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Submitting a Problem Statement to the National Cooperative Highway Research Program

<https://www.trb.org/NCHRP>

August 2024

NCHRP Problem Statement and Balloting System

- NCHRP provides an online system to: 
 - Manage the process of submitting problem statements.
 - Distributing them for review and collecting technical comments from state departments of transportation, AASHTO committees and councils, and the Federal Highway Administration.
 - Facilitate the AASHTO Special Committee on Research and Innovation’s project selection decisionmaking.
- System accessed via a link – as usual – nothing to download.
- Users will login using their MyTRB credentials.
- Submitters will fill in an online form – no uploaded documents.
- Submitters will receive submission confirmation and a link to their “dashboard” where they can access their submittal.

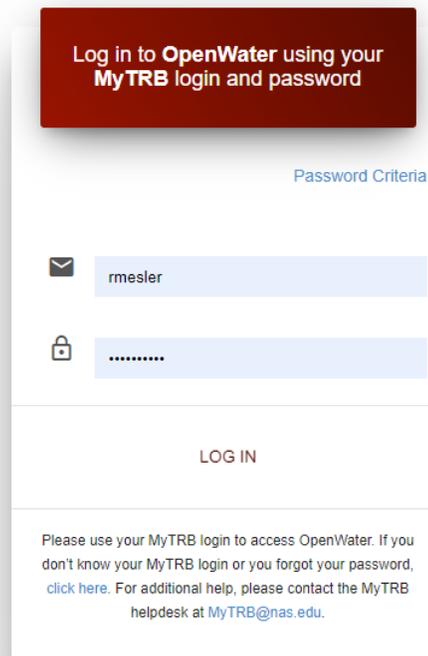
Submitting a problem statement:

Welcome to MyTRB!

In our continuing effort to simplify and consolidate logins across TRB's systems, we are now using MyTRB as the method for logging into [OpenWater](#).

If you need to create a MyTRB login/password or if you've forgotten your password, click [here](#). We expect the login process to be seamless for you, but the MyTRB helpdesk is available at MyTRB@nas.edu if you run into any problems.

- As in the past, to access the submittal system you ***must*** use the link on the NCHRP home page OR contained in the “Call for Problem Statements” email sent by Joe Snell on behalf of Waseem Dekelbab to AASHTO committees, FHWA, and others.
- After clicking on the link, you will be prompted to login with your MyTRB credentials.



Log in to **OpenWater** using your MyTRB login and password

[Password Criteria](#)

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LOG IN

Please use your MyTRB login to access OpenWater. If you don't know your MyTRB login or you forgot your password, [click here](#). For additional help, please contact the MyTRB helpdesk at MyTRB@nas.edu.

- If you do not have a MyTRB account, you will be prompted to create one.
- MyTRB will “authenticate” eligible submitters.

Submitting a problem statement: after entering your MyTRB credentials, you will see this page.

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NATIONAL COOPERATIVE HIGHWAY RESEARCH PROGRAM

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Problem Submittals for FY2026 National Cooperative Highway Research Program

Problem Statements Due by November 1, 2024

[Click here to submit a problem statement](#)

The AASHTO Special Committee on Research and Innovation (R&I) is soliciting candidate research problems for the fiscal year 2026 National Cooperative Highway Research Program (NCHRP).

New this year, NCHRP provides an enhanced portal for submitting problem statements online. This is the only way problem statements may be submitted. To access the portal, submitters must log in using their MyTRB account, saving you time and the burden of yet another new account to manage.

The problem statement template plus the instructions for preparing a problem statement are two separate documents that you may download to help you prepare your submission:

- [The problem statement template \(Word\)](#)
- [The problem statement instructions \(Word\)](#)

To be considered for the FY2026 program, problem statements must be submitted by midnight Eastern Time on November 1, 2024. This is a firm deadline.

- Special note to FHWA staff: you will be receiving a separate email from Jean Landolt with further instructions on problem statement submittal.

Please direct any questions you may have to MyTRB@nas.edu.

Click here to begin the submission process
And fill out the problem statement form.

Filling out the form:

- Text boxes: Can type or cut-and-paste.
- Limited formatting: bold, italics, underline, super-and-subscript, alignment.
- No spell check.
- Character limits for most questions.
- Embedded guidance for each question.
- No uploaded attachments.
- No live links to external content.

NCHRP Balloting

Instructions Submitter Information **Problem Statement**

1. PROBLEM TITLE *

Word count: 0 / 20

Communicate what the research is about in as few words as possible. The reader should be able to at least partially understand what the problem statement is about just by reading the title.

2. RESEARCH OBJECTIVE *

Prepare a concise objective statement (e.g. The objective of this research is...) describing:

- The desired outcome(s) and expected final product(s), e.g., guidance or guidelines, a test method, equipment, a tool, specifications, a manual, a new or revised process, etc.
- Major tasks or activities the research contractor will likely have to perform in order to successfully conduct the research.
 - Describe the tasks or activities in enough detail to demonstrate that the objective can be fully achieved and that the estimated funding is justified and sufficient.

Word count: 0 / 250

B **I** **U** \times_2 \times^2 I_x Format 

Note: Use ctrl-V (PC) or cmd-V (Mac) to paste your text into the submission form fields. Due to browser settings, fields with formatting options (rich-text fields) will not allow you to right-click and paste.

3. BACKGROUND INFORMATION AND NEED FOR RESEARCH *

- Crisply describe the problem to be solved, and whom it affects.
- Explain why the research will solve this problem.

The online form asks the same questions that are in the problem statement template. (found on the NCHRP homepage <https://www.trb.org/NCHRP/NCHRP.aspx>)

1. Problem statement title
2. Research objective
3. Background information and need for research
4. Literature search summary
5. Urgency and potential benefits
6. Alignment with the 2021-2026 AASHTO strategic plan
7. Implementation considerations
8. Recommended research funding and research period
9. Has this problem statement or a different version of the problem statement been submitted to NCHRP before? If yes, what year(s)?
10. Problem statement author(s)
11. Potential panel member(s)
12. Required keywords/terms: 3 required keywords derived from the **Transportation Research Thesaurus ***
13. Optional keywords/terms: 3 additional “free text” keywords or terms

* Choosing Keywords or Terms

Look at the major elements of the problem statement and ask yourself:

- What are the major ideas, concepts or concerns?
- Who or what is affected by the problem and the solution?

This problem statement will be sent to technical reviewers in state departments of transportation and the Federal Highway Administration. What key words would help us determine which experts to send it to?

TOO BROAD

- Environment
- Highways
- Safety
- Management
- Materials
- Locations



JUST ABOUT RIGHT

- Highway access management
- Snow and ice control
- Moveable bridges
- Wildlife crossings
- Reclaimed asphalt pavement
- Pedestrian bridges

The NCHRP problem statement form requires 3 keywords or terms, taken from the TRT.

Each keyword field on the form is connected to the TRT; just start typing and potential keywords will appear for you to choose from.

You can also identify your keywords separately by going directly to the TRT and searching...by browsing alphabetically, or hierarchically, and then typing those in the form.

<https://trt.trb.org>

Transportation Research Thesaurus (TRT)

Contact Us

Thesaurus Home

How to Use the Thesaurus

Hot Topic Terms

Suggest Terms

Download

About the TRT

Welcome to the TRT



The Transportation Research Thesaurus (TRT) is a tool to provide a common and consistent language between producers and users of transportation information. The TRT covers all modes and aspects of transportation. Terms are arranged in hierarchies under 21 top concepts.

You can search the TRT by keyword, or browse alphabetically and by hierarchy. Click on any term to view its relationships (broader, narrower, and related terms) and to find records indexed with that term in TRB's TRID, Research in Progress (RIP) and Publications Index databases.

Search

Begin typing. You may use AND and OR

Browse

Hierarchical

Alphabetical

- Areas and regions (8)
- Communication and control (4)
- Construction and maintenance (2)
- Disciplines (6)
- Economic and social factors (10)
- Environment (6)
- Facilities (5)
- Information, data, and knowledge (6)
- Management and organization (21)
- Materials (2)
- Mathematics (10)
- Organizations (9)
- Persons and personal characteristics (18)
- Physical phenomena (11)



<https://trt.trb.org>

Search

Accident prone locations

High risk locations *USE FOR Accident prone locations*

Begin typing, and the TRT will return suggestions

Search Results

Your search for **accident prone locations** returned the following:

High risk locations *USE FOR Accident prone locations*

Top Terms > Safety and security > Crashes > Crash characteristics > Crash locations > High risk locations

| | | |
|--------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------|
| Use For | Broader Term | Narrower Terms |
| Accident black spots | Crash locations | Roadside hazards |
| Accident prone locations | | |
| High accident locations | | |
| Hot spots | | |
| Hotspots | | |
| Related Terms | Find Related Records | |
| Risk | RIP | |
| | TRID | |
| | PubsIndex | |

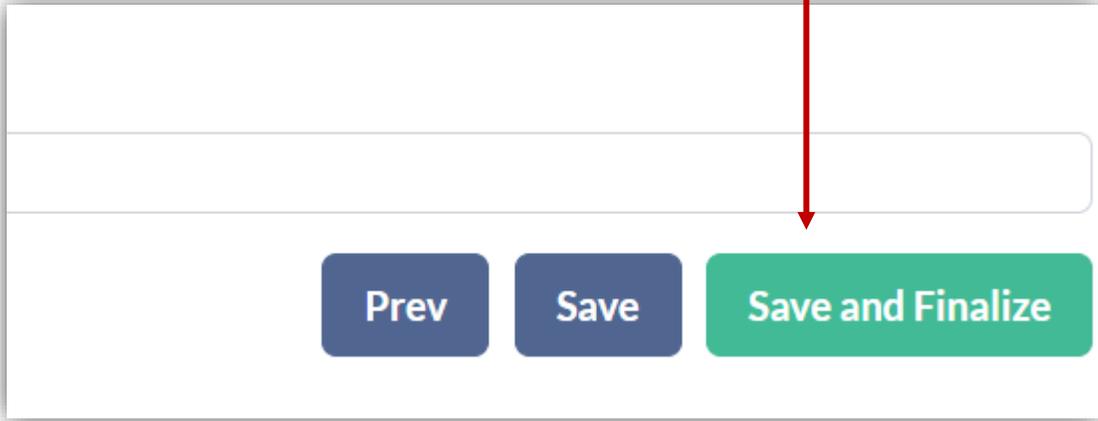
Created: 9/24/2019

Excel **Download**

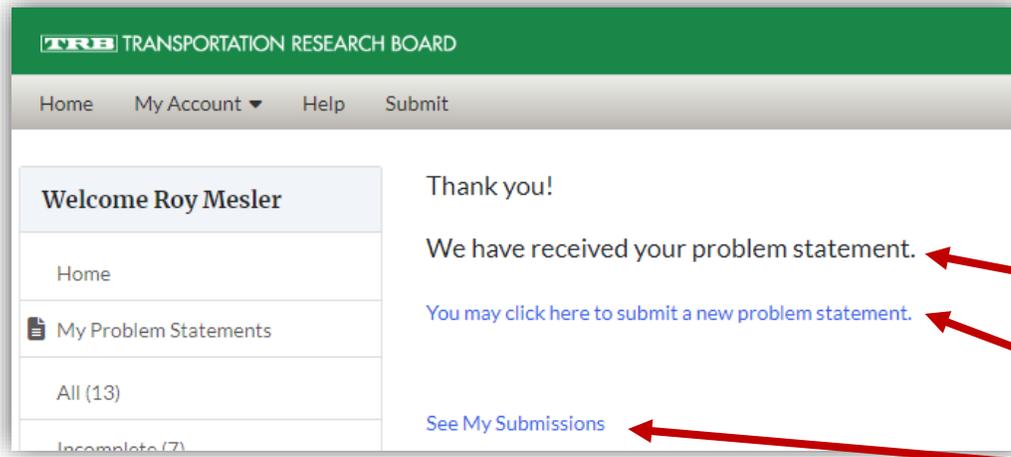
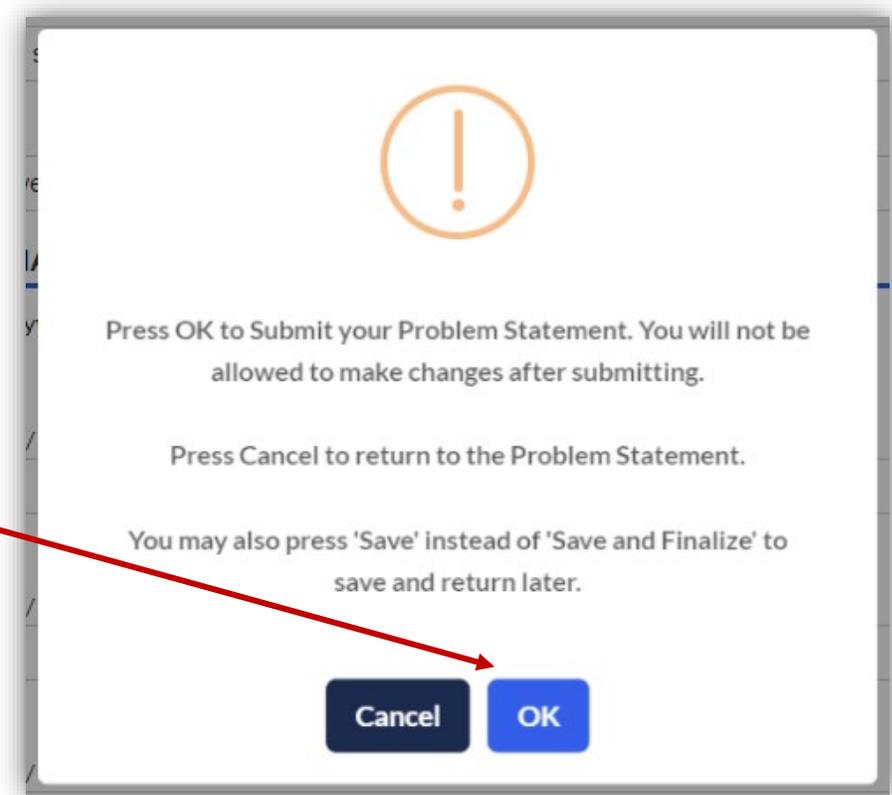
The TRT will help you narrow your terms:

| | | |
|----------------|---|----------|
| Bicycle paths | } | Bikeways |
| Bicycle routes | | |
| Cycle paths | | |
| Cycling paths | | |

When the submitter is finished entering the problem statement, click **Save and Finalize**



This box will pop up – click **OK** to finalize and submit.



After clicking on OK, the submitter will see this screen:

- Confirming we received their problem statement.
- They can start a new problem statement.
- They can view, and then download or print their problem statement.

After submission...

- The submitter will also receive an email confirming our receipt of their problem statement:
 - Thank you for your submission. To review your problem statement you can sign into our submission portal [here](#). Please let us know if you have any problems or questions by emailing MyTRB@nas.edu.
- The submitter will see their own dashboard listing all their problem statements. They can access their dashboard and problem statements at any time.

| Welcome Roy Mesler | | | | | |
|--------------------|---------------------|----------|------------------------------------|--------------------|---|
| Program | Problem Statement # | Category | Title | Last Updated | Action |
| NCHRP Balloting | 4033 | | Lorem ipsum odor amet | 8/1/2024 11:59 AM | View Copy Problem Statement Print |
| NCHRP Balloting | 4028 | | Lorem ipsum odor amet, consectetur | 7/25/2024 05:17 PM | View Copy Problem Statement Print |

For more information about the
National Cooperative Highway Research Program

visit our website at
<https://www.trb.org/NCHRP>

Questions or suggestions?
Contact us at MyTRB@nas.edu