communications technology that provides a warning about potential hazards (e.g. vehicles, bicyclists, pedestrians, deer, etc.), regardless of whether they are in view. In comparison, a vehicle that relies on the more common line-of-sight sensors that is

currently available in many vehicles is unable to detect the presence of another vehicle that is not directly visible, let alone determine the other vehicle's direction, speed, operational status, etc. Connected vehicle technology provides information upon which drivers can act to prevent a crash.

The implementation of connected vehicle technology in Oakland County is first and foremost about delivering increased levels of safety to the community. Studies have shown that thousands of crashes could be avoided every year if this technology were deployed across the U.S. In addition, this technology can help to improve congestion and reduce emissions by making available various smart road services, such as extended green lights. These improvements could also reduce emergency response times. Finally, this technology should help reduce insurance costs for those drivers who choose to equip their vehicles. Since the technology helps to keep the driver safe, the vehicle will have reduced chances of being in a crash situation.

How will this technology impact me?

The most immediate and important answer to how this technology will impact Oakland County residents and businesses is that it will make Oakland County roads safer by reducing crashes that cause injury and death. Nationwide, it is estimated that this technology could save thousands of lives per year. Drivers will be safer. Pedestrians will be safer. Whole communities will be safer. Fewer crashes will mean traffic will flow more smoothly, and there will be fewer delays. Driving on safer streets should also lower car insurance costs for Oakland County residents.

In order to work, this technology needs to be installed on roads and in vehicles. RCOG is working to install this technology at intersections throughout the county, but most residents won't have the technology in their vehicles for a number of years. At this time, the in-vehicle technology provides information upon which drivers can act to prevent a crash. By the time most people have the technology in their vehicles, the technology will likely have progressed such that the vehicle itself reacts to the information to avoid a crash.

In summary, the following four messages should be shared and repeated by everyone advocating the technology in Oakland County:

1. The connected vehicle technology being used in Oakland County is a communications technology.

2. It will improve road safety.
3. It will help traffic flow more efficiently.
4. For those with the technology in their vehicles and a related insurance policy, it should lower car insurance costs.

These messages are high-level sound bites that can be tailored within specific communications for each audience.

Communication Sequencing and Methods

Communications are expected to unfold over three phases: With the first phase initiated by notification of the grant award, the second phase will take place once the contract has been executed and expenses can be paid by the grant, and the third phase will be more of an ongoing push.

Milestone 1: USDOT Notifies RCOC of Stage 2 Award

Once the award announcement is made, there will be a small window of time, a manner of days at most, when the local media and public will be interested in learning about what is happening. During this period, RCOC will develop a media kit - including a press release, fact sheet, video, and background information - for distribution to their media contacts. The media kit will also be shared with the Cities of Southfield and Oak Park, where the technology was piloted and which had representatives on the Advisory Board, to do the same.

Milestone 2: RCOC Is Under Contract with USDOT

Once the contract with USDOT is executed, the following pieces of communications collateral could be prepared, posted, and otherwise shared.

A brief high-level video for the public and a separate video for those in the automotive field that goes into more detail for posting on the website that is currently being built and elsewhere¹

¹ In preparing this community engagement plan, quotes were solicited from three Michigan media consultants to get a sense of the potential cost of supporting the plan's implementation. These quotes included suggestions in addition to those identified by the Advisory Board, such as a six-week video campaign on each YouTube, Meta (formerly Facebook), LinkedIn, cable, and digital streaming.

**Functionality will be built into the website to invite feedback from the public on the county-wide deployment, and to learn more or otherwise contribute to the project - options will include asking:*

- *For more information/materials,*
- *For a device for their vehicle,*
- *To share their story², and*
- *"Other," which would lead to a fillable website form to email the project team.*

Budget is needed as part of the Stage 2 grant for someone to serve as a point person on community engagement. This person would receive and respond to inquiries, reach out to the stakeholders via the meetings described below and to the groups listed in Appendices A and B, and work with a media consultant, RCOC, Oakland County staff, and other stakeholders to prepare materials.

Social media graphics and messages for sharing and re-sharing.

A one-page flyer, one-page narrative elevator pitch, and a frequently asked questions (FAQ)³ document for sharing and communicating with residents. These will also be emailed to local government elected officials and staff using RCOC and SEMCOG's listservs and posted on the website. All three documents will be offered in English, Spanish, and Arabic

Milestone 3: During the Contract, After the Initial Push

After this initial push to communicate with residents, the media, and the community at large, there will be more time for targeted communications and to leverage opportunities to continue to spread the word. During this time, additional communications collateral will be developed and used:

A 1-2 slide PowerPoint presentation and a longer presentation for delivery at meetings and events such as:

- RCOC strategic planning meetings with communities
- Oakland County school district supervisor regular meeting

² Functionality will be needed for members of the public to submit video testimonials to share their own stories of unsafe roads. The aforementioned community point person would receive and review them before posting to the website. A protocol will need to be developed for removing from the website and archiving (or not) videos.

³ See Appendix B for likely FAQs

- South Oakland Mayors & Managers Association monthly meeting
- SEMCOG Transportation Coordinating Council monthly meeting
- SEMCOG Executive Committee monthly meeting
- SEMCOG Transportation Safety Action Committee quarterly meeting
- Oak Park Traffic Safety Board quarterly meeting
- Michigan Municipal League annual conference
- Regional Transportation Operations Coordinating Committee annual partners' workshop
- Governor's Safety Advisory Commission annual meeting
- Michigan Traffic Safety Summit
- Intelligent Transportation Society (ITS) Michigan annual meeting or a "lunch and learn" webinar

In addition, a video could be recorded of RCOC and P3Mobility delivering the presentation and then made available to these organizations for virtual presentation to their constituents.

Meetings could also be scheduled to connect with key stakeholders such as local school principals and/or Orthodox Jewish Rabbis.⁴

People will need to see, touch, and feel the technology to begin to understand it. To that end, P3Mobility is working with a partner to bring a connected vehicle simulator to Southeast Michigan to offer opportunities for the public and others to experience what it would be like to drive in an equipped vehicle. P3Mobility is also working to secure a partner who would build a demonstration vehicle, which would be a more realistic (and sleeker) experience of the technology.

Finally, the development of a 60-Minutes-style video that includes impacted residents and first responders telling their personal stories will be explored.

⁴ Specific messaging needs to be shared with this stakeholder group in order to help them understand the "always on" nature of the technology.

Appendix A: Stakeholder Detail

Stakeholders to be communicated with first:

- Residents
 - Those who have technology-related religious beliefs
 - Those with other special considerations
- Media
- Local government elected officials
- Local government staff
 - City managers, city engineers, economic development staff
 - First responders and law enforcement
 - Transportation officials
- Transit organizations
 - Oakland County Transit Division
 - Regional Transit Authority of Southeast Michigan (RTA)
 - Regional Transportation Operations Coordinating Committee
 - Suburban Mobility Authority for Regional Transportation (SMART)
- School districts
- Professional associations
 - Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE)
 - Society of Automotive Engineers (SAE)
 - Society of Manufacturing Engineers (SME)
- Original Equipment Manufacturers (OEMs) - *a separate engagement process is underway*

Stakeholders to be communicated with second:

- Transportation safety advocates
 - Intelligent Transportation Society (ITS) and ITS Michigan
 - Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) and ITE Michigan
 - Mothers Against Drunk Drivers (MADD)
 - Students Against Drunk Drivers (SADD)
 - Transportation Improvement Association (TIA)
 - Vision Zero
- Private company first responders
- Disability organizations
 - Disability Network

- Program to Educate all Cyclists (PEAC)
- Students
 - Lawrence Technological University
 - Oakland Community College
 - Oakland Intermediate School District
 - Oakland University
- Senior service organizations
 - Area Agency on Aging 1-B

Stakeholders to be communicated with third:

- New drivers
 - Drivers education programs
 - Secretary of State
- Pedestrian/biking advocacy groups
 - Catalpa Park bike riders
 - Detroit Greenways Coalition
 - Hansons Running Shop
 - Michigan Chapter of Association of Pedestrian and Bicycle Professionals (APBP)
 - MOGO
 - Oak Park Slow Roll
 - Southfield Slow Roll
- Business organizations
 - CEED Lending, an initiative of the Great Lakes Women's Business Council
 - Downtown Development Authorities
 - Dream Cruise
 - Metropolitan Affairs Coalition (MAC)
 - Oakland Chamber Network
- Companies with fleet vehicles - *a separate fleet engagement exercise is underway*
 - Local fleets that must interact with local government (e.g. plumbers and builders)
 - National delivery companies with local operations (e.g. Amazon, UPS, Fed Ex)
 - National ride sharing companies with local operations (eg. Uber, Lyft)
 - Utility companies

- SEMCOG Regional Freight Initiative
- Insurance companies
 - AAA of Michigan
 - State Farm
 - Nationwide
- Tier I suppliers
 - Magna
 - Harman
 - Denso
- Ridesharing companies
- Judicial system
 - District court administrator association
- Youth sports organizations

Appendix B: Stakeholder Map

Priority	Stakeholder	Stakeholder Detail	Preferred Communication Vehicle(s)/Notes
First	Residents		Cable station, social media, YouTube, mail flyers, open houses
First	Residents	Oak Park traffic safety board	
First	Residents	Non-English speaking communities	Title VI obligations will need to be fulfilled; translate all info into Spanish and Arabic
First	Residents	Ethnic communities	
First	Residents	Orthodox Jewish Rabbis	Special meeting
First	Residents	Jewish senior living facility near pilot intersection	
First	Residents	Neighborhood associations	Newsletters for which they seek ready-made content
First	Media		Media kit for RCOC and Cities of Southfield and Oak Park media distribution lists
First	Local government elected officials	SEMCOG Transportation Safety Action Committee	Quarterly meetings
First	Local government elected officials	SEMCOG Transportation Coordinating Council	Monthly
First	Local government elected officials	SEMCOG Executive Committee	Monthly
First	Local government elected officials	Oakland County communities	RCOC meets one-on-one with each Oakland County community every 2 years for strategic planning
First	Local government elected officials	South Oakland Mayors & Managers Association	10-15 minute presentation at a monthly meeting
First	Local government elected officials	Governor's Safety Advisory Commission	Annual meeting
First	Local government elected officials	Michigan Municipal League	Session at the 2025 annual conference (likely in March)

Priority	Stakeholder	Stakeholder Detail	Preferred Communication Vehicle(s)/Notes
First	Local government staff	City managers, city engineers, economic development staff	RCOC/Oakland County/SEMCOG email listservs
First	Local government staff	Police, fire, EMS, OakWay	Michigan Transportation Summit; Oakland County homeland security hosts police chiefs (Chris can connect)
First	Transit organizations	Regional Transportation Operations Coordinating Committee	
First	Transit organizations	Oakland County Transit Division	
First	Transit organizations	Regional Transit Authority of Southeast Michigan (RTA), SMART	Oakland County transit coordinator can communicate
First	School districts	Transportation district supervisors	Oakland County school district supervisor meetings Thomas Korth, Oakland County coordinator for school district transportation Training Agency Association of Michigan (TAAM) (248) 209-2224
First	School districts	Principals	Special meeting
First	Professional associations	Society of Automotive Engineers (SAE)	
First	Professional associations	Society of Manufacturing Engineers (SME)	
First	Professional associations	Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE)	
First	Original Equipment Manufacturers (OEMs)		A separate engagement process is underway
Second	Transportation safety advocates	Traffic Improvement Association (TIA)	Will advocate the technology; need education; active in ITS Michigan, based in Oakland County

Priority	Stakeholder	Stakeholder Detail	Preferred Communication Vehicle(s)/Notes
Second	Transportation safety advocates	Vision Zero	Consider hosting a march
Second	Transportation safety advocates	Intelligent Transportation Society of Michigan (ITS of MI)	Annual meeting, lunch and learn webinars
Second	Transportation safety advocates	Students Against Drunk Drivers (SADD)	
Second	Transportation safety advocates	Mothers Against Drunk Drivers (MADD)	Ask the police officers - Eric Buchard
Second	Private company first responders	First responders (EMS, tow trucks)	GM/Milford proving grounds - County: Dr. McGraw (Fred has more info)
Second	Disability organizations	Disability Network	
Second	Disability organizations	Program to Educate all Cyclists (PEAC)	How to use infrastructure correctly and safely
Second	Students	Oakland University	Listserve, leverage monthly student group meetings, showcase events; social media/YouTube
Second	Students	Oakland Community College	
Second	Students	Oakland Intermediate School District	School bus fleets could be equipped with the technology; can make others aware of school bus zones
Second	Students	Lawrence Tech	Listserve, leverage monthly student group meetings, showcase events; social media/YouTube
Second	Senior service organizations	Area Agency on Aging 1-B	
Third	New drivers	Drivers ed programs	Expose to the new technology to prepare to experience it
Third	New drivers	Secretary of State	Whether/should the technology be included in the instruction cars, Secretary of State materials available
Third	Pedestrian/biking advocacy groups	Todd Scott, Detroit Greenways Coalition	
Third	Pedestrian/biking advocacy groups	MOGO	

Priority	Stakeholder	Stakeholder Detail	Preferred Communication Vehicle(s)/Notes
Third	Pedestrian/biking advocacy groups	Hansons	
Third	Pedestrian/biking advocacy groups	Oak Park Slow Roll (Tuesdays)	
Third	Pedestrian/biking advocacy groups	Southfield Slow Roll (Thursdays)	
Third	Pedestrian/biking advocacy groups	Katalpa Park riders: Fred	
Third	Pedestrian/biking advocacy groups	Michigan Chapter of Association of Pedestrian and Bicycle Professionals (APBP)	
Third	Business organizations	Oakland Chamber Network	
Third	Business organizations	DDAs	
Third	Business organizations	Dream Cruise	
Third	Business organizations	CEED Lending is an initiative of the Great Lakes Women's Business Council (WBC) (Chris to reach out)	
Third	Business organizations	Metropolitan Affairs Coalition (MAC)	
Third	Companies with fleet vehicles	Local fleets that must interact with local government (e.g. plumbers and builders)	A separate fleet engagement process is underway
Third	Companies with fleet vehicles	National delivery companies with local operations (e.g. Amazon, UPS, Fed Ex)	A separate fleet engagement process is underway
Third	Companies with fleet vehicles	National ride sharing companies with local operations (eg. Uber, Lyft)	A separate fleet engagement process is underway

Priority	Stakeholder	Stakeholder Detail	Preferred Communication Vehicle(s)/Notes
Third	Companies with fleet vehicles	Utility companies	
Third	Companies with fleet vehicles	SEMCOG Regional Freight Initiative	
Third	Insurance companies	AAA of Michigan, State Farm, Harmon Denso	Gary Bubar, Traffic Safety - Public Affairs, Michigan AAA-The Auto Club Group (734) 751-1606, gtbubar@acg.aaa.com
Third	Tier I suppliers	Magna, Harmon, Denso	
Third	Judicial system	District court administrator association	Could use education as part of penalties
Third	Youth sports organizations		Coordinator to get messaging out broadly

Appendix C: Likely FAQs

- What is the history of this technology? Why was it developed?
- At what intersections will the technology be put in use in Oakland County and when?
- How will those intersections be selected/prioritized?
- What vehicles will have the technology?
- How do I get the technology in my car and what will be the cost?
- What information will the driver receive?
- How will that information help to improve safety as opposed to causing more driver distraction?
- Will my image be recorded?
- What data is being collected and how is it being used? Who has access to it?
- Is someone going to monitor my behavior?
- Can I opt out completely?
- How is the communications technology affected by jurisdictional boundaries?
- Where can I go to learn more?