

Transportation Public Affairs Essentials

Why Your Transportation Project Needs a Public Affairs Campaign

When it comes to a successful transportation project, sound engineering and improved traffic flow are only one side of the story. Roads and highways, bridges and tolls — changes to these key infrastructures have a far-reaching impact on motorists, the economy, and even regional politics.

That's why it's crucial to manage public opinion — or else risk public opinion derailing your project. You need buy-in from legislators, support from businesses and municipalities, and most importantly, enthusiasm from the drivers who will be impacted by your project, day after day.

Big or small, every transportation project will benefit from a public affairs campaign that includes careful evaluation of public sentiment; intensive research into marketing opportunities; and anticipating possible PR concerns and proactively addressing them through intelligent and timely strategy.

To help you make the case for the public affairs support you need, we've put together this brief. Use this tool to help educate your team and make the case for incorporating a well-crafted public affairs campaign into your next project.

Transportation Public Affairs Essential Steps

No matter how large or small the transportation project, you need to manage public opinion and reassure key stakeholders. Here are the 6 essential steps to guarantee positive public reception for your project:

Manage impact to and build relationships with motorists, residents, and businesses

Engage with community and civic groups, municipalities, and local organizations

Get buy-in from local and state legislators and key stakeholders

Develop Communications Plan, including risk management and crisis response

Generate positive public relations through a solid brand, website and dynamic engagement — keep key stakeholders informed and up-to-date

Be proactive with media relations and media placement and planning — advertising, media training, and local news coverage

What to Look For in a Public Affairs Partner

In addition to following the Public Affairs Essentials checklist above, your ideal public affairs partner should have a strong, proven background in executing transportation project PR campaigns. Take the time to look through examples of previous work and consider how the needs of your project might differ. Create a punch list of items to discuss, and be sure to bring up any special areas of concerns (local politics, protected land, key businesses, environmental considerations, military presence) for your region.

Billing and Invoicing

Ideally, your public affairs partner should be well-versed in DOT billing and invoicing requirements. This is an area where you literally can't afford errors. Your public affairs partner should understand the process for DOT submission and associated requirements.

DBE and SWaM

You should also consider the value of working with an agency that adheres to DMBE (Department of Minority Business Enterprise) guidelines with DBE (Disadvantaged Business Enterprise) certification. In Virginia, the certification to look for is SWaM (Small, Women-owned, and Minority-owned Business).

Seventh Point Transportation PR

When you look into potential partners to manage your transportation project's public affairs, you'll find one agency that stands out from the rest: Seventh Point. We understand how to collaborate with an engineering firm in combination with the local DOT to identify key audiences and deliver solid outreach to the target groups that will experience impact.

Contact Mike Carosi at Seventh Point for additional information or to explore a PR partnership for your next transportation project.

Mike Carosi

Vice President of Public Affairs
4752 Euclid Road, Virginia Beach, VA 23462
O: 757.473.8152 | C: 757.353.5532
mcarosi@seventhpoint.com