Persons completing reports on behalf of the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) are not responsible for the final design of their reports; final design is the responsibility of FTA. FTA will produce these final reports in PDF format and will post them on the FTA website at https://www.transit.dot.gov/research-innovation/fta-reports-and-publications and at other locations on FTA's website.

The following provides instructions to contractors, grantees, and others responsible for preparing and delivering final research reports to FTA in electronic format. The purpose is to foster uniformity in FTA reports for ease of information retrieval, technical merit, clarity of writing, quality control, and processing in information systems, as well as for assuring permanent access and delivery of FTA reports and documents. **All final reports must be compliant with Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973** (described in more detail below).

To further promote efficient spending in the Federal Government, Executive Order 13589 directs agencies to provide written information electronically and limit the publication and printing of hard copy documents. If it is determined that a report will be printed, printing is the responsibility of the FTA Project Manager or the author, but FTA will provide the design and files necessary for **printing if requested at the time of final report submission**.

<u>**Compliance with these formatting instructions is required**</u>. These instructions are provided at https://www.transit.dot.gov/research-innovation/preparation-instructions-fta-final-reports-0. Questions regarding report formatting guidelines should be directed to your FTA Project Manager.

General

Reports must be submitted electronically in two formats: one file in Word and one file as a PDF.

Order of Appearance

Reports **must** include the following elements in the following order:

- Title Page, including report title, date, authors/organization, cover image, cover image credit
- Report Documentation Page (Standard Form 298), submitted in a separate Word file, as found at https://www.transit.dot.gov/research-innovation/omb-research.
- Table of Contents
- List of Figures (numbered according to section number)
- List of Tables (numbered according to section number)
- Foreword (optional)
- Acknowledgments
- Abstract
- Executive Summary
- Main body of text, separated into titled sections and subsections as appropriate; **DO NOT number subsections**; use footnotes as appropriate
- Appendices (if needed)
- Acronyms/Abbreviations/Glossary (if needed)
- References

Text

The body of the report should be 8.5x11 in. with 1 in. margins. Text should be Arial 11 pt, aligned left, one column, and single spaced, with no paragraph indents and no headers or footers other than page number.

Tables & Figures

Tables and figures should be included within the text and appear immediately after the paragraph in which they first are indicated. Tables must not be inserted as images; they must be editable in Word. Tables and figures should be numbered consecutively within sections, e.g., 5-1, 5-2. All figures must have 508-compliant alternative text. To ensure the highest quality, original (high resolution) images and photos must be available upon request if needed for final report design.

Cover Image

Cover illustrations or photographs must be in color with a resolution of 1M and must include no writing on the image. Credit for the cover image must be provided; written permission for use should be retained by the report author.

Videos must be submitted separately in a video file format (MPG, MOV, WMV, or AVI) and must include all sources; written permissions for use should be retained by the report author. A written script of any video(s) must be included for 508 compliance purposes.

Footnotes/References

Footnotes (not endnotes) should be used if appropriate, numbered sequentially, and shown at the bottom of the page.

References should be numbered sequentially in the order of their appearance in the text in brackets, e.g., [22], not as superscripts. A list of references in numeric order should be included at the end of the document using a consistent format (author name, date, title, publication, volume, page numbers). If numbered references are not used in the text, they should be listed in alpha order. Example reference format:

[1] Bengston, D. N., J. O. Fletcher, and K. C. Nelson. 2003. Public policies for managing urban growth and protecting open space: Policy instruments and lessons learned in the United States. *Landscape and Urban Planning*, 69, 271–286.

Alternative Text Guidelines (Section 508/Accessibility Compliance)

Alternative (alt) text is a written description of an image that conveys the same essential information as the image so persons who are visually impaired and using a text reader can understand the image.

Alt text for all images (including those in appendices) must be submitted as a separate Word file with each figure distinctly referenced, e.g., "Figure 1-1: Photograph of …." or "Figure 3-5: Bar chart showing …."

Alt text should **not** be a repetition of the figure title; it should describe all the important information in the image but not every physical detail, only what is needed to convey its meaning and understanding. Alt text for images that contain detailed information such as a technical diagram, chart, or graph must include all relevant data unless already described in the page text, in which case the description should end with "as described in the text."

Report Summary

All reports must be accompanied by a 1–2 page (maximum) summary of the information contained in the report that includes the following subsections:

- **FTA Report Title**
- **Background** – information detailing the history of the problem and rationale for conducting the research
- **Objectives** – brief description of research objectives

- **Findings and Conclusions** – must include a one-sentence summary of the findings and conclusions, followed by a brief description of the findings and conclusions of the report
- **Benefits** – description of how the findings will be used, how they will affect FTA business, safety, economic, and/or efficiency benefits
- **Project Information** – include the following at the end of the summary:

This research project was conducted by (*name of Principal Investigator*) of the (*contracting organization*). For more information, contact FTA Project Manager (*name of FTA Project Manager*) at (*FTA Project Manager phone #, e-mail address*). All research reports can be found at https://www.transit.dot.gov/about/research-innovation.

General Report Submission/Posting Process

- Final report and report summary are submitted by FTA Project Manager in Word and PDF to Edwin Rodriguez in TRI.
- Report and summary are reviewed by TRI for required elements and either forwarded to contractor for editing or returned to the FTA Project Manager for missing elements.
- Report and summary are edited by contractor using Tracking and returned to the FTA Project Manager for approval. A report checklist is provided noting missing items.
- Approved edited report and summary are returned to TRI for design.
- Report and summary are designed and provided to the FTA Project Manager for final approval.
- Report and summary are made 508-compliant and posted on FTA public website.

FTA Report Preparation Checklist

Report Title:

FTA Project Manager:

Final Output: ☐ PDF ONLY   ☐ PDF <u>and</u> PRINTED

Required Report Components

☐ Title page

☐ Report Documentation Page (in Word) with all information provided

☐ Table of Contents, List of Figures, List of Tables

☐ Acknowledgments/Foreword (optional)

☐ Abstract

☐ Executive Summary

☐ Main Body (no section/subsection numbering)

☐ Appendices (if needed)

☐ Acronyms/Glossary (if needed)

☐ References

Tables & Figures

☐ Distinct title for each table and figure, numbered according to each text section

☐ All tables in editable Word format (not included as images)

☐ 508-complaint alternative text for all figures and images (including appendices), **provided in a separate Word file**; no alt text is required for tables

Illustrations & Photos

☐ All images 72kb or higher (300 kb or higher if report will be professionally printed)

☐ Cover image at least 1M resolution with no writing on image

☐ Source, permission, and/or photo credit for cover image

☐ Videos submitted separately, with sources and written permissions AND written script of video

Report Summary

☐ 1–2 pages (800 words) max

☐ Background

☐ Objectives

☐ Findings & Conclusions (including single summary sentence)

☐ Benefits

☐ Project Info