

Iowa DOT Research Request for Proposal (RFP)

It is the intent of Iowa DOT Research to enter into agreement with the responsible bidder whose submitted proposal is the most advantageous, cost and other factors considered. Other factors include but are not limited to meeting or exceeding mandatory requirements, proposed staffing, and meeting required time schedule.

- Original RFP is posted at <https://iowadot.gov/research/Requests-for-Proposal>
- Questions should be submitted to the project manager, identified below.
 - Questions are due no later than 14 calendar days prior to the proposal due date. Questions and responses will be posted on <https://iowadot.gov/research/Requests-for-Proposal> no later than 7 calendar days prior to the proposal due date.
- Responses must be submitted in pdf form to Proposal.Research@iowadot.us
 - Use the following naming convention for the PDF submission:
 - **ResearchProposalNumber_Agency_PrincipalInvestigatorLastName.pdf**
- Responses must comply with the proposal guidelines in “Required Format for Iowa DOT Research Proposals.”
 - <https://iowadot.gov/research/Research-Process/Proposal-Deliverable-Guidelines>

RFP #: TPF5545-2026b

RFP Title: Evaluation of Positive Protection in Work Zones

RFP Posted: September 15, 2025

Proposals Due: On or Before November 1, 2025 at 12:00 Noon Central Standard Time.

Project Manager: Khyle Clute, khyle.clute@iowadot.us, (515)-239-1646

Budget

- ☐ Funding limitations have been established. Proposed budgets shall not exceed \$_____.
- ☒ Proposed budgets are not limited. They will be considered during the evaluation process.

Timeline

- ☒ Timing limitations have been established. Proposed timelines shall not extend beyond 3/31/2032.
- ☐ Proposed timelines are not limited. They will be considered during the evaluation process.

Literature Review

- ☐ A Literature Review has been performed as part of project development and should not be included as a task in the proposal. The Literature Review is available for download here:
- ☒ A Literature Review has not been performed and may be included as a task in the proposal.

Data Management Plan

- ☐ Development of a Data Management Plan (DMP) is a required task in the proposal.
Refer to [Iowa DOT DMP guidance](#) section for more information.
- ☒ Development of a Data Management Plan is not a required task in the proposal.
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Problem Statement

The use of positive protection measures between the work space and motorized traffic can improve work zone safety for all users. However, evaluation of various combinations of measures and strategies within the positive protection umbrella is needed for State DOTs to appropriately understand and maximize a positive protection plan appropriate for each work zone.

Objectives

The primary objective of this research project is to develop a structured, data-driven, decision support tool to assist engineers in using a defined set of positive protection measures in highway work zones. The project should, at a minimum, determine what constitutes a positive protection measure. It should also consider a variety of approaches and the various factors that may influence the comparison and choice of particular measures. These factors should include but not be limited to work zone duration, operational mode (i.e., stationary, mobile, or moving), traffic flow characteristics and impacts, length of the construction zone, geometrics, and the proximity of workers to active traffic lanes. A benefit/cost analysis should also be considered as part of the decision support tool developed. The data used in the creation of the tool may come from a variety of sources and the decision tool should include a consideration of the entire life span and/or stages of the construction work zone. Finally, the project tasks should also consider all the decision-making tools/matrices and resources that already exist in this subject area and are being applied within the United States. It is expected that the tool developed as part of this project will build upon and improve upon those that currently exist. In addition, all the recently added requirements for positive protection in 23 CFR 630 subpart K (Temporary Traffic Control Devices) must also be considered.

Minimum Project Tasks

1. None pre-determined

Products and Deliverables

1. Quarterly Progress Reports
2. Draft Final Report
3. Final Report
4. Technology Transfer Technical Brief
5. Research Implementation Plan(s)
6. Photo or Image Files
7. Decision Support Tool

Note: All products and deliverables shall comply with accessibility and Section 508 requirements, regardless of funding source. Section 508 is an amendment to the federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973 mandating that all electronic and information technology developed, procured, maintained, or used by the federal government be accessible to people with disabilities. Refer to 29 U.S.C 794d for additional information.

Additional Information

- This RFP is funded through the Smart Work Zone Deployment Initiative (SWZDI) under a multi-state pooled fund led by Iowa DOT as TPF-5(545). Information about the current SWZDI pooled fund is available at <https://pooledfund.org/Details/Study/779>.

- SWZDI encourages those proposing to reach out to the DOTs in the states noted below if the proposal includes possible piloting or field demonstration activities. Provide the name, title and email of the DOT contact if they support or provide possible locations for those activities.
- ****Proposal Restrictions****
 - Proposals are limited to 8 pages. Resumes of the principal investigator and other named team members, along with other relevant materials, may be provided for additional information in appendices, but the proposal itself shall be a stand-alone document. The proposer should not expect the reviewers to read appendices to be able to evaluate the merit of a proposal.
 - The proposing entity must be a college or university located in one of the states pledging funds to the SWZDI TPF-5(545) pooled fund: Alaska, Georgia, Illinois, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, Pennsylvania, Texas, or Wisconsin. The principal investigator and any co-principal investigator(s) must be a faculty or professional staff employed by the proposing entity.
 - Proposals submitted by current SWZDI principal investigators that have projects one year or more behind their originally contracted end date will not be considered.
 - Individual respondents are limited to submitting on only one SWZDI proposal per year as either a principal investigator or co-principal investigator.

Non-Discrimination Statement

Iowa DOT ensures non-discrimination in all programs and activities in accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Any person who believes that they are being denied participation in a project, being denied benefits of a program, or otherwise being discriminated against because of race, color, national origin, gender, age, or disability, low income and limited English proficiency, or needs more information or special assistance for persons with disabilities or limited English proficiency, please contact Iowa DOT Civil Rights at 515-239-7970 or by email at civil.rights@iowadot.us.