

Federal Highway Administration
Office of Research, Development, and Technology
2024/2025 Public Roads Reader Survey

Objective

The editorial team for Federal Highway Administration’s *Public Roads* magazine, led by the Office of Research, Development, and Technology, plans to repeat a reader survey, which was conducted in spring 2021. The goal of the follow-up survey is two-fold: First, it will help determine if readers are pleased with the changes made following the first reader survey and the comments received; and secondly, it will provide additional insights into reader needs, interests, and demographics to inform content improvements for the publication. The survey will be open for at least six weeks and may be extended to seven weeks, based on response quantities.

Target Audience

The target audience for this survey is current or previous readers of *Public Roads*. When the first survey was conducted in 2021, there were 2,300 subscribers. In 2024, there are more than 25,750. The opportunity to reach a larger audience is exciting and will likely produce more robust survey results.

Messaging

The messaging for the rollout of the survey will emphasize:

- Readers as a critical part of the content development process.
- FHWA’s commitment to providing top-notch, relevant, and timely content on Federal highway policies, programs, research, and technology.

Survey Distribution

The survey questions will be distributed via SurveyMonkey, an online software that helps create and run online surveys. This platform is equipped with several question types including multiple choice answers, rating scales, and text boxes that allow fill-in comments.

SurveyMonkey is a tool that FHWA has used in the past to survey stakeholders. This tool presents a user-friendly and reliable web interface and offers robust analytics options that allow for the thorough analysis of survey results.

The survey will be accessible in five ways:

1. Email distribution.
2. Social media.
3. Embedded web link on the *Public Roads* landing page, <https://highways.dot.gov/public-roads/home>.
4. Embedded web link on the Office of Research, Development, and Technology landing page, <https://highways.dot.gov/research>.
5. Dr. Regal’s weekly HOA update.

Marketing/Design

The design team will create graphics to launch the survey, announce survey reminders, and promote a “last call” to take the survey. These announcements will be bi-weekly. Email and social media copy will accompany the graphics and will be sent to HPA for approval.

Intro/Legal Copy

- Very satisfied
 - Somewhat satisfied
 - Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
 - Somewhat dissatisfied
 - Very dissatisfied
- The editorial team of *Public Roads* magazine is asking for reader feedback to ensure that we continue to deliver top-notch, relevant, and timely content on FHWA’s highway policies, programs, research, and technology.
- This collection of information is voluntary, and replies will be confidential. It takes an average of three minutes to complete this survey. Please note that an agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number. The OMB temporary control number for this collection is 2125-0628. *Note: This will be filled out upon OMB’s approval.*

Survey Questions

Question	Question Type	Answer Choices
1. What is your overall satisfaction with <i>Public Roads</i> magazine?	Rate one item on a scale	<input type="checkbox"/> Very satisfied. <input type="checkbox"/> Somewhat satisfied. <input type="checkbox"/> Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied. <input type="checkbox"/> Somewhat dissatisfied. <input type="checkbox"/> Very dissatisfied (please specify why).
2. How relevant to current and emerging transportation-related technology and research do you find the articles and information?	Rate one item on a scale	<input type="checkbox"/> Very relevant. <input type="checkbox"/> Somewhat relevant. <input type="checkbox"/> Not at all relevant.
3. Please rank the following sections of the magazine in order of importance to you (1 being the most important and 5 being the least important).	Rank items numerically	<input type="checkbox"/> Feature Articles. <input type="checkbox"/> What’s New. <input type="checkbox"/> Innovation Corner. <input type="checkbox"/> Along the Road. <input type="checkbox"/> Training Update. <input type="checkbox"/> Guest Editorial.
4. Based on the results of the 2021 reader survey, several changes were made. What is your level of satisfaction with each change? Changes noted below. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhanced Guest Editorial to 	Rate each item on a scale	<input type="checkbox"/> Very satisfied. <input type="checkbox"/> Somewhat satisfied. <input type="checkbox"/> Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied. <input type="checkbox"/> Somewhat dissatisfied. <input type="checkbox"/> Very dissatisfied (please specify why).

Question	Question Type	Answer Choices
<p>look like a featured article.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changed name of Hot Topic to What’s New. • Added larger pictures and more white space to entire magazine. • Shortened Internet Watch and merged it with Along the Road. • Removed Communication Product Updates. • Increased marketing efforts. 		
<p>5. What topics are you interested in seeing more of in future issues of <i>Public Roads</i>? (1 being the most important and 5 being the least important).</p>	<p>Rank items numerically</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Nondestructive evaluation. <input type="checkbox"/> Hydraulics. <input type="checkbox"/> State/local level projects and case studies. <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation leader profiles (FHWA, FMCSA, NHTSA, etc.). <input type="checkbox"/> Environmental issues. <input type="checkbox"/> New innovations (software, connected vehicles, etc.). <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify).
<p>6. Please rank the following special-themed issues in order of importance to you (1 being most important and 5 being least important).</p>	<p>Rank items numerically</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Female Leaders in Transportation; Spring 2020. <input type="checkbox"/> Safe System Approach; Winter 2022. <input type="checkbox"/> Equity in Transportation; Spring 2023. <input type="checkbox"/> Student Writing Competition; Winter 2024.
<p>7. In what industry or discipline do you work? Select the best answer.</p>	<p>Dropdown</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation – government. <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation – non-governmental organization (NGO). <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering – government. <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering – (NGO). <input type="checkbox"/> University or college (specify area of study). <input type="checkbox"/> High school student (specify grade level). <input type="checkbox"/> Think tank or research firm (specify area of specialty).

Question	Question Type	Answer Choices
8. How would you rank the following topics (1 being most important and 5 being least important) if they were to become a standard feature in <i>Public Roads</i> ?	Rank items numerically	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify). <input type="checkbox"/> State DOT case studies. <input type="checkbox"/> FHWA program highlights. <input type="checkbox"/> Safe System Approach. <input type="checkbox"/> Connected vehicle technology. <input type="checkbox"/> Complete Streets. <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify).
9. If you are a regular reader, what topic has been the most informative to you? If possible, please specify the title and issue.	Open-ended	
10. Do you have any other feedback about the magazine that you would like us to know?	Open-ended	

Timeline

Timing*	Action
Week of March 4	Send reader survey and rollout plan to POC. Secure FHWA input and approval by March 15.
Week of April 8	Submit OMB Fast-Track Generic Clearance application. Note: Fast track approval would be 2–3 months.
Week of April 15	Develop marketing materials (social media posts, GovDelivery, website copy, and HOA copy).
Week of June 24	Send survey and rollout plan to <i>Public Roads</i> Editorial Board for courtesy review.
Week of July 8	OMB Fast-Track Generic Clearance approval.
Week of July 15	Send reader survey package (questions and marketing materials) to HPA. (Requested review date approx. week of July 29)
Week of July 29	Post survey links to web pages and prepare GovDelivery.
Week of August 5	Distribute survey via GovDelivery and email outreach. Launch social media campaign. Send announcement, reminder, and last call one week apart.
Week of September 9	Survey closes.
Week of September 16	Initiate survey analysis.

Timing*	Action
Week of October 14	Submit final survey report and recommendations to POC.
Week of October 28	Conduct briefing with the Editorial Board to share survey findings and secure input and approval on survey recommendations.
Date TBD	Implement recommendations from the survey.

*Dates may be added or adjusted to accommodate review and approval schedules. All dates are projected and subject to change based on OMG approval date.