



DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Highway Administration

Public Notice: Design Challenge for National Memorial to Fallen Highway Workers in Work Zones

AGENCY: Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT).

ACTION: Notice; design challenge.

SUMMARY: FHWA invites detailed proposals for the design, construction, and installation of a National Fallen Highway Workers Memorial. Proposals should demonstrate both a compelling design vision and a feasible approach to implementation. This memorial will honor the American workers who have lost their lives in highway work zones and serve as a national symbol of the ongoing commitment to work zone safety.

DATES: Submissions must be received on or before [INSERT DATE 120 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER].

ADDRESSES: Submissions should be emailed to: WZMemorial@dot.gov

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: For questions about this notice, please contact David Johnson, FHWA Office of Operations, at (202) 366-1301 or via email at david.johnson@dot.gov. For legal questions, please contact Ailya Zaidi, FHWA Office of the Chief Counsel, (404) 562-3670, or via email at ailya.zaidi@dot.gov. Office hours for FHWA are from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., E.T., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Electronic Access and Filing

An electronic copy of this document may be downloaded from the Office of the Federal Register's Website at: www.FederalRegister.gov and the U.S. Government Publishing Office's Website at: www.GovInfo.gov.

Purpose

Highway workers play a vital role in building and maintaining the Nation's transportation system, often under dangerous conditions. The National Fallen Highway Workers Memorial will honor those who have lost their lives in work zones by recognizing their service, sacrifice, and lasting impact. The intent of the memorial is not only to provide a place of remembrance and education, but also to serve as a visible reminder to the public that every work zone is a place where lives are at risk.

This Design Challenge seeks to identify creative visions that balance solemnity, education, and approachability, while also ensuring the memorial remains meaningful and relevant over time. Respondents are encouraged to consider designs that can evolve as needed, whether through updates, additions, or adaptable elements, so that the memorial continues to reflect current realities and sustain its impact for future generations. These designs should set this memorial apart from existing memorials through innovative design and a unique expression of purpose.

This Design Challenge is an invitation to gather detailed design proposals for a memorial dedicated to workers who have lost their lives in work zones. The purpose is to enable interested stakeholders to provide input, facilitate dialogue, and galvanize action towards resolving a serious transportation challenge on the national transportation network. This notice is for planning and information purposes only. It does not constitute a Request for Proposal (RFP) or a promise to issue an RFP in the future.

Background

Work zone safety is not just about rules; it's about saving lives. As more roads and infrastructure projects are built across the country, highway workers face daily risks

from speeding traffic and driver inattention. Even with improved safety measures, too many lives are still being lost.

A National Crisis: From 2020 to 2024, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration reported 4,481 deaths in work zones. Many of these crashes are preventable and often involve distracted driving, speeding, or failure to follow traffic controls. During that same period, the Bureau of Labor Statistics recorded 536 highway worker deaths. These individuals were delivering essential work—repairing roads, maintaining infrastructure, and supporting safe travel—when they were killed on the job.

The Opportunity: Though these numbers show the scale of the problem, they do not fully capture the human impact. Behind every statistic is a person, a family, and a community affected by loss. The National Fallen Highway Workers Memorial presents an opportunity to both honor those individuals and address a critical gap in public awareness. By creating a space for reflection and remembrance, the memorial will serve as an educational tool—helping visitors and motorists understand the importance of work zone safety and the consequences of unsafe driving. Thoughtful design will be essential to ensure the memorial is meaningful, durable, and integrated with its surroundings, creating a lasting landmark that resonates with the public and reinforces the shared responsibility to protect highway workers.

Prize: The Design Challenge for National Memorial to Fallen Highway Workers in Work Zones offers a total prize of \$5,000. The prize recognizes public creativity and reflects the technical rigor of its contestants. The winning design will be featured on official DOT communication platforms, serving as exemplars for future projects.

Challenge:

1. Design Request

FHWA is seeking detailed design proposals for a memorial to honor workers who have lost their lives due to work zone crashes.

The goal of this Design Challenge is to identify innovative design approaches that:

- **Memorializes:** Provides a space for reflection, remembrance, and opportunities for the public to actively engage with the installation.
- **Educates the Public:** Highlights the need for highway maintenance and work zones and solidifies the importance of work zone safety.
- **Integrates with the Environment:** Creates a landmark that is durable, manageable, and aesthetically resonant with its surroundings.

Proposed Design Tracks

To ensure the memorial reaches as many people as possible and maintains a lasting legacy, FHWA is soliciting information on two distinct physical formats. Applicants may choose to submit design concepts for Track A, Track B, or both.

Track A: The Mobile Memorial (Indoor-Outdoor)

This track focuses on a versatile, transportable installation that can serve as a Federal centerpiece for National Work Zone Awareness Week events, safety conferences, and State Departments of Transportation events. FHWA is considering a memorial that can be displayed outside for up to 90 days at a time and moved indoors as necessary. Please consider the following factors:

- **Scale and Presence:** Ensure high visibility while blending seamlessly into the environment with the constraints of being up to 6' (width) x 4' (depth) x 6' (height).
- **Mobility:** Disassembled and reassembled by a small crew (4–6 people) within a 48-hour window and can it be easily packed, moved, and stored.
- **Informative:** Memorialize and educate the public regarding the importance of work zone safety and the consequences of unsafe driving.
- **Climate Adaptability:** Ensure the memorial remains pristine when moved from a climate-controlled indoor atrium to an unsheltered outdoor viewing space.

- **Lighting:** Illuminated at night to ensure beauty and viewability.
- **Logistics:** Weight and dimension constraints for transporting the memorial.
- **Circuit:** For the temporary memorial, which national landmarks or annual events (e.g., National Work Zone Awareness Week, Safety Conventions) would provide the highest impact and engagement? How can the memorial be made interactive for event participants?
- **Fabrication timeline:** Timeframe to create and install the memorial.

Track B: The Permanent Indoor Memorial at DOT (Washington, District of Columbia.)

This track focuses on a fixed landmark of national significance. Please consider the following factors:

- **Scale and Presence:** Ensure high visibility while blending seamlessly into the environment with the constraints of being up to 4' (width) x 2' (depth) x 4' (height).
- **Informative:** Memorialize and educate employees and visitors regarding the importance of work zone safety and the consequences of unsafe driving.
- **Structural Longevity:** Engineering solutions (e.g., seismic anchors) which will minimize the long-term fiscal burden on DOT for maintenance.
- **Fabrication timeline:** Timeframe to create and install the memorial.

2. Submission Requirements

Interested firms or individual artists should submit the following:

- **Design Concept Description:** A brief explanation of how the memorial educates and increases awareness for work zone safety.
- **Medium type identification:** Artwork, structure, statue, etc.
- **Material identification:** Identify primary materials (e.g., bronze, weathering steel, digital screens, etc.).

- **Preliminary Sketches/Renderings/Diagrams:** Visual representations of the proposed design concept.
- **Qualifications:** Links to previous public works or architectural projects, if applicable.
- **Preliminary Design Schedule:** A high-level timeline from design finalization through fabrication and installation
- **Preliminary Cost Estimate:** A non-binding cost estimate (not to exceed \$50,000) for the design, materials, fabrication, installation, and maintenance.

3. Eligibility

In the case of an individual, whether participating singly or in a group, shall be a citizen or permanent resident of the United States and in the case of a private entity, shall be incorporated in and maintain a primary place of business in the United States.

Applicants may not be a Federal entity or Federal employee acting within the scope of their employment.

4. Rules

Payment of the Prize

Cash prize awarded under this Challenge will be paid to the designated individual or Team Lead directly by DOT through electronic funds transfer. Winner(s) will be responsible for any applicable local, State, and Federal taxes and reporting that may be required under applicable tax laws. DOT will comply with the Internal Revenue Service withholding and reporting requirements, where applicable. For designs submitted by a team, following payment to the Team Lead, DOT will not be involved in determining how prize money is divided or distributed amongst the team members.

Usage of Artificial Intelligence (AI)

Any use of AI tools (i.e., generative AI or large language model [LLM, e.g., ChatGPT]) in the preparation of the design submission must be disclosed. If AI tools

were used, indicate what AI tool(s) were used, the approximate percentage of the document that was generated or assisted by AI, and briefly describe the purpose (e.g., language enhancement, content generation) of such use. Each team or applicant remains fully responsible for verifying the accuracy, originality, and ethical integrity of all content, including AI-generated portions. DOT reserves the right to reject any paper submission that may have used AI in an unethical or illegal manner.

Representation, Warranties, and Indemnification

By entering the Challenge, each applicant or participant represents, warrants, and covenants as follows:

- Applicant is the sole author, creator, and owner of their submission;
- The submission is not the subject of any actual or threatened litigation or claim;
- The submission does not and will not violate or infringe upon the intellectual property rights, privacy rights, publicity rights, or other legal rights of any third party;
- The submission does not and will not contain any harmful computer code (sometimes referred to as “malware,” “viruses,” or “worms”); and
- The submission, and contestants’ use of the submission, does not and will not violate any applicable laws or regulations.
- Applicant agrees to assume any and all risks and waives claim against the Federal Government and its related entities, except in the case of willful misconduct, for any injury, death, damage, or loss of property, revenue, or profits, whether direct, indirect, or consequential, arising from their participation in a prize competition, whether the injury, death, damage or loss arises through negligence or otherwise.

If an applicant or participant is unable to make any of the warranties as stated above, that applicant or participant must provide a clear written explanation of the

reason(s) it cannot make any specific warranty. DOT will, in its sole discretion, determine whether such explanations are sufficient and acceptable.

Intellectual Property of Submissions

Applicants can utilize intellectual property developed prior to this prize competition as a part of their submission. Neither DOT nor anyone acting on its behalf will obtain any rights in intellectual property developed prior to or during this prize competition without the prior written consent of the participant. By participating in the prize competition, the participant is not granting rights in any patents, pending patent applications, or copyrights related to the technology described in their submission. However, by submitting their entry, the participant is granting DOT and any parties acting on its behalf certain limited rights as set forth herein.

By virtue of their submission to this prize competition, participants grant to DOT and any parties acting on their behalf the right to:

1. Review, screen, and evaluate submitted materials per the Evaluation Criteria as detailed below.
2. Use the submitted materials in formulation for the design of a memorial.
3. Describe the submission in any materials created in connection with this prize competition.

Participant further grants DOT, and anyone acting on its behalf the right to publicize participant's name and, as applicable, the name of participant's team members or the name of any entity that assisted in preparing participant's submission. Such authority includes posting or linking to the participant's submission on DOT Websites, including the Challenge Website, and inclusion of the participant's submission in any other media, worldwide, subject to the above restrictions relating to confidential business information. More specifically, such authority includes the right to copy, distribute, publicly display, and publicly perform all parts of participant's submission that would not

otherwise be exempt from disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act.

Note: DOT reserves the right, in its sole discretion, to (a) cancel, suspend, or modify the Challenge, and (b) not award any prize if no entries are deemed worthy.

5. Judging

Submissions will be evaluated by a multidisciplinary technical review team of DOT experts representing varied backgrounds. The evaluation criteria for these submissions include:

- how effectively the submission memorializes fallen workers in work zones with dignity, clarity, and emotional impact
- how effectively the submission educates, engages, and creates public awareness around work zone safety
- how effectively the submission integrates with the environment and enhances the surrounding context without disruption
- how effectively the submission encourages reflection, visitation, and sustained public engagement over time
- how effectively the submission demonstrates feasibility within realistic cost constraints, including fabrication, installation, and lifecycle costs
- how effectively the submission can be produced within a reasonable implementation timeline
- how effectively the submission demonstrates durability and minimizes maintenance requirements
- how effectively the submission supports efficient assembly, disassembly, and transport for portable or temporary installations
- how effectively the submission provides access to all public and ensures their safety

All submissions will be evaluated using the above criteria. Proposals will then be assigned an overall qualitative rating of **Highly Recommended, Recommended, or Not Recommended**, reflecting the extent to which they satisfy the stated evaluation criteria and objectives of the memorial design challenge. They will support their ratings of Highly Recommended with comments on strengths, ratings of Recommended with comments on strengths and some weaknesses, and their ratings of Not Recommended with comments on weaknesses or deficiencies. For evaluation purposes, strengths are considered an outstanding or exceptional approach to addressing the criteria. Weaknesses are considered a flaw or gap in how the proposal addresses the criteria. Finally, a deficiency is considered a potential significant flaw or shows incomplete, inadequate, or missing information to address the criteria.

6. How to Enter

To participate in the Design Challenge for National Memorial to Fallen Highway Workers in Work Zones, please follow the submission process below.

1. Email all submissions to: WZMemorial@dot.gov.
2. Include the following information with your submission:
 - **Submitter Information:** Contact details for the individual or team lead.
 - **Submission Details:** Identification of design concepts for Track A, Track B or both and all submission requirements.
 - **Valid Email Address:** You **must** provide a valid and active email address.
3. Submission requirements:
 - File size should not exceed 50MB.
 - PDF files are preferred.
 - Zip files will not be accepted.

Applicants will receive an email confirmation within 3 business days of submission.

Timeline and Delivery of Submittal

Submittals should be submitted within 120 days after this announcement is published in the *Federal Register*. FHWA may request additional clarification to responses directly related to this Design Challenge through direct contact with respondents.

Authority: 15 U.S.C. 3719

Sean McMaster,
Administrator,
Federal Highway Administration.

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