



Illinois Department
of Transportation

**THE SUMMER 2008 ILLINOIS
MOTORIST OPINION SURVEY**

Conducted for
Illinois Department of Transportation

Conducted by



**Survey Research Office
Center for State Policy and Leadership
University of Illinois at Springfield (UIS)**

SUMMARY OF RESULTS

October, 2008

[Results Weighted by Population Distribution of IDOT Districts]

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Introduction

The Illinois Department of Transportation contracted with the Survey Research Office, located within the Center for State Policy and Leadership, of the University of Illinois at Springfield (UIS) to conduct a mail-out Motorist Opinion Survey in the Summer of 2008. Similar surveys had been conducted for the Department in every Spring from 2001 through 2007 and in the Fall of 2001. Staff of the UIS Survey Research Office offered advice concerning final question wording, assisted in developing the specific methodology (see below), implemented the data collection procedures (see below) and data input, and analyzed the results. A summary of the results are presented in this report.

Methodology

The sample. For the Summer 2008 survey, a stratified sample of “listed” Illinois households was purchased from Survey Sampling, Inc., one of the leading vendors of samples in the country.¹ The sample was stratified by IDOT region, with 2000 households randomly selected from District 1, and 225 from each of the other eight IDOT Districts (for a total of 1,800 outside of District 1). Thus, a grand total of 3,800 randomly-selected households were in the original sample.

It should be noted that this is basically the same sampling methodology that has been used in all previous surveys except Spring 2002.² In that survey, both a cross-sectional sample (such as this) and a panel design (following up on those who responded in the Fall 2001 survey) were used. Because the cross-sectional portion of this design was thought to better represent licensed drivers, the original cross-sectional sampling design was selected for subsequent surveys.

Data collection procedures. Each original sample member was sent an initial survey package in July, 2008.³ These initial packages consisted of a personalized letter from the Secretary of IDOT, a four-page questionnaire in booklet form, and a postage-paid return envelope addressed to the UIS-SRO in an outside envelope with the IDOT logo.⁴ About one week after this initial mailing, a postcard thank-you / reminder was sent to all

¹ In the initial Spring 2001 survey, the sample was purchased from Survey Sampling, Inc. rather than selected from the Secretary of State’s list of licensed drivers because of time considerations. Since then, this decision has been driven by the desire to maintain consistency in this aspect of the methodology, particularly since a purpose of these surveys is to assess changes over time.

² The difference in the most recent Spring 2007 and Summer 2008 surveys is the sampling of 225 households in Districts 2 through 9, up from 190 households in the previous surveys. There has also been some variation in the household member whom we ask to complete the questionnaire. This is explained more fully below.

³ The 2008 Motorist Survey was conducted somewhat later than the 2007 Motorist Survey. This in turn had been conducted somewhat later than all previous Motorist surveys. For 2008, the initial survey packages were mailed July 18-21, 2008; postcard reminders were mailed July 28-29; and follow-up survey packages to non-respondents were mailed August 13-14.

⁴ The survey packages were the same as those for all the earlier surveys, with the exception of the inclusion of focus group participation forms in the Fall 2001 survey packages.

sample members. And, just over two weeks after the postcard, a follow-up survey package was sent to non-respondents. This follow-up survey package was similar in composition to the first survey package.

A web-based version of the questionnaire was introduced in 2008. In all U.S. mail correspondence with sample members, we informed them that they could complete a web-based version of the questionnaire that could be accessed by going to a particular web-site address.

One variation across the surveys is worthy of note. In the three cross-sectional surveys prior to 2003, we asked the licensed driver with the next birthday to complete the questionnaire in order to “randomly” vary the characteristics of the respondent. In the Spring 2003 through Spring 2007 surveys, we explicitly asked for the youngest licensed driver in the household to complete the survey in a random half of the sample, while still asking for the licensed driver with the next birthday in the other half. And, for this 2008 survey, we began asking for the youngest licensed driver in the household for all sample members. It should be noted that in all cases, we did ask that another licensed driver in the household complete the survey if the requested driver was not available. These changes were made in an effort to obtain a greater proportion of younger licensed drivers in the responding sample.

Returns and response rate. Through September 22, 2008, over 1,300 (n = 1,310) usable surveys had been returned to the Survey Research Office. Only 40 of these questionnaires were completed through the web-version of the questionnaire. The total number completed represents just over 34 percent of the sample, and is an *“initial” response rate that underestimates the actual response rate (see below for an explanation)*. The *initial* response rate from District 1 (the Chicago metro area) is almost 30 percent compared to just under 40 percent for the remaining districts in the state.

We describe this as an “initial response rate” because the number of mail-out problems and the number who indicated having no licensed driver in the household have not been subtracted from the base. When these are subtracted from the base, the response rate (known as the cooperation rate) for the cross-sectional survey rises to just over 36 percent (36.5%). The cooperation rate is just over 31 percent for District 1 (Chicago area) and just over 42 percent for Districts 2 through 9 (the “downstate” regions). Relevant response and cooperation rate numbers for the total sample and by IDOT region and “sample half” are presented in Table 1 on the next page.

For the results reported in the summary below, respondents in the 2008 sample have been weighted to reflect each district’s overall estimated proportion of licensed drivers. The targeted proportions for each district used in this weighting, as in the past reports, are: District 1 - Schaumburg (58.6%); District 2 - Dixon (8.8%); District 3 – Ottawa (5.9%); District 4 - Peoria (4.8%); District 5 - Paris (5.7%); District 6 – Springfield (5.3%); District 7 - Effingham (2.7%); District 8 - Collinsville (5.5%); and District 9 - Carbondale (2.8%).⁵ Note that for a few results in this report (those relating to the

⁵ For the weighting, the 2000 population Census figures for Illinois counties were used. However, the proportion of licensed drivers for the Chicago metro area was decreased somewhat from the population proportion because of two factors: 1) the likelihood that this area contains a higher proportion of

current topical area of a capital improvement program), we have also presented results weighted by district, age and education. This reflects a sample that is more demographically representative of Illinois motorists than is our responding sample weighted only by district. However, the district-only weighted results are more useful for comparing current to past survey results.

The sampling error for this survey is just over +/- 2.7 percent, at the 95 percent confidence level. That is, the percentage results for the full sample will be within 2.7 percentage points of the actual population characteristics 95 percent of the time.⁶

Table 1
Response Rates, Total
and by IDOT District and Letter Version

District	Original number	Mail problems	Not Licensed Driver / Deceased	Remain-ing number	Returns	“Initial” Response Rate (base: all)	Coopera-tion Rate (base: remaining)
1	2,000	51	41	1,908	596	29.8%	31.2%
2	225	14	8	203	87	38.9%	42.9%
3	225	4	8	213	81	36.0%	38.0%
4	225	7	9	209	101	44.9%	48.3%
5	225	5	8	212	98	43.6%	46.2%
6	225	6	9	210	96	42.7%	45.7%
7	225	3	5	217	87	38.7%	40.1%
8	225	5	10	210	82	36.4%	39.0%
9	225	6	8	211	82	36.4%	38.9%
TOTAL	3,800	101	106	3,593	1,310	34.5%	36.5%
1	2,000	51	41	1,908	596	29.8%	31.2%
2 - 9	1,800	50	65	1,685	714	39.7%	42.4%

The questionnaire

The questionnaire was in the format of a four-page booklet. It contained questions that have been part of the survey since its inception, and as usual, it contained sections consisting of topical issue questions.

Continuing questions are found in the first and last parts of the questionnaire.

In the first part of the questionnaire (pages 1 and 2), respondents were asked to rate various aspects of state highways and bridges under three main headings: maintaining highways and traffic flow; road repair and construction; and traveler services. Respondents were then asked about their awareness and use of the IDOT toll-free telephone number and website. And following this, they were asked to rate IDOT

households with no licensed driver; and 2) the likelihood that the population in this area contains a higher proportion of household members not old enough to drive. It is acknowledged that estimation is involved here; however, it should be noted that any small changes in this weighting will have no impact on the substantive results.

⁶ Note that this assumes a non-biased sampling frame and no bias in those who responded.

employees on four characteristics and to give a couple overall evaluations of IDOT (overall performance and frequency IDOT can be trusted to do what is right regarding transportation issues) as well as to assess IDOT's impact on their area's economy and overall quality of life.⁷

In the last part of the questionnaire (bottom of page 4), respondents were asked selected "objective background" information. These included questions about the number of miles respondents drive per year (in total and on their job), commuting time and miles, and residential location as well as information regarding the respondents' age, gender, education level and household income. For the first time, respondents were also asked whether they are now driving more, less or about the same as they were last year.

This year's topical issue questions included: importance of three selected characteristics of state agencies and ratings of IDOT on these characteristics, considering "tax dollars spent" (page 3); and a couple questions on traffic safety activities and messages (page 3). Both of these topics and the questions included in them had been asked in some of the recent Motorist surveys.

The other topical issue questions included in this year's survey focused on a capital improvement program for Illinois. Several questions specifically focused on the "Illinois Works" capital improvement program, a multi-year state construction program proposed by Governor Blagojevich that was put together by the Illinois Works Coalition, co-chaired by former Speaker of the House Dennis Hastert and SIU President Glenn Poshard, a former congressman and gubernatorial candidate.

Questions asked here included: awareness of the Illinois Works capital improvement program, and source of first awareness; knowledge of the year the last capital improvement was passed in Illinois; priorities regarding types of capital improvement projects; support for/opposition to the Illinois Works program as well as support for/opposition to three selected ways to fund a capital improvement program.

Description of the responding sample

The following presents a description of the 2008 Motorist Survey sample in terms of selected demographics asked about in the questionnaire. It also offers a comparison of the composition of this year's sample with those in the Motorist surveys since 2003. (See Table 2 for a summary.) As with most of the substantive results, this description is based on results weighted by IDOT district. It should be noted that throughout most of this report, percentages have been rounded to integers.⁸ (Rounding may result in percentages not adding exactly to 100%.)

⁷ The trust question was first asked in the Spring 2005 survey and in every survey since. The assessed impact questions were asked in the Spring 2005 survey as well as in the most recent two surveys; however, they were not asked in 2006.

⁸ Numbers with decimals of .5 are rounded to the even integer.

Gender. For those responding sample members (98% of the total sample), just over half (50%+) are male while the remaining near-half (50%) are female. This is the most balanced the gender distribution has been across the last six surveys.⁹

Age. The average age of respondents in the total sample is 55 to 57 years old (mean = 55.1 years; median = 57.0 years). Nearly three in ten (28%) of the respondents are in the two youngest age groups, split between those 16 to 35 years of age (16%) and those 36 to 45 years of age (13%). About one in five are in each of the next two age groups -- 46 to 55 (20%) and 56 to 65 (21%). Just over thirty percent (31%) are in the two oldest age categories, split between those 66 to 75 (18%) and those over 75 (13%).

Across the six surveys, the average age of the respondents has generally become somewhat older, increasing from about 53 years of age to 55 to 57 years of age. The proportion of respondents under 46 years of age has declined from more than one-third in 2003 to just under 30 percent in the last three surveys, while the proportion 66 years of age and older has increased from about one-quarter of the respondents to about 30 percent.

Driving-related descriptions. Miles drive per year. The median number of miles respondents drive per year is 12,000 miles while the mean number is somewhat higher, at nearly 13,500.¹⁰ Almost one-quarter (23%) reported driving up to 6,000 miles per year; well over one-third reported driving 6,000+ to 12,000 miles per year (37%) while almost three in ten reported 12,000+ to 20,000 miles year (29%) and just over one in ten (11%) reported driving more than 20,000 miles per year.

The median number of miles respondents report driving per year is consistent across the last six surveys. However, the mean number for 2008 is the fewest across the six surveys.

Miles drive per year compared to last year. Almost half (48%) indicated that they had driven "about the same" number of miles compared to last year while four times as many indicated they had driven "fewer miles" (39%) as opposed to "more miles" (10%). This question was not asked in previous surveys, but the results are consistent with the above trend in miles per year respondents reported driving (i.e., fewer miles per year).

Miles drive on job per year. Just over one-quarter (27%) reported mileage for miles they drive on their job per year (not including commuting). *For these respondents*, the median number of miles that was reported is 5,000. Just over one-third (35%) of these respondents reported driving 1,000 miles or less per year and fairly similar percentages of one in five to one in five reported driving each of the next three mileage categories -- 1,001 to 5,000 miles (24%); 5,001 to 12,001 miles (22%); and more than 12,000 miles (21%).

⁹ In past surveys, we have noticed a more even gender balance resulting from the random half who gets the version of the letter where we ask for the youngest licensed driver than for the half where we ask for the next birthday. Thus, one reason for the more even gender balance in the 2008 survey appears to be the fact that we asked for the youngest licensed driver for all sample members.

¹⁰ These results are based on the 90 percent of respondents who gave any miles per year.

With the exception of 2007, the median number of miles driven per year for their job is consistent at 5,000 miles per year. The number of 2008 respondents who reported any mileage driven on their job is the lowest across the five most recent surveys (down from 42% in 2004 through 2006 and 35% in 2007).

Commuting. When asked about the miles and minutes of their commute to/from work, just over half of the respondents (about 51-52%) reported information. The median number of miles these respondents reported being from work is 11 miles. The median number of minutes it takes to get to work is 20 minutes – and home from work is 25 minutes – for a total median commute time of three-quarters of an hour (45 minutes). The associated mean numbers are somewhat greater, reflecting the fact that there are some respondents at the higher ends of each distance/time period that “pull” the average numbers up from the median.

The number of respondents who provided information about commuting miles is the lowest of the last six surveys, only slightly lower than the 2006 sample (53-54%). This compares to nearly six in ten who provided information in 2007 (58%) and to just over six in ten who provided information in 2003 and 2004 (62-63%). And overall, the average commuting distance and commuting time are lower in 2008 than the respective results for the earlier surveys.

Residential location. Almost half (46%) of the “weighted” respondents reported living in the two listed metro Chicago areas, with 11 percent indicating they live in the City of Chicago and 35 percent indicating they live in the Chicago suburbs.¹¹ Proportions around one in ten reported living in five other listed areas: a city of more than 75,000 (8%); a city of 20,000 to 75,000 (11%); a city/town of 10,000 to 19,999 (10%); a city/town/village less than 10,000 (12%); and a rural area (10%). Less than one in twenty (3%) reported living in the Metro East area. Not surprisingly, there is not much difference in these results across the last six surveys.

Education. Almost three in ten (28%) of the respondents have up to a high school diploma or GED as their highest level of education while about one-third (33%) have some post high school education and four in ten (40%) have a four-year college degree. These results have been very stable across the four most recent surveys. The 2003 and 2004 results reflect a sample with just slightly less overall education.

Income. The median household income of respondents is in the \$50,000 to \$74,999 range, with the best estimate being nearly \$62,000 (about \$61,950).¹² About 15 percent of all responding households have incomes less than \$25,000 a year, and fairly equal proportions of about one-quarter reported incomes between \$25,000 and \$49,999 a year (24%) and \$50,000 to \$74,999 a year (23%). The remaining respondents are basically split between those in households with incomes between \$75,000 and

¹¹ See the description of weighting in the Methodology section. Note that 19 percent of those in District One reported living in the City of Chicago, nearly 60 percent (59%) reported living in the Chicago suburbs, and 22 percent reported another type of area.

¹² This estimate is based on interpolation and assumes that respondents with incomes in this interval are equally dispersed across it.

\$100,000 a year (18%) and those in households with incomes of more than \$100,000 a year (20%).

The 2008 results actually show an overall sample with household incomes slightly lower than the 2007 responding sample. Generally, however, the household income results show similar income distributions in pairs of adjacent survey years (2003 and 2004; 2005 and 2006; 2007 and 2008) – and modest increases in overall household incomes across the three pairs.

Comparisons of the 2008 respondent portrait with recent past years. A comparison of selected response and demographic characteristics from survey years 2003 through 2008 is found in Table 2. The highest cooperation rate across the six years is found for the 2003 survey at 44 percent with a drop to about 40 percent in both 2004 and 2005, then a slight decline to just over 39 percent in both 2006 and 2007, and another decline to just over 36 percent in 2008.

From 2003 through 2007, the same methodology was employed, including the use of two versions of the letter, one asking for the youngest licensed driver and the other asking for the licensed driver with the next birthday. In 2008, all sample members were sent the youngest licensed driver version of the letter, and a web-site version was offered to respondents.

The above summary describes the changes in these demographic characteristics across the survey years. And, while there have been trends for some of these, it is also the case that there is a great deal of consistency in the demographic profiles of respondents across the six most recent surveys (and, for that matter, for the profiles of the earlier 2001 and 2002 survey respondents as well). Most notable about the demographic profile of the 2008 sample is probably its balance in terms of gender, thus being a respondent sample with proportionally somewhat more females than was the case for the earlier surveys.

Table 2
Selected Response and Demographic Characteristics, 2003 to 2008

Characteristic	2003 Sample	2004 Sample	2005 Sample	2006 Sample	2007 Sample	2008 Sample
Cooperation rate	44.3%	40.4%	40.1%	39.4%	39.4%	36.5%
Gender						
Male	55%	57%	56%	54%	57%	50%
Female	45%	43%	44%	46%	43%	50%
	(98%)	(98%)	(98%)	(98%)	(97%)	(98%)
Age						
16 to 35	16%	15%	15%	13%	12%	16%
36 to 45	19%	18%	18%	16%	14%	28%
46 to 55	21%	22%	20%	22%	21%	20%
56 to 65	19%	19%	21%	22%	23%	21%
66 to 75	13%	15%	15%	15%	18%	18%
Over 75	12%	11%	11%	13%	12%	13%
Mean	53.2 yrs	53.4 yrs	53.9 yrs	55.0 yrs	56.1 yrs	55.1 yrs
Median	53.0 yrs	53.0 yrs	54.0 yrs	55.0 yrs	57.0 yrs	57.0 yrs
	(97%)	(97%)	(96%)	(96%)	(96%)	(96%)
Education						
Up to HS	32%	33%	29%	28%	28%	28%
Post HS	30%	30%	32%	32%	33%	33%
4-yr college	37%	38%	39%	39%	39%	40%
	(98%)	(96%)	(97%)	(97%)	(96%)	(97%)
Income						
< \$25,000	16%	17%	14%	13%	12%	15%
\$25-49,999	30%	31%	27%	27%	26%	24%
\$50-74,999	23%	22%	25%	26%	23%	23%
\$75-100,000	15%	14%	16%	16%	19%	18%
> \$100,000	15%	17%	18%	17%	20%	20%
	(88%)	(83%)	(85%)	(85%)	(85%)	(82%)
Up to \$49,999	46%	48%	41%	40%	38%	39%
\$50-74,999	23%	22%	25%	26%	23%	23%
\$75,000 and up	30%	31%	34%	33%	39%	38%
Miles drive / yr						
Up to 6,000*	21%	20%	19%	23%	19%	23%
6,000+ -12,000	38%	36%	33%	36%	33%	37%
12,000+ - 20,000	28%	29%	31%	28%	32%	29%
Over 20,000	14%	16%	16%	13%	15%	11%
Mean	14,459 m (est)	14,795 miles	15,244 miles	14,045 miles	15,205 miles	13,479 miles
Median	12,000 m (est)	12,000 miles	12,000 miles	12,000 miles	12,000 miles	12,000 miles
	(94%)	(88%)	(90%)	(90%)	(86%)	(90%)

*Among those who indicated any driving miles. The results in the 2003 report were re-calculated to make this consistent. (continued on next page)

Table 2 (continued)

Characteristic	2003 Sample	2004 Sample	2005 Sample	2006 Sample	2007 Sample	2008 Sample
Residential location						
City of Chicago	<i>not comp*</i>	11%	12%	10%	12%	11%
Chicago suburbs	<i>not comp</i>	36%	34%	38%	37%	35%
Metro East	<i>not comp</i>	3%	3%	3%	3%	3%
City > 75,000	<i>not comp</i>	8%	6%	8%	8%	8%
City 20-75,000	<i>not comp</i>	10%	12%	10%	10%	11%
City/town 10-20,000	<i>not comp</i>	10%	8%	8%	8%	10%
Town < 10,000	<i>not comp</i>	11%	13%	13%	14%	12%
Rural	<i>not comp</i>	11%	10%	9%	10%	10%
		(95%)	(96%)	(96%)	(94%)	(97%)
Miles drive on job / yr						
% giving number		42%	42%	42%	35%	27%
Of these:						
1 to 100	<i>na*</i>	5%	8%	9%	8%	6%
101 to 1000	<i>na</i>	22%	20%	20%	23%	26%
1001 to 5000	<i>na</i>	27%	24%	23%	19%	24%
5001 to 12,000	<i>na</i>	24%	24%	26%	21%	22%
Over 12,000	<i>na</i>	23%	24%	22%	29%	21%
Median	<i>na</i>	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,731	5,000
Commuting						
% giving answer		63%	62%	53-54%	58%	51-52%
Of these:						
avg miles one way to work	<i>na</i>	Mean = 16.8 Med = 13.0	Mean = 17.0 Med = 12.0	Mean = 18.4 Med = 14.2	Mean = 18.2 Med = 14.0	Mean = 15.9** Med = 11.0
avg minutes to work	<i>na</i>	Mean = 30.0 Med = 25.0	Mean = 28.1 Med = 22.0	Mean = 30.2 Med = 25.0	Mean = 31.7 Med = 30.0	Mean = 28.2 Med = 20.0
avg minutes home from work	<i>na</i>	Mean = 32.9 Med = 25.0	Mean = 30.8 Med = 25.0	Mean = 31.1 Med = 30.0	Mean = 35.7 Med = 30.0	Mean = 30.7 Med = 25.0
avg minutes total commute (adding avgs for above)	<i>na</i>	Mean = 62.9 Med = 50.0	Mean = 58.9 Med = 47.0	Mean = 61.3 Med = 55.0	Mean = 67.4 Med = 60.0	Mean = 59.0 Med = 45.0

**"not comp" indicates that the residential location question did not produce comparable data in 2003.
 "na" indicates that the information is not contained in the 2003 report.

**In the calculation of this 2008 mean, 4 outlier cases were excluded which had average miles of 600 miles or greater.

A SUMMARY OF RESULTS

The following pages summarize the final results. For the Summer 2008 survey, we present the results for the total sample, as we did for the Spring 2003 through Spring 2007 surveys and for both surveys in 2001. For summary results reporting trends, we have included three averages for the Spring 2002 survey: that for all respondents; that for the cross-sectional sample; and that for the panel sample. However, it is our opinion that the best comparison here is the with the 2002 “cross-sectional” sample (the middle result reported), and it is this figure we use in commenting upon trends below.

Ratings of specific aspects of highways and bridges

We asked respondents to rate nine aspects under the category of Maintaining Highways and Traffic Flow, another ten aspects under the category of Road Repair and Construction (nine of which are continuing aspects from earlier surveys), and five aspects under the category of Traveler Services.

Generally speaking, we find a great deal of consistency between the most recent Spring 2008 findings and results in the past five years (back to the Spring 2003 survey) with regard to the order of aspects within each major category. Differences in rank order generally occur only for those aspects rated very similar to each other.

Overall, most of the Spring 2008 mean ratings on the 1-to-5 point rating scale do not differ a great deal from the Spring 2007 mean ratings. However, declines in mean ratings from 2007 to 2008 are more the norm than the exception. While most of these declines are very modest to slight, we do find several items where the 2008 mean rating is the lowest, or among the lowest, of mean ratings recorded across all nine surveys that have been conducted.

The largest changes from 2007 to 2008 are found for:

- Landscaping and overall appearance of roadsides and medians (-.12)
- Ride quality and smoothness of pavement on interstate highways (-.12)
- Ride quality and smoothness of pavement on non-interstate highways (-.12)
- Cleanliness of roadsides, absence of litter (-.09)
- Timeliness of repairs on non-interstate highways (-.08)
- Cleanliness of rest areas (-.08)
- Timely removal of debris and dead animals from pavement (-.07)
- Advance information about construction and repair projects to the public through tv, radio and newspapers (-.07)

Among the items where the 2008 mean rating is the lowest, or among the lowest, recorded across the nine surveys, the following are worth noting:

- Landscaping and overall appearance of roadsides and medians (lowest)
- Timeliness of repairs on non-interstate highways (lowest)
- Cleanliness of rest areas (lowest)
- Timely removal of debris and dead animals from pavement (lowest)

- Ride quality and smoothness of pavement on interstate highways (2nd lowest, only slightly higher than Spring 2001)
- Ride quality and smoothness of pavement on non-interstate highways (2nd lowest, only slightly higher than Spring 2001)

It is worth noting that the lower mean ratings found in the Spring 2008 survey are not the result of changes in the gender distribution of the responding sample. While the 2008 sample is more balanced in terms of gender than earlier samples (i.e., proportionally fewer males), it is also the case that, of the 13 items where there are significant differences between male and female mean ratings, females are more positive than males on 12 of them.

The following summarizes these results in more detail. Summary highlights of the results for the 2008 respondents are found within the text. Tables having more detail for the 2008 results and trends for all rating aspects follow after the summary text.

Maintaining highways and traffic flow

Using the 2008 findings, the nine aspects can be ordered into the following general three tiers. In the first tier are two aspects which both receive “excellent” ratings from nearly one in five respondents, and receive ratings of “excellent” or “good” by more than seven in ten respondents. In the second tier are two additional aspects which receive “excellent” ratings by somewhat more than one in ten respondents and “excellent” or “good” ratings by well over six in ten respondents. And, in the third tier are five aspects which receive “excellent” ratings by fewer than one in ten respondents and “excellent” or “good” ratings by proportions hovering around half of the respondents.

Presented below are: the aspects according to these tiers; the rank order (based on mean score); the aspect; the percent giving an “excellent” rating; the percent giving an “excellent” or “good” rating; and the mean rating. (Also see Table 3A.)

	Excel- lent	Excellent or Good	Mean
<i>Tier One</i>			
1. Traffic signs	18%	75%	3.88
2. Electronic message boards to advice of delays or construction areas	18%	71%	3.83
<i>Tier two</i>			
3. Snow and ice removal	13%	67%	3.70
4. Visibility of lane / shoulder markings	12%	64%	3.65
<i>Tier Three</i>			
5. Cleanliness of roadsides	6%	55%	3.45
6. Roadside lighting and reflectors	7%	49%	3.40
7. Landscaping and overall appearance	7%	51%	3.39
8. Timely removal of debris and dead animals	7%	50%	3.37
9. Timing of traffic signals	6%	46%	3.35

The 2008 order of the specific aspects is very similar to that in 2007, the only change being that “roadside lighting and reflectors” jumped to the 6th from the 8th position.

When comparing 2008 mean ratings to those in 2007, we find declines for all aspects but one, with the latter showing only a very slight increase of +.01. However, it should be noted that five of the aspects showing decreases have declines in the magnitude of -.05 or less. (See Table 3B.)

The largest change in mean rating from 2007 to 2008 occurred for “landscaping and overall appearance of roadsides and medians,” an item which shows a decrease of -.15, from 3.54 to 3.39. This item shows a decrease in the excellent/good proportion from 56% to 51%, with an accompanying increase in the poor/very poor proportion from 9% to 14%. The latest mean rating for this item is the lowest recorded across the nine surveys (with the second lowest being 3.43 in Spring 2001).

The second largest change in mean rating from 2007 to 2008 occurred for “cleanliness of roadsides, absence of litter,” an item which shows a decrease of -.09, from 3.54 to 3.45. This item shows a decrease in the excellent/good proportion from 57% to 54%, with an accompanying increase in the poor/very poor proportion from 9% to 13%. The 2008 mean rating is basically tied with two other surveys (2002 at 3.45, and 2004 at 3.47) for being the second lowest mean ratings recorded, but yet still .09 above the lowest mean score found in Spring, 2001.

And, the third largest change in mean rating from 2007 to 2008 occurred for “timely removal of debris and dead animals from pavement,” an item which shows a decrease of -.07, from 3.44 to 3.37. This item shows a decrease in the excellent/good proportion from 53% to 50%, with an accompanying increase in the poor/very poor proportion from 12% to 15%. The latest mean rating for this item is the lowest recorded across the nine surveys.

A comment is in order for the item of “*snow and ice removal,*” which showed a decrease in its mean rating of -.05. Across the nine surveys conducted since 2001, it is worth noting that the lowest mean ratings recorded for this item (all in the range of 3.70 to 3.75) were in the Fall survey of 2001, the Spring 2007 survey – which was conducted later in the Spring than had been the norm, and the Summer 2008 survey. Mean ratings of the earlier Spring surveys are all within the range of 3.86 to 3.91. It is likely that the lower ratings are a function of the timing of administration of the survey.

Road repair and construction

Using the 2008 findings, the ten aspects can be ordered into the following general four tiers. In the first tier is one aspect which receives “excellent” ratings from nearly one in five respondents, and receives ratings of “excellent” or “good” by just over three-quarters of the respondents. In the second tier are two additional aspects which receive “excellent” ratings by one in ten respondents and “excellent” or “good” ratings by well over half of the respondents. In the third tier are two aspects which receive “excellent” ratings by fewer than one in ten respondents and “excellent” or “good” ratings by proportions just under of the respondents. In the fourth tier are five aspects which

receive “excellent” ratings by fewer than one in twenty respondents and “excellent” or “good” ratings by proportions ranging from just under to one-quarter to somewhat more than one-third.

Presented below are: the aspects according to these four tiers; the rank order (based on mean score); the aspect; the percent giving an “excellent” rating; the percent giving an “excellent” or “good” rating; and the mean rating. (Also see Table 4A.)

	Excel- lent	Excellent or Good	Mean
<i>Tier One</i>			
1. Warning signs when workers present	18%	76%	3.88
<i>Tier Two</i>			
2. Workzone signs to direct merging traffic and alert motorists to reduce speed	10%	61%	3.61
3. Advance information about future construction projects through informational highway signs*	10%	56%	3.51
<i>Tier Three</i>			
4. Advance information about construction projects through tv, radio, newspapers, Internet	8%	48%	3.36
5. Signs about alternative routes when construction	6%	46%	3.34
<i>Tier Four</i>			
6. Ride quality / smoothness on interstates	3%	36%	3.10
7. The flow of traffic through workzones	3%	33%	3.06
8. Timeliness of repairs on interstates	2%	29%	2.96
9. Ride quality / smoothness on non-interstates	2%	25%	2.90
10. Timeliness of repairs on non-interstates	2%	24%	2.84

*Asked first in last year’s 2007 survey

The order of these aspects in 2008 is very similar to that found in 2007, with only one exception. The exception is the reversal in rank order for “timeliness of repairs on interstates” and “ride quality / smoothness on non-interstates,” two items within the same tier.¹³

When comparing 2008 mean ratings to those in 2007, we find declines for eight of the ten aspects, no change for one aspect, and a very modest increase (+.05) for a final aspect. However, it should be noted that four of the eight aspects showing decreases have declines in the magnitude of -.05 or less. (See Table 4B.)

The two largest decreases in mean ratings occur *for the two items regarding “ride quality and smoothness” of pavement/highways: for interstates* (-.12, from 3.22 to 3.10,

¹³ In 2006, these two items had the same rank order as the 2008 results and accounted for the only change from the 2006 order to the 2007 order.

with a 4% pt decline in excellent/good ratings, from 40% to 36%, and a 5% pt increase in poor/very poor ratings, from 19% to 24%) -- *and for non-interstates* (-.12, with a 2% pt decline in excellent/good ratings, from 26% to 24%, and a 5% pt increase in poor/very poor ratings, from 25% to 29%). It should be noted that both of these items had experienced modest declines from 2006 to 2007 (-.06). And, for both items, the 2008 mean rating is only slightly higher than the lowest mean rating recorded across the nine surveys, that found in the first Spring 2001 survey (3.10 vs. 3.08 in 2001 for interstates; 2.90 vs. 2.89 in 2001 for non-interstates).

Two items show smaller declines of -.08 and -.07. The item showing a decline of .08 is *“timeliness of repairs on non-interstate highways”* (2.92 to 2.84, with a 2% pt decrease in the excellent/good proportion from 26% to 24%, and a 2% pt increase in the poor/very poor proportion from 29% to 31%). This item had also experienced a decline of the same magnitude from 2006 to 2007 (-.08). And, the 2008 mean rating is the lowest recorded across the nine surveys (slightly lower than the 2.87 found in the first Spring 2001 survey).

The item showing a decline of -.07 is *“advance information about construction and repair projects to the public through tv, radio and newspapers”* (3.43 to 3.36, with a slight decrease in the excellent/good proportion from 49% to 48% and a very modest increase in the poor/very poor proportion from 14% to 17%). While tied for the lowest mean rating recorded with two other surveys, it should be noted that eight of the nine survey means are in the range of 3.36 to 3.43, with only the Spring 2006 mean rating higher at 3.57.

Other items show even less change than that reported above.

Traveler services

Using the 2008 findings, we find that the two items rated most positively both relate to informational signs (Tier One and Tier Two below), with “signs at highway exits for food, gas and lodging” receiving a somewhat more favorable ratings than did “signs about tourist attractions and state parks” (over 80% “excellent” or “good” for the former compared to just under three-quarters for the latter.) Next, in Tier Three, were the two items relating to characteristics of rest areas – “cleanliness” and “safety” – which had very similar overall ratings, with almost two-thirds giving each of them ratings of either “excellent” or “good.” In fifth position was “availability of free IDOT maps,” which received “excellent” or “good” ratings from just over half the respondents.

Presented below are: the aspects according to four tiers; the rank order (based on mean score); the aspect; the percent giving an “excellent” rating; the percent giving an “excellent” or “good” rating; and the mean rating. (Also see Table 5A.)

	Excel- lent	Excellent or Good	Mean
<i>Tier One</i>			
1. Informational signs at highway exits for food, gas, and lodging	22%	81%	3.99

	Excel- lent	Excellent or Good	Mean
<i>Tier Two</i>			
2. Informational signs about tourist attractions and state parks	16%	73%	3.83
<i>Tier Three</i>			
3. Cleanliness of rest areas	13%	65%	3.69
4. Safety of rest areas	11%	65%	3.69
<i>Tier Four</i>			
5. Availability of free IDOT maps	15%	54%	3.40

The order of these aspects departs only slightly from that generally found across the earlier eight surveys.¹⁴ In 2008, we find the mean rating for “cleanliness of rest areas” virtually tied with that of “safety of rest areas” rather than being slightly to somewhat more positive, which was the case in earlier surveys.

An examination of the 2007 to 2008 mean rating changes shows one item (“cleanliness of rest areas”) having a decline of -.08, and one other item (“informational signs at highway exists for food, gas and lodging”) having a very small decline of -.04. The remaining three items having slight decreases or increases (-.01 or +.01). For “cleanliness of rest areas,” the item showing the most change in its mean rating from 2007 to 2008, the excellent/good proportion decreased from 70% to 65%, and the poor/very poor proportion also decreased – but just slightly from 8% to 7%.

The following summarizes the trends in mean rating scores across the survey years for these items.

For “informational signs at highway exits for food, gas and lodging,” there is a great deal of stability across all survey years, ranging only from a low of 3.99 to a high of 4.07, with the most recent mean score being at the lowest end of this range.

For “informational highway signs about area tourist attractions and state parks,” there also is a great deal of stability across all survey years, ranging from a low of 3.83 to a high of 3.89, with the most recent mean score being at the lower end of this range.

For “cleanliness of rest areas for highway motorists,” mean scores range from a low of 3.69 in the most recent 2008 survey to a high of 3.85 in Spring 2002. As just indicated, the most recent mean score of 3.69 is the lowest recorded, slightly lower than the 3.71 recorded in the first Spring 2001 survey.

For “safety of rest areas for highway motorists,” the lowest mean score of 3.58, received in Spring 2001, is the outlier, with the remaining mean scores only ranging from a low of 3.67 to a high of 3.74. The most recent score of 3.69 is toward the lower end of this latter group.

For “availability of free IDOT road maps,” the lowest mean score of 3.24 is found in Spring 2001 followed by an increase to 3.34 or 3.35 in the next three surveys (Fall 2001

¹⁴ Only the Spring 2002 survey shows a slight departure in the order for the earlier eight surveys, and this is dependent upon which sample is examined.

through Spring 2003). In turn, this was followed by another increase to scores of 3.42 (2004 and 2005), 3.39 (2006 and 2007) and 3.40 (2008) in the most recent five surveys.

Average composite ratings for each general area

For each of the three general areas, we calculated an average composite rating. In 2008, the composite mean ratings for all three general areas fall between the alternatives of “good” (when coded as 4) and “fair” (when coded as 3). The most positive average scores are found for Traveler Services (mean = 3.74; median = 3.80) followed by the averages for Maintaining Highways and Traffic Flow (mean = 3.56; median = 3.67) and then Road Repair and Construction (mean = 3.27; median = 3.30). [See Table 6A (includes standard deviations and n’s), Table 6B (trend data in a form more consistent with other tables), and Table 6C (summarizes survey-to-survey changes).]

For the composite ratings on items within the area of Maintaining Highways and Traffic Flow, we find a high degree of consistency in average scores from the Fall 2001 survey to the 2007 survey, with mean composite ratings ranging only from 3.60 to 3.63. The most recent 2008 composite mean rating of 3.56 is the second lowest of the nine surveys, surpassed only by the 3.54 recorded in the first Spring 2001 survey. Across this time span, the median composite rating has been 3.67 in every year, with the exception of the first survey of Spring 2001 (median = 3.56).

For the composite ratings on items within the area of Road Repair and Construction, we find a high degree of consistency in average scores for six of the eight surveys conducted from the Fall 2001 survey to the 2008 survey.¹⁵ For these six surveys, the mean composite rating ranges only from 3.29 to 3.33, and the median composite rating is 3.33 in all years. In the two other surveys during this time span, we find slightly to somewhat more positive average composite scores for the 2006 survey (mean = 3.36, median = 3.42), and just slightly lower average composite scores for the most recent 2008 survey (mean=3.27; median=3.30). Again, the lowest average composite scores are found for the first Spring 2001 survey (mean and median both = 3.22).

For the composite ratings on items within the area of Traveler Services, we find a high degree of consistency in average scores from the Fall 2001 survey to the most recent 2008 survey. Across this time span, the mean composite rating ranges only from 3.74 to 3.79 (and is either 3.77 or 3.78 for five of the eight surveys) while the median composite rating is 3.80 for every survey except the 2007 survey (where the mid-point case just makes it into the 4.00 category from the 3.80 category). In this area, the mean composite rating in the first survey of Spring 2001 was slightly to somewhat lower than would be the case in years to come, consistent with the other two areas. Here, however, the median rating for the Spring 2001 survey was on par with those that would occur in future surveys.

¹⁵ In calculating the composite score for 2007, only the 9 continuing items were used.

Table 3A
Ratings on Aspects relating to
Maintaining Highways and Traffic Flow

Aspect rated^a	Excellent (5)^b	Good (4)	Fair (3)	Poor (2)	Very Poor (1)	<i>n</i> (% of sample)	<i>mean</i>
5. Traffic signs (for example, directional signs, warning signs, miles to destination signs)	18%	58%	20%	4%	1%	1291 (98%)	3.88
6. Electronic message boards to advise drivers of delays or construction areas	18%	53%	22%	5%	1%	1240 (94%)	3.83
4. Snow and ice removal	13%	54%	25%	7%	1%	1271 (97%)	3.70
7. Visibility of lane and shoulder markings on highways	12%	52%	27%	7%	2%	1284 (98%)	3.65
1. Cleanliness of roadsides, absence of litter	6%	48%	33%	10%	3%	1281 (98%)	3.45
9. Roadside lighting and reflectors for visibility after dark and in bad weather	7%	42%	38%	11%	2%	1260 (96%)	3.40
3. Landscaping and overall appearance of roadsides and medians	7%	44%	34%	10%	4%	1283 (98%)	3.39
2. Timely removal of debris and dead animals from pavement	7%	43%	35%	11%	4%	1243 (95%)	3.37
8. Timing of traffic signals to maintain flow of traffic	6%	40%	40%	12%	3%	1245 (95%)	3.35

^aThe items are ordered by mean rating, from most positive to least positive. The numbers next to the items indicate the order that they appeared in the questionnaire.

^bThe actual scale in the questionnaire is reversed. However, we have recoded the scale so that the higher score represents a more positive rating.

Table 3B
Mean Ratings on Aspects relating to Maintaining Highways and Traffic Flow:
Trends Across Surveys

Aspect rated	Spring 2001 means (n)	Fall 2001 Means (n)	Spring 2002 Means T: Total M: Cross B: Panel	Spring 2003 means (n)	Spring 2004 means (n)	Spring 2005 means (n)	Spring 2006 means (n)	Spring 2007 means (n)	Summer 2008 means (n)
5. Traffic signs (for example, directional signs, warning signs, miles to destination signs)	3.86 (1379)	3.89 (1236)	3.92 3.93 3.90	3.90 (1399)	3.94 (1307)	3.91 (1310)	3.91 (1304)	3.90 (1386)	3.88 (1291)
6. Electronic message boards to advise drivers of delays or construction areas	3.70 (1323)	3.81 (1199)	3.79 3.75 3.82	3.70 (1322)	3.79 (1234)	3.80 (1244)	3.87 (1241)	3.87 (1342)	3.83 (1240)
4. Snow and ice removal	3.82 (1363)	3.72 (1222)	3.93 3.89 3.99	3.95 (1400)	3.96 (1302)	3.91 (1326)	3.86 (1300)	3.75 (1362)	3.70 (1271)
7. Visibility of lane and shoulder markings on highways	3.57 (1372)	3.69 (1229)	3.67 3.67 3.67	3.61 (1399)	3.68 (1308)	3.59 (1305)	3.61 (1303)	3.64 (1383)	3.65 (1284)
1. Cleanliness of roadsides, absence of litter	3.36 (1384)	3.56 (1242)	3.50 3.45 3.55	3.52 (1407)	3.47 (1314)	3.52 (1297)	3.52 (1308)	3.54 (1391)	3.45 (1281)
9. Roadside lighting and reflectors for visibility after dark and in bad weather	3.33 (1352)	3.41 (1203)	3.44 3.42 3.46	3.39 (1363)	3.43 (1291)	3.39 (1273)	3.41 (1277)	3.41 (1359)	3.40 (1260)

(continued on next page)

Table 3B. (continued)
Ratings on Aspects relating to
Maintaining Highways and Traffic Flow

Aspect rated	Spring 2001 means (n)	Fall 2001 Means (n)	Spring 2002 Means T: Total M: Cross B: Panel	Spring 2003 means (n)	Spring 2004 means (n)	Spring 2005 means (n)	Spring 2006 means (n)	Spring 2007 means (n)	Summer 2008 means (n)
3. Landscaping and overall appearance of roadsides and medians	3.43 (1377)	3.52 (1231)	3.53 3.48 3.58	3.53 (1399)	3.52 (1305)	3.54 (1301)	3.49 (1303)	3.54 (1387)	3.39 (1283)
2. Timely removal of debris and dead animals from pavement	3.43 (1342)	3.46 (1207)	3.50 3.46 3.54	3.56 (1363)	3.50 (1277)	3.51 (1267)	3.50 (1252)	3.44 (1341)	3.37 (1243)
8. Timing of traffic signals to maintain flow of traffic	3.33 (1347)	3.37 (1212)	3.44 3.41 3.48	3.42 (1387)	3.44 (1291)	3.35 (1283)	3.40 (1273)	3.38 (1347)	3.35 (1245)

Table 4A
Ratings on Aspects relating to
Road Repair and Construction

Aspect rated^a	Excellent (5)^b	Good (4)	Fair (3)	Poor (2)	Very Poor (1)	<i>n</i> (% of sample)	<i>mean</i>
7. Warning signs when workers are present	18%	58%	20%	3%	1%	1284 (98%)	3.88
6. Workzone signs to direct merging traffic and alert motorists to reduce speed	10%	50%	30%	6%	2%	1280 (98%)	3.61
*10. Advance information about construction and repair projects to the public through informational signs on highways	10%	47%	32%	10%	3%	1214 (92%)	3.51
9. Advance information about construction and repair projects to the public through tv, radio, and newspapers	8%	40%	35%	13%	4%	1191 (91%)	3.36
8. Signs about alternative routes when there is construction	6%	40%	38%	12%	3%	1252 (96%)	3.34
3. Ride quality and smoothness of pavement on interstates	3%	33%	40%	18%	6%	1260 (96%)	3.10
5. The flow of traffic through workzones	3%	30%	43%	17%	6%	1270 (97%)	3.06
4. Ride quality and smoothness on non-interstate highways	2%	23%	46%	21%	8%	1253 (96%)	2.90
1. Timeliness of repairs on interstate highways	2%	27%	45%	19%	8%	1218 (93%)	2.96
2. Timeliness of repairs on non-interstate highways	2%	23%	45%	21%	10%	1207 (92%)	2.84

^aThe items are ordered by mean rating, from most positive to least positive. The numbers next to the items indicate the order that they appeared in the questionnaire.

^bThe actual scale in the questionnaire is reversed. However, we have recoded the scale so that the higher score represents a more positive rating.

Table 4B
Mean Ratings on Aspects relating to Road Repair and Construction:
Trends Across Surveys

Aspect rated	Spring 2001 means (n)	Fall 2001 means (n)	Spring 2002 Means T: Total M: Cross B: Panel	Spring 2003 means (n)	Spring 2004 means (n)	Spring 2005 means (n)	Spring 2006 means (n)	Spring 2007 means (n)	Summer 2008 means (n)
7. Warning signs when workers are present	3.81 (1374)	3.89 (1233)	3.82 3.79 3.86	3.89 (1402)	3.86 (1302)	3.89 (1299)	3.92 (1299)	3.91 (1383)	3.88 (1284)
6. Work zone signs to direct merging traffic and alert motorists to reduce speed	3.71 (1378)	3.58 (1231)	3.65 3.63 3.67	3.60 (1392)	3.62 (1302)	3.61 (1300)	3.65 (1300)	3.61 (1381)	3.61 (1280)
10. Advance information about construction and repair projects to the public through informational signs on highways	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	3.46 (1314)	3.51 (1214)
9. Advance information about construction and repair projects to the public through tv, radio, and newspapers	3.41 (1294)	3.39 (1162)	3.40 3.36 3.45	3.42 (1309)	3.42 (1211)	3.36 (1196)	3.57 (1217)	3.43 (1299)	3.36 (1191)
8. Signs about alternative routes when there is construction	3.25 (1328)	3.32 (1200)	3.24 3.23 3.26	3.29 (1373)	3.34 (1260)	3.32 (1261)	3.35 (1267)	3.39 (1344)	3.34 (1252)

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Table 4B. (continued)
Ratings on Aspects relating to Road Repair and Construction:
Trends Across Surveys

Aspect rated	Spring 2001 means (n)	Fall 2001 means (n)	Spring 2002 Means T: Total M: Cross B: Panel	Spring 2003 means (n)	Spring 2004 means (n)	Spring 2005 means (n)	Spring 2006 means (n)	Spring 2007 means (n)	Summer 2008 means (n)
3. Ride quality and smoothness of pavement on interstates	3.08 (1358)	3.26 (1207)	3.28 3.27 3.30	3.29 (1380)	3.28 (1289)	3.22 (1287)	3.28 (1275)	3.22 (1363)	3.10 (1260)
5. The flow of traffic through work zones	2.95 (1372)	2.98 (1221)	3.11 3.05 3.17	3.09 (1378)	3.09 (1299)	3.06 (1279)	3.11 (1278)	3.07 (1374)	3.06 (1270)
1. Timeliness of repairs on interstate highways	2.97 (1322)	3.07 (1171)	3.16 3.12 3.22	3.17 (1337)	3.14 (1227)	3.08 (1238)	3.10 (1225)	3.00 (1316)	2.96 (1218)
4. Ride quality and smoothness on non-interstate highways	2.89 (1342)	3.10 (1188)	3.12 3.10 3.14	3.13 (1369)	3.09 (1272)	3.07 (1265)	3.08 (1256)	3.02 (1337)	2.90 (1253)
2. Timeliness of repairs on non-interstate highways	2.87 (1305)	3.00 (1132)	3.09 3.04 3.15	3.08 (1318)	3.04 (1216)	3.03 (1229)	3.00 (1209)	2.92 (1291)	2.84 (1207)

Table 5A
Ratings on Aspects relating to
Traveler Services

Aspect rated^a Top: Total Middle: Cross-section Bottom: Panel	Excellent (5)^b	Good (4)	Fair (3)	Poor (2)	Very Poor (1)	<i>n</i> <i>(% of sample)</i>	<i>mean</i>
3. Informational signs at highway exits for food, gas, and lodging	22%	59%	16%	2%	1%	1217 (93%)	3.99
4. Informational highway signs about area tourist attractions and state parks	16%	56%	23%	4%	1%	1181 (90%)	3.83
1. Cleanliness of rest areas for highway motorists	13%	52%	27%	5%	2%	1031 (79%)	3.69
2. Safety of rest areas for highway motorists	11%	54%	28%	5%	1%	976 (74%)	3.69
5. Availability of free IDOT road maps	15%	39%	25%	14%	7%	836 (64%)	3.40

^aThe items are ordered by mean rating, from most positive to least positive. The numbers next to the items indicate the order that they appeared in the questionnaire.

^bThe actual scale in the questionnaire is reversed. However, we have recoded the scale so that the higher score represents a more positive rating.

Table 5B
Mean Ratings on Aspects relating to Traveler Services:
Trends Across Surveys

Aspect rated	Spring 2001 means (n)	Fall 2001 means (n)	Spring 2002 Means T: Total M: Cross B: Panel	Spring 2003 means (n)	Spring 2004 means (n)	Spring 2005 means (n)	Spring 2006 means (n)	Spring 2007 means (n)	Summer 2008 means (n)
3. Informational signs at highway exits for food, gas, and lodging	4.02 (1343)	4.07 (1191)	4.08 4.04 4.13	4.05 (1350)	4.07 (1265)	4.06 (1266)	4.02 (1254)	4.03 (1331)	3.99 (1217)
4. Informational highway signs about area tourist attractions and state parks	3.83 (1303)	3.89 (1159)	3.88 3.83 3.93	3.86 (1320)	3.86 (1223)	3.87 (1240)	3.84 (1219)	3.84 (1300)	3.83 (1181)
1. Cleanliness of rest areas for highway motorists	3.71 (1165)	3.77 (1035)	3.87 3.85 3.89	3.79 (1168)	3.78 (1095)	3.80 (1096)	3.74 (1052)	3.77 (1122)	3.69 (1031)
2. Safety of rest areas for highway motorists	3.58 (1100)	3.67 (983)	3.71 3.70 3.72	3.72 (1118)	3.72 (1021)	3.74 (1037)	3.68 (994)	3.70 (1067)	3.69 (976)
5. Availability of free IDOT road maps	3.24 (947)	3.34 (847)	3.40 3.35 3.46	3.35 (991)	3.42 (891)	3.42 (908)	3.39 (871)	3.39 (951)	3.40 (836)

Table 6A
Summary Statistics for Composite Section Ratings

For each of the above three sections, a composite rating was derived by calculating the average score across the items in the section. This was done by summing all relevant ratings and dividing by the total number of items rated in the respective section.

	Median	Mean	Std dev	n
Spring, 2008				
<i>Maintaining highways and traffic flow</i>	3.67	3.56	0.57	1296
<i>Road repair and construction (1-9)</i>	3.30	3.27	0.64	1298
<i>Traveler services</i>	3.80	3.74	0.68	1241
Spring, 2007				
<i>Maintaining highways and traffic flow</i>	3.67	3.61	0.57	1402
<i>Road repair and construction (1-9)</i>	3.33	3.30	0.65	1397
<i>Traveler services</i>	4.00	3.77	0.67	1352
Spring, 2006				
<i>Maintaining highways and traffic flow</i>	3.67	3.62	0.57	1318
<i>Road repair and construction</i>	3.42	3.36	0.62	1315
<i>Traveler services</i>	3.80	3.75	0.64	1271
Spring, 2005				
<i>Maintaining highways and traffic flow</i>	3.67	3.61	0.56	1315
<i>Road repair and construction</i>	3.33	3.30	0.64	1311
<i>Traveler services</i>	3.80	3.79	0.62	1278
Spring, 2004				
<i>Maintaining highways and traffic flow</i>	3.67	3.63	0.53	1320
<i>Road repair and construction</i>	3.33	3.33	0.61	1318
<i>Traveler services</i>	3.80	3.78	0.65	1280
Spring, 2003				
<i>Maintaining highways and traffic flow</i>	3.67	3.62	0.53	1418
<i>Road repair and construction</i>	3.33	3.33	0.59	1416
<i>Traveler services</i>	3.80	3.77	0.63	1370
Spring, 2002				
<i>Top number: total</i>				
<i>Middle number: cross-sectional</i>				
<i>Bottom number: panel</i>				
<i>Maintaining highways and traffic flow</i>	3.67	3.63*	0.54	1760
	3.67	3.61	0.54	964
	3.67	3.67	0.53	796
<i>Road repair and construction</i>	3.33	3.33*	0.60	1753
	3.33	3.30	0.59	959
	3.38	3.36	0.61	795
<i>Traveler services</i>	4.00	3.80*	0.60	1680
	3.80	3.77	0.61	900
	4.00	3.84	0.60	780

(continued on next page)

Table 6A
Summary Statistics for Composite Section Ratings

	Median	Mean	Std dev	n
Fall, 2001				
<i>Maintaining highways and traffic flow</i>	3.67	3.60	0.53	1245
<i>Road repair and construction</i>	3.33	3.29	0.62	1243
<i>Traveler services</i>	3.80	3.77	0.63	1205
Spring, 2001				
<i>Maintaining highways and traffic flow</i>	3.56	3.54	0.57	1391
<i>Road repair and construction</i>	3.22	3.22	0.60	1389
<i>Traveler services</i>	3.80	3.71	0.65	1359

*indicates the difference between the two Spring 2002 samples is significant at the .01 level.

Table 6B
Average Composite Rating Scores
Across Surveys

Rating Area	Spring 2001	Fall 2001	Spring 2002	Spring 2003	Spring 2004	Spring 2005	Spring 2006	Spring 2007	Summer 2008
Area	Mean Composite Rating								
<i>Maintaining highways and traffic flow</i>	3.54	3.60	3.63 3.61 3.67	3.62	3.63	3.61	3.62	3.61	3.56
<i>Road repair and construction</i>	3.22	3.29	3.33 3.30 3.36	3.33	3.33	3.30	3.36	3.30	3.27
<i>Traveler services</i>	3.71	3.77	3.80 3.77 3.84	3.77	3.78	3.79	3.75	3.77	3.74
Area	Median Composite Rating								
<i>Maintaining highways and traffic flow</i>	3.56	3.67	3.67 3.67 3.67	3.67	3.67	3.67	3.67	3.67	3.67
<i>Road repair and construction</i>	3.22	3.33	3.33 3.33 3.38	3.33	3.33	3.33	3.42	3.33	3.30
<i>Traveler services</i>	3.80	3.80	4.00 3.80 4.00	3.80	3.80	3.80	3.80	4.00	3.80

Table 6C
Differences in Summary Composite Section Ratings
Across Surveys

Rating Area (in order, differences between Spring 2002 and Fall 2001 represent: total sample, cross- sectional sample, and panel sample)	Difference: Fall 2001 – Spring 2001	Difference: Spring 2002 – Fall 2001	Difference: Spring 2003 – Spring 2002 ^a	Difference: Spring 2004 – Spring 2003	Difference: Spring 2005 – Spring 2004	Difference: Spring 2006 – Spring 2005	Difference: Spring 2007 – Spring 2006	Difference: Summer 2008 – Spring 2007
Change from Year to Year in Composite Mean Ratings								
<i>Maintaining highways and traffic flow</i>	+.06	+.03 +.01 +.07	+.01	+.01	-.02	+.01	-.01	-.05
<i>Road repair and construction</i>	+.07	+.04 +.01 +.07	+.03	+.00	-.03	+.06	-.06	-.03
<i>Traveler services</i>	+.06	+.03 +.00 +.07	+.00	+.01	+.01	-.04	+.02	-.03
Change from Year to Year in Composite Median Ratings								
<i>Maintaining highways and traffic flow</i>	+.09	+.00 +.00 +.00	+.00	+.00	+.00	+.00	+.00	.00
<i>Road repair and construction</i>	+.11	+.00 +.00 +.05	+.00	+.00	+.00	+.09	-.09	-.03
<i>Traveler services</i>	+.00	+.20 +.00 +.20	+.00	+.00	+.00	+.00	+.20	-.20

^a To calculate this difference, the cross-sectional mean (mean in middle position) was used for the Spring 2002 results.

Overall ratings of IDOT and employees

Overall job IDOT is doing. In 2008, just under one in twenty (4%) gave IDOT an overall rating of “excellent” while half (50%) responded with “good.” Nearly four in ten (39%) said “fair” while just over one in twenty gave a rating of “poor” (6%) and very few (1%) gave a “very poor” rating. The average (mean) rating is 3.52. (See the middle of Table 7A.)

Across the surveys, the mean rating for IDOT’s overall job performance ranges from 3.50 to 3.63. This mean rating showed steady positive increases from 2001 (3.53) through a plateau of 3.63 reached in both 2003 and 2004. Since then, the mean rating declined to 3.58 and 3.60 in 2005 and 2006, respectively, then to 3.54 in 2007 and to 3.50 in the most recent survey, slightly lower than the 2001 level. (See the 2nd row from the bottom of Table 7B.)

To illustrate the changes these ratings have taken from their “high point” in 2003 and 2004 to the most recent 2008 ratings, the percent who gave an “excellent” rating decreased from only 6 percent in these earlier years to 4 percent. But, the percent who gave either an “excellent” or a “good” rating declined somewhat from 62 percent to 56 percent – and the percent who gave either a “poor” or “very poor” rating increased from 4 percent to 12 percent.

General trust. For the fourth year in a row, respondents were asked, “Generally speaking, how often do you think you can trust IDOT to do what is right regarding transportation issues?” In response to this, more than 70 percent (71%) chose either “just about always” (15%) or “most of the time” (56%). One-quarter (25%) chose “only some of the time” while just under one in twenty (4%) chose “hardly ever.” (See the bottom of Table 7A.) When the 2008 (and 2007) results are scored so as to be comparable to the earlier surveys, the recent mean rating of 3.83 is just slightly more positive than that found in 2007, which in turn was slightly more positive than the results for either 2005 or 2006.¹⁶

Ratings of employees. The rank order of the four Employee Performance aspects is the same as that for previous surveys. Again, the most positive rating goes to “courtesy and respect shown to motorists” (mean of 3.87 in 2008; with 75% giving “excellent” or “good”) followed by “overall conduct on the job” (3.82; with 73% giving “excellent” or “good”) and then “helpfulness of the information provided” (3.75; 669). Again, the final aspect is “accessibility of employees” (3.52; 56%). (See Table 7A for 2008 results.)

The 2008 mean ratings for three of these aspects are very similar to the means in 2007 (one decline of only -.01, one increase of only +.01 and two additional increases of +.03). (See Table 7B.)

¹⁶ In 2008 and 2007, the response alternative “never” was not asked as it had been in 2005 and 2006. The “never” alternative had received very few responses in both 2005 and 2006 (about 1%), and eliminating it makes the response alternatives more balanced and more comparable to the “trust question” more usually asked in surveys.

Table 7A
Ratings of IDOT's Employees on Selected Aspects
and Overall Rating of IDOT Performance

Aspect rated^a	Excellent (5)^b	Good (4)	Fair (3)	Poor (2)	Very Poor (1)	<i>n</i> (% of total)	<i>mean</i>
1. Courtesy and respect shown to motorists	17%	58%	21%	3%	1%	767 (58%)	3.87
4. Overall conduct of IDOT employees on the job	14%	59%	22%	3%	1%	690 (53%)	3.82
3. Helpfulness of the information provided by employees	13%	56%	25%	4%	2%	571 (44%)	3.75
2. Accessibility of employees when you need them	10%	46%	32%	9%	3%	564 (43%)	3.52
Overall performance: How would you rate THE OVERALL JOB the Illinois Dept of Transportation is doing?	4%	50%	39%	6%	1%	1198 (91%)	3.50
General trust:	Just about always (4)	Most of the time (3)	Only some of the time (2)	Hardly ever (1)	Never (not asked in 2007)	<i>n</i> (% of total)	<i>mean</i>
How often trust IDOT to do what is right regarding transportation issues?	15%	56%	25%	4%	---	981 (75%)	2.83 (3.83)^c

^a The items are ordered by mean rating, from most positive to least positive. The numbers next to the items indicate the order that they appeared in the questionnaire.

^b The actual scales (for both scales) in the questionnaire is reversed. However, we have recoded the scale so that the higher score represents a more positive rating.

^c In 2008 and 2007, the response alternative "never" was not asked as it had been in 2005 and 2006. The "never" alternative had received very few responses in both 2005 and 2006 (about 1%), and eliminating it makes the response alternatives more balanced and more comparable to the "trust question" more usually asked in surveys. If the 1-to-4 scale in 2008 is scored on a 2-to-5 scale (thus more comparable to the 2005 and 2007 results), the means becomes 3.83.

Table 7B
Mean Ratings of IDOT's Employees on Selected Aspects
and Overall Rating of IDOT Performance: Trends Across Surveys

Aspect rated	Spring 2001 means (n)	Fall 2001 means (n)	Spring 2002 Means T: Total M: Cross B: Panel	Spring 2003 means (n)	Spring 2004 means (n)	Spring 2005 means (n)	Spring 2006 means (n)	Spring 2007 means (n)	Summer 2008 means (n)
1. Courtesy and respect shown to motorists	3.66 (640)	3.81 (612)	3.86 3.81 3.92	3.89 (887)	3.89 (819)	3.86 (804)	3.87 (802)	3.88 (870)	3.87 (767)
4. Overall conduct of IDOT employees on the job	3.64 (598)	3.79 (554)	3.82 3.76 3.88	3.81 (818)	3.79 (744)	3.75 (740)	3.78 (730)	3.79 (801)	3.82 (690)
3. Helpfulness of the information provided by employees	3.59 (507)	3.70 (456)	3.78 3.73 3.84	3.78 (713)	3.76 (621)	3.73 (651)	3.74 (623)	3.74 (687)	3.75 (571)
2. Accessibility of employees when you need them	3.34 (485)	3.55 (447)	3.52 3.46 3.60	3.58 (687)	3.58 (588)	3.55 (622)	3.55 (611)	3.49 (683)	3.52 (564)
How would you rate THE OVERALL JOB the Illinois Dept of Transportation is doing?	3.53 (1271)	3.56 (1157)	3.63 3.59 3.68	3.63 (1361)	3.63 (1249)	3.58 (1260)	3.60 (1265)	3.54 (1308)	3.50 (1198)
How frequently do you trust IDOT to do what is right regarding transportation issues?	----	----	----	----	----	3.78 (918)	3.75 (1026)	3.81 [2.81*] (1020)	3.83 [2.83*] (981)

*See footnote c in Table 7A. The "never" alternative was not asked in the 2007 and 2008 surveys.

Trends across the survey years for these items are summarized below and are presented in Table 7B.

For “courtesy and respect shown to motorists,” there is a great deal of stability in the mean rating scores over the past six survey years (2003 through 2008), with means ranging from 3.86 to 3.89. In Fall 2001 and 2002, the mean rating was a lower 3.81 and in Spring 2001 it was even lower at 3.66

For “overall conduct of IDOT employees on the job,” there is a great deal of stability in all mean rating scores except for that of the first survey conducted, with means during this span of Fall 2001 to 2008 ranging from a low of 3.75 to a high of 3.82. The Spring 2001 mean rating was a lower 3.64.

For “helpfulness of the information provided by employees,” the mean ratings for eight of the nine surveys range from a low of 3.70 in Fall 2001 to a high of 3.78 in Spring 2003, with the most recent 2008 mean rating in the middle of this rather narrow range. The Spring 2001 mean rating was the lowest of all at 3.59.

For “accessibility of employees when you need them,” the mean rating score has been either 3.55 or 3.58 for five of the past eight surveys. Both in 2002 (3.46) and in 2007 survey (3.49), the mean dipped below 3.50 while in 2008, it is just above this level (3.52). As is the case for the items above, the lowest mean rating of 3.34 occurred in the first survey conducted in Spring 2001.

Assessed importance of IDOT for area. Respondents were asked “how important [they] think IDOT is for [their] area’s economy” and “for [their] area’s overall quality of life.” The same questions were asked in the 2007 and 2005 surveys. (See Table 8.)

In 2008, eight in ten (80%) responded that IDOT was either “very important” (46%) or “important” (34%) for their area’s economy while 17 percent said it was “somewhat important” and under one in twenty (3%) said it was either “not very” (3%) or “not at all important” (0+%). The distribution for assessed importance on the area’s overall quality of life is overall very similar, with slightly more indicating IDOT is either “very important” or “important” (83% vs. 80% for the economy) and slightly fewer saying “somewhat important” (14% vs. 17%). Consistent with this, the mean rating for IDOT’s importance on the area’s overall quality of life is slightly greater than that for IDOT’s importance on their area’s economy (4.25 vs. 4.22).

Overall, the assessed importance of IDOT on their area’s economy is somewhat greater in 2007 and 2008 than it was in 2005. And, the assessed importance of IDOT on their area’s overall quality of life has become somewhat greater across each adjacent survey.

Table 8
Assessed Importance of IDOT for Area

IDOT's importance for ...	Very Important (5)*	Important (4)	Some-what important (3)	Not very important (2)	Not at all important (1)	n (% of total)	mean
Area's economy							
2008	46%	34%	17%	3%	0+%	1101 (84%)	4.22
2007	44%	38%	13%	4%	1%	1234 (87%)	4.20
2005	32%	46%	18%	3%	1%	1144 (86%)	4.06
Area's overall quality of life							
2008	45%	38%	14%	2%	0+%	1078 (82%)	4.25
2007	40%	41%	15%	3%	0+%	1170 (83%)	4.17
2005	33%	48%	16%	3%	0+%	1153 (87%)	4.10

*These values have been reversed from those in the questionnaire so that higher scores represent greater satisfaction.

Awareness and use of toll-free telephone number and website

Toll-free telephone number. Just over two-thirds (68%) of the 2008 respondents indicated not being aware of IDOT's toll-free number to get information on road conditions. Just under one-quarter (24%) are aware of it but have never called it while the remaining 9 percent said they had called it, 4 percent having done so in the past year. The results are very similar across the past six years. (See Table 9A.)

Website. About two-thirds (66%) of the 2008 respondents indicated not being aware of IDOT's website that contains information on construction zones and road conditions. Just over one in five (22%) are aware of it but have never visited it while the remaining 12 percent said they have visited it. (See Table 9B.)

Over the past six years, the percent not aware of the website has decreased 10 percentage points -- from just over three-quarters in 2003 and 2004 to about two-thirds in the past three surveys. And, the total percent who indicated they have been to the website has doubled -- from about 5 to 6 percent in 2003 and 2004 to 11 to 12 percent in the past two surveys. (See Table 9B.)

Table 9A
Awareness and Use of IDOT Toll-Free Number

Topic	Spring 2003	Spring 2004	Spring 2005	Spring 2006	Spring 2007	Summer 2008
Aware of toll-free number to get info on road conditions? And have you called this number?						
NOT aware	68%	69%	69%	68%	68%	68%
Aware -- but never called	24%	23%	24%	26%	24%	24%
Called, but not in last 12 months	5%	5%	5%	5%	6%	5%
Called in last 12 months	3%	2%	2%	2%	3%	4%
<i>n</i>	1353 (95%)	1260 (94%)	1254 (95%)	1252 (95%)	1318 (93%)	1252 (95%)

Table 9B
Awareness and Use of IDOT's Internet Site

Topic	Spring 2003	Spring 2004	Spring 2005	Spring 2006	Spring 2007	Summer 2008
Aware of website to get info on construction zones and road conditions? And ever visited site to get this info?						
NOT aware of website	77%	77%	71%	67%	69%	66%
Aware -- but never visited	17%	18%	21%	23%	21%	22%
To website but not for this info	2%	1%	2%	2%	3%	2%
Looked at this info on website	4%	4%	6%	7%	8%	10%
<i>n</i>	1344 (94%)	1246 (94%)	1239 (93%)	1232 (93%)	1284 (91%)	1236 (94%)

Topical questions

As noted earlier, this year's topical issue questions focused on three general topical areas. They are:

Importance of and ratings of IDOT on three characteristics

Importance of three selected characteristics of a state agency (page 3)

Ratings of IDOT on these three selected characteristics, considering "tax dollars spent" (page 3)

Traffic safety questions

Assessed amount of traffic safety activities, and evaluations of the effectiveness of traffic safety messages (page 3)

Capital improvement program

Level and sources of awareness of the "Illinois Works" capital improvement program (page 3)

Knowledge of year of last Illinois capital improvement program (page 3)

Priorities for selected types of capital improvements (page 3)

Support/opposition for the "Illinois Works" capital improvement program, and for any capital improvement program (page 3)

Support/opposition for three selected ways to pay for capital improvement program (page 4)

Three State Agency Characteristics and IDOT Ratings

Relative importance of characteristics. Respondents were first informed that "when we invest tax dollars in a state agency, we expect a return in terms of: 1) overall amount of service provided; 2) overall quality of work; and 3) overall professionalism." They were then asked which of these "is most important" to them, and which is "second most important"?

The results, presented in Table 10A, clearly indicate that "overall quality of work" is most important, followed by overall amount of service provided, and then overall professionalism. Indeed, about six of ten respondents (61%) identified "overall quality of work" as most important, about double the proportion that identified "overall amount of service provided" (29%). Only one in twenty (5%) identified "overall professionalism" as most important.

In terms of those identifying each of the characteristics as either "most" or "second most" important, "overall quality of work" is identified as such by about nine of ten respondents (89%) followed by about three-quarters who did so for "overall amount of service provided" (76%) and 15 percent who did so for "overall professionalism."

The order of these characteristics is the same as that found in the 2005 survey, and as indicated in the footnote to Table 10A, even the proportions are very similar for each of the characteristics.

IDOT ratings on these characteristics. Respondents were then asked, “For the tax dollars that are spent, how would you rate IDOT on the following characteristics?” – and respondents were given the same three characteristics we just described. The results are presented in Table 10B. The same question was also asked in the 2007 and 2005 surveys.

While the overall results across the three characteristics do not differ by substantial margins, the order is clear and consistent across the three surveys in which this question has been asked. *For those giving a rating*, IDOT is rated a bit more positively on “overall professionalism” than it is on “overall quality of work,” and IDOT is in turn rated a bit more positively on this than it is on “overall amount of service provided.”

To illustrate, 55 percent of the 2008 respondents gave IDOT either an “excellent” or a “good” rating on overall professionalism compared to 52 percent for overall quality of work and 48 percent for overall amount of service. At the other end of the scale, 14 percent gave IDOT either a “poor” or “very poor” rating for overall amount of service provided compared to 11 percent for overall quality of work and 8 percent for overall professionalism.

Across the three surveys, the overall picture here is that of a good deal of stability for each of the items, but it should be noted that slight declines for each item are generally in evidence from survey to survey. The overall 2005 to 2008 decline is smallest for “overall quality of work” (only -.04), followed by “overall professionalism (-.08) and then “overall amount of service provided” (-.10).

It should also be noted that in each of the three surveys, far more respondents gave ratings to the two items relating to overall quality and amount of work than gave ratings to the professionalism item. For instance, in the most recent 2008 survey, 79 percent gave ratings for the amount/quality of work items vs. 61 percent who gave ratings for professionalism. (The difference here is somewhat greater than that for either 2007 or 2005.)

Table 10A
Importance of Three Selected Characteristics*
(n = 1270; 97% of sample)

Characteristic	Most Important	Second Most Important	Most or Second Most Important
Overall quality of work	61.3%	27.9%	89.2%
Overall amount of service provided	28.8%	47.3%	76.1%
Overall professionalism	5.0%	9.9%	14.9%
Don't know	5.0%	14.9%	-----

*In 2005, when the "don't know" respondents were excluded, the results were:

For "overall quality of work": 65% rated it most important; 30% rated it next most important.

For "overall amount of service provided": 49% rated it most important; 28% rated it next most important.

For "overall professionalism": 5% rated in most important; 12% rated it next most important.

Table 10B
Evaluations of Three Selected Characteristics of IDOT,
"For the tax dollars that are spent," 2005, 2007 and 2008

Aspect rated^a	Excellent (5)^b	Good (4)	Fair (3)	Poor (2)	Very Poor (1)	n (% of sample)	mean
2008							
C. Overall professionalism	6%	49%	37%	6%	2%	803 (61%)	3.49
B. Overall quality of work	6%	46%	37%	8%	3%	1039 (79%)	3.44
A. Overall amount of service provided	4%	44%	38%	11%	3%	1034 (79%)	3.36
2007							
C. Overall professionalism	8%	48%	36%	5%	2%	1034 (73%)	3.55
B. Overall quality of work	6%	45%	39%	7%	2%	1184 (84%)	3.47
A. Overall amount of service provided	5%	45%	37%	10%	3%	1155 (82%)	3.39
2005							
C. Overall professionalism	8%	50%	35%	5%	2%	921 (70%)	3.57
B. Overall quality of work	6%	49%	35%	8%	2%	1122 (85%)	3.48
A. Overall amount of service provided	5%	47%	39%	7%	2%	1104 (83%)	3.46

Traffic Safety Questions

Amount of traffic safety activities. Respondents were first informed that “IDOT promotes traffic safety by conducting activities such as encouraging people to wear seat belts, discouraging people from drinking and driving, and encouraging the use of child restraint seats.” After this information, respondents were first asked whether the “amount of activities IDOT conducts to promote traffic safety is too much, about right, or too little.” And respondents were then asked to rate “the effectiveness of messages IDOT uses to promote traffic safety (relating to such things as: seat belts, drinking & driving, child restraint seats).”

The same questions were asked in the 2005 survey. Results are presented in Table 11.

Amount of traffic safety activities. Eight in ten 2008 respondents believe that the amount of traffic safety activities is “about right,” and among the remainder, about twice as many believe the amount is too little rather than too much (13% vs. 6%). These results are very close to those in the 2005 survey.

Effectiveness of traffic safety messages. Two-thirds (67%) of the 2008 respondents rated the effectiveness of IDOT’s traffic safety messages as either “excellent” (13%) or “good” (54%), just over one-quarter (27%) rated them as “fair,” one in twenty (5%) rated them as “poor,” and hardly any (1%) rated them as “very poor.” The 2008 results are virtually the same as the 2005 results.

Table 11
Evaluations of IDOT Traffic Safety Activities and Messages

Amount of activities IDOT conducts to promote traffic safety							
	Too little	About right	Too much	<i>n</i> (% of sample)			
2008	13%	80%	6%	1162 (89%)			
2005	14%	81%	5%	1159 (87%)			
Effectiveness of messages IDOT uses to promote traffic safety							
	Excellent (5)^b	Good (4)	Fair (3)	Poor (2)	Very Poor (1)	<i>n</i> (% of sample)	<i>mean</i>
2008	13%	54%	27%	5%	1%	1154 (88%)	3.73
2005	12%	54%	27%	5%	1%	1188 (90%)	3.72

Capital Improvement Questions

Several of the questions in the 2008 Motorist Opinion Survey related to the topic of a capital improvement program for Illinois. The preface to this section of questions read:

Next are a few questions that relate to the infrastructure of Illinois. By infrastructure, we mean such things as: roads, bridges and highways in Illinois (whether or not IDOT is responsible for them); mass transit systems; schools; water and sewer systems, etc.

A description of these questions and their results follow. Here, in addition to presenting the results weighted by district, we also present the results weighted by district, age and education. Because our responding sample under-represents the younger motorists and over-represents the better educated, this latter weighting reflects a more representative sample of Illinois motorists.¹⁷ And, it is these latter results that we focus on in this section.

Awareness level and sources of awareness. Respondents were asked, “Before this survey, had you heard of the ‘Illinois Works’ capital improvement program, a proposed multi-year state construction program designed to improve the state’s infrastructure? This is the program proposed by Governor Blagojevich that was put together by the Illinois Works Coalition, co-chaired by Dennis Hastert and Glenn Poshard.”

Respondents who had heard of the Illinois Works capital improvement program were asked to identify the information source through which they “first heard” about the program. They were offered nine alternatives as well as an “other” and a “don’t know” alternative.

Results for the above questions are presented in the top two portions of Table 12A.

When weighted by district, age and education, we find that somewhat more than one-third respondents had heard of the Illinois Works capital improvement program prior to the survey (34% who circled “yes” and another 2% who indicated their first information source). Just over half (51%) indicated “no,” and 12 percent indicated they did not know whether or not they had heard of the program. (When weighted only by district, the results show only somewhat greater awareness prior to the survey, about 40%.)

The two most common “first sources of awareness” for the Illinois Works capital improvement program are newspaper articles (35%) and television news reports (28%). Following in third and fourth positions are radio news reports (13%) and television advertisements (6%). (Results weighted only by district do not differ much from these.)

Knowledge of last year Illinois had a capital improvement program. Respondents were asked, “As far as you know, when was the last time the Illinois legislature passed and the governor signed a capital improvement program.” Alternatives offered were:

¹⁷ Note that we did not need to weight by gender because the responding sample is very representative in terms of this characteristic.

last year (2007); 5 years ago (2003); 9 years ago (1999); 15 years ago (1993); and don't know. The results are presented in the bottom portion of Table 12A.

Over eight in ten respondents (85%) indicated they did not know when Illinois last had a capital improvement program. Only 4 percent correctly identified 9 years ago (1999), the same proportion that indicated last year (4%) and slightly less than that who indicated five years ago (6%). (Results weighted only by district do not differ much from these.)

Table 12A
Awareness of "Illinois Works"
Capital Improvement Program

Before this survey, had you heard of the "Illinois Works" capital improvement program ...?	Wgtd by district	Wgtd by district, age & educ
Yes	38%	34%
Possibly yes ("no" or "don't know" but answered source)	2%	2%
No	46%	51%
Don't know	13%	12%
<i>(n = 1292; 98% of sample)</i>		
First source through which heard about the program (among "yes" or "possibly yes" in above)		
Newspaper article	38%	35%
Television news report	28%	28%
Radio news report	13%	13%
Television advertisement	5%	6%
Friends, coworkers, acquaintances	2%	2%
News site on Internet	1%	1%
Newspaper advertisement	1%	1%
Radio advertisement	1%	2%
State agency publication / website	1%	2%
Other	1%	1%
Don't know	6%	6%
No answer for applicable respondents	2%	2%
<i>(n = 525)</i>	<i>(40% of sample)</i>	<i>(36% of sample)</i>
When was last time Illinois had a capital improvement program?		
Last year (2007)	5%	4%
5 years ago (2003)	6%	6%
9 years ago (1999)	4%	4%
15 years ago (1993)	2%	1%
Don't know	83%	85%
<i>(n = 1274; 97% of sample)</i>		

Priorities of capital improvement projects. From a list of “12 types of improvements that would be supported through the Illinois Works capital improvement program,” respondents were asked to choose “the four [they] believe[d] to be the most important.”

As seen in Table 12B, two of the twelve items were selected by more than half of the respondents: repair/resurface existing roads and highways, selected by over seven in ten (71%); and repair/upgrade existing bridges (55%).

Two additional items were selected by nearly 40 percent or more: repair/renovate existing schools buildings (K-12) [46%]; and repair/upgrade water and sewer systems (39%).

Three more items were selected by proportions of just over one-third of the respondents, the percentage that each item would have received had every respondent merely selected four items at random: repair/upgrade mass transit systems (36%); energy development projects (36%); and environmental clean-up projects (35%).

Two additional items were selected by proportions which are somewhat more and somewhat less than one-quarter of the respondents: construct new highways and/or add lanes (28%); and construct new schools and/or add classrooms (K-12) [22%].

The final three items, in terms of these priorities, are: repair/upgrade railroad tracks and airport runways (14%); repair/upgrade buildings and facilities at universities/colleges (9%); and repair/upgrade state buildings and facilities (3%).

(The order of the priorities when results are weighted only by district is basically the same. And, percentage results for each item generally differ only slightly. However, for three items, these percentages differ by a somewhat larger 4 to 5% pts.)

Table 12B
Most Important Improvements
in Illinois Works Capital Improvement Program

Improvements – choose the four most important	Wgtd by district	Wgtd by district, age & educ
Repair/resurface existing roads and highways	74%	71%
Repair/upgrade existing bridges	60%	55%
Repair/renovate existing school buildings (K-12)	45%	46%
Repair/upgrade water and sewer systems	41%	39%
Repair/upgrade mass transit systems	36%	36%
Energy development projects	32%	36%
Environmental clean-up projects	30%	35%
Construct new highways and/or add lanes	27%	28%
Construct new schools and/or add classrooms (K-12)	20%	22%
Repair/upgrade railroad tracks & airport runways	15%	14%
Repair/upgrade buildings & facilities at universities/colleges	8%	9%
Repair/upgrade state buildings & facilities	3%	3%
<i>(n = 1240; 95% of sample)</i>		

Support of and opposition to a capital improvement program. Respondents were asked “how much do you favor or oppose” both “the Illinois Works capital improvement program” and “any kind of capital improvement program for Illinois this year.”

As can be calculated from the results presented in Table 12B, well over half (56%) indicated being in favor of the Illinois Works capital improvement program, with 14 percent indicating they “strongly favor” it. Very few (4%) oppose the program to any extent, but about four in ten (41%) do not have an opinion.

More than six in ten respondents (63%) support any kind of capital improvement program, with 17 percent indicating they “strongly favor” it. Again, very few (4%) oppose a capital program, but about one-third (33%) do not have an opinion.

(Results are virtually the same when only district weighting is used.)

**Table 12C
Favor or Oppose Capital Improvement Programs**

How much do you favor or oppose ...?	Strongly Favor	Favor	Oppose	Strongly Oppose	Don't know	<i>n</i> (% of sample)
The Illinois Works capital improvement program						
Wgtd by district	14%	42%	3%	1%	40%	1274 (97%)
Wgtd by district, age & education	14%	42%	3%	1%	41%	
Any kind of capital improvement program						
Wgtd by district	18%	45%	3%	1%	32%	1272 (97%)
Wgtd by district, age & education	17%	46%	3%	1%	33%	

Support of and opposition to selected sources of funding for a capital improvement program. And, for each of three selected “ways of funding” a capital improvement program, respondents were asked to choose their opinion from the options of: in favor of; don't favor but it is acceptable; oppose; and don't know. The three selected ways of funding asked about were:

- Sale of state lottery to a private firm, with proceeds to pay for capital improvement projects
- Expansion of casino gambling, with proceeds to pay for capital improvement projects
- Earmark a percentage of the state sales tax already collected on motor fuel sales to pay for capital improvement projects

As seen in Table 12D, the alternative most preferred is that of earmarking a percentage of the state sales tax already collected on motor fuel sales. About two-thirds (66%) indicated either being in favor of this alternative (44%) or that it was acceptable to them (23%). About one in five (20%) expressed opposition to this alternative.

The next-most preferred alternative is expansion of casino gambling. Nearly six in ten respondents (59%) indicated either being in favor of this alternative (32%) or that it was acceptable to them (27%). Nearly one-third (31%) expressed opposition to this alternative.

Finally here, for the alternative of selling the state lottery to a private firm, just over half of the respondents (51%) indicated either being in favor of this alternative (24%) or that it was acceptable to them (27%). Just over one-third (34%) expressed opposition to this alternative.

Table 12D
Opinions about Possible Revenue Sources
To Fund a Capital Improvement Program

<i>As a way to fund a capital improvement program, what is your opinion for this source of funding?</i>	In favor of	Don't favor but it is acceptable	Oppose	Don't know	<i>n</i> (% of sample)
<i>Sale of state lottery to a private firm, with proceeds to pay for capital improvement projects</i>					
Wgtd by district	20%	25%	39%	15%	1217 (93%)
Wgtd by district, age & education	24%	27%	34%	16%	
<i>Expansion of Illinois casino gambling, with proceeds to pay for capital improvement projects</i>					
Wgtd by district	30%	29%	33%	9%	1239 (94%)
Wgtd by district, age & education	32%	27%	31%	10%	
<i>Earmark a percentage of the state sales tax already collected on motor fuel sales to pay for capital improvement projects</i>					
Wgtd by district	49%	22%	17%	12%	1245 (95%)
Wgtd by district, age & education	44%	23%	20%	14%	

[When the results are weighted only by district, the results for the expansion of casino gambling do not differ much at all. However, for earmarking a percentage of the state sales tax on motor fuel sales, the district-only weighted results show somewhat more in favor (49% vs. 44%) and thus somewhat more for whom this alternative is at least acceptable (71% vs. 66%). And, for selling the state lottery to a private firm, the district-only results show somewhat fewer in favor (20% vs. 24%) and somewhat fewer for

whom the alternative is at least acceptable (45% vs. 51%) – and somewhat more who are opposed (39% vs. 34%). Yet, the overall preference order of these alternatives is the same regardless of the weighting scheme used.]

When asked whether there are “other ways (revenue sources) to fund capital improvement projects that [respondents] would be in favor of,” almost one-quarter (24%) indicated “yes,” about one in twenty (6%) indicated “no,” and remaining 70 percent either indicated “don’t know” (59%) or did not answer the question (12%). Further analysis indicates that actual substantive responses to this question are even less than the 24 percent figure suggests, with many respondents giving very general comments. These included comments about: cutting spending in general; cutting waste and inefficiencies; raising taxes in general; the nature of the current political climate in Illinois state government; etc. Comments relating to specific revenue sources basically covered the range of currently available revenue/tax sources as well as some rather unique ones as well. And, given the nature of the overall questionnaire, it is not surprising that some comments were directed solely at funding road/highway repairs/upgrades (e.g., comments regarding the motor fuel tax and the road fund).