

**HEALTH IN TRANSPORTATION WORKING GROUP  
2016 ANNUAL REPORT**

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**Final**

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The Health in Transportation Working Group 2016 Annual Report provides an overview of the Working Group's activities and accomplishments in 2016, summarizes other USDOT health-related accomplishments, and documents its progress toward the recommendations laid out in the 2015 Annual Report. The report also offers recommendations based on the Working Group's self-assessment.

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# 2016 Health in Transportation Working Group Annual Report

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The United States Department of Transportation's (USDOT) Health in Transportation Working Group examines and promotes the Department's existing policies and programs to assist modal agencies address health-related issues such as safety, air quality, noise, active transportation, environmental review, livable communities, and access to jobs and services that are raised by staff, project sponsors, and the public. This report provides an overview of the Working Group's activities in 2016, summarizes other USDOT health-related accomplishments, documents its progress toward implementing the recommendations laid out in the 2015 Annual Report, and offers recommendations for the Working Group for 2017.

## 2. WORKING GROUP OVERVIEW

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) established the Health in Transportation Working Group in early 2012 in response to growing interest in the intersection of transportation and how it can support healthy outcomes from the communities we serve. The Working Group initially included representatives from various FHWA Offices, including: Chief Counsel, Federal Lands Highway, Human Environment, Natural Environment, Planning, Project Development and Environmental Review, Resource Center Environment and Planning Technical Service Teams, and Safety. Since then, the Working Group has expanded its membership to include representatives of other modal administrations, including the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), Federal Transit Administration (FTA), National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), and the Office of the Secretary of Transportation (OST).

The Working Group's purpose is to support transportation planning, programming and project delivery by having an agency-wide understanding of health in transportation, and identify aspects of existing agency programs that relate to health. Through the Work Group participants are prepared to quickly find answers and expertise needed to address stakeholder health-related concerns. The Working Group develops a work plan annually that lays out its activities for the year.

## 3. 2016 WORKING GROUP ACCOMPLISHMENTS

### FRAMEWORK FOR BETTER INTEGRATING HEALTH INTO TRANSPORTATION CORRIDOR PLANNING

With oversight from the Working Group, FHWA released the [Framework for Better Integrating Health into Transportation Corridor Planning \(Framework\)](#), which is an action-oriented, flexible guide for communities that are considering health in an agency's existing corridor planning process. Five transportation agencies tested the Framework in a corridor study: Akron Metro

Regional Transit Authority, Central Oklahoma Transportation and Parking Authority, Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission, East Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission, and Tennessee Department of Transportation. FHWA documented their experiences in [case studies](#) that highlight how each of the agencies applied the Framework to incorporate health into their corridor planning processes, and the resulting outcomes. Finally, in March, FHWA hosted a [webinar on the Framework](#), including the background research, focus group findings, the steps and content of the Framework, and the case studies. In October, FHWA presented on the Framework at the Association of Metropolitan Planning Organizations (AMPO) Annual Conference.

## PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENTAL LINKAGES (PEL) AND HEALTH

FHWA, with support from the Working Group, researched the relationship between the current use of a PEL approach and the explicit inclusion of health considerations and implications of transportation decisions. Through discussions with transportation agencies about PEL and health, the research found that the use of PEL to advance health considerations was possible and potentially beneficial. PEL and health are mutually supportive concepts that require frequent collaboration and an early focus on the community at hand.

## RIDES TO WELLNESS

FTA's [Rides to Wellness](#) initiative promotes coordination and partnerships between health and transportation providers. The goals of Rides to Wellness include increasing access to care, improving health outcomes, and reducing healthcare costs. In 2016, Working Group members provided support to Rides to Wellness by reviewing proposals for grant funding under the initiative. In September, FTA awarded [grants](#) to 19 communities to address healthcare challenges specific to their communities through improvements to transit.

## TRANSPORTATION AND HEALTH TOOL

The Working Group supported OST, FHWA, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in the development and promotion of the [Transportation and Health Tool](#) (THT). In August, THT project sponsors held a workshop with Delaware DOT staff in Dover, Delaware to help them use the THT to help support their statewide prioritization process. In October, OST presented on the THT at the Association of Metropolitan Planning Organizations (AMPO) Annual Conference.

The THT provides data on 14 transportation and health indicators relating to safety, active transportation, air quality, connectivity, and equity. Indicator data are available for States, Metropolitan Statistical Areas, and Urbanized Areas, and scores are provided for each indicator, allowing users to see how a jurisdiction compares to its peers in terms of public health performance. The THT also provides 25 evidence-based strategies that transportation practitioners can use to address health.

## COORDINATION WITH CDC

In 2016, the Health in Transportation Working Group continued its collaboration with CDC's Built Environment Work Group (BEWG). Jason Broehm served as the liaison between the Working Group and the BEWG. As part of the coordination, Jason Broehm and Kevin Moody attended a BEWG meeting on April 5.

## CDC AND USDOT DATA LINKAGES PROGRAM

In support of a recommendation made during the May 2014 CDC-USDOT workshop, in 2016, the CDC and USDOT continued their collaboration to improve data sharing between the agencies. In 2017, the agencies will complete the process of linking health and transportation data sets and will analyze the linked data and report the findings to the Working Group.

## WEBINAR ON CDC AND USDOT FUNDING PROGRAMS

In September, the Working Group and the BEWG held a joint internal webinar to share information about each agency's funding programs that relate to health in transportation. The webinar aimed to help participants develop a basic understanding of the other agency's funding programs, and identify points where the funding streams intersect and how the recipients of these funds can leverage them to improve health. There was not enough time to cover all funding programs that relate to health in transportation, but USDOT and CDC focused on a few each that were most relevant.

The webinar included overviews of the following USDOT programs:

- OST's Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER)
- FHWA's Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP)
- FHWA's Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement (CMAQ) Program
- NHTSA's Nonmotorized Safety Program
- FTA's Pilot Program for Transit-Oriented Development Planning
- FTA's Rides to Wellness and Mobility on Demand Programs

It also covered the following CDC programs:

- CDC's Motor Vehicle Injury Prevention Program
- CDC's Core State Violence and Injury Prevention Program (Core SVIPP)
- CDC's Racial and Ethnic Approaches to Community Health (REACH) Program
- CDC's Partnerships to Improve Community Health (PICH)
- CDC's National Environmental Public Health Tracking Network

## OVERVIEW OF CDC'S HEALTH IMPACT IN FIVE YEARS (HI-5) INITIATIVE

At the December 2016 meeting, the Working Group invited Elizabeth Skillen from CDC's Office of the Associate Director for Policy to present on the [HI-5 initiative](#). The initiative includes 14 evidence-based, community-wide population health interventions that can demonstrate positive health impacts in five years or less. Four of the HI-5 interventions relate to transportation:

- Public Transportation System Introduction or Expansion
- Safe Routes to School
- Clean Diesel Bus Fleets
- Motorcycle Injury Prevention

The Working Group plans to collaborate with CDC on the HI-5 initiative in 2017.

## HEALTH IN TRANSPORTATION CASE STUDIES

The Working Group published two case studies to highlight how transportation agencies are using their transportation planning and project development processes to support healthy outcomes. The case studies are available on the [Health in Transportation website](#):

- [Enhancing Access to Pinellas County Parks to Improve Health Outcomes](#): The Pinellas County Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) is improving access to Pinellas County parks and trails that serve minority and low-income populations. By increasing access to recreational opportunities, the MPO aims to reduce risk factors for chronic diseases related to inactivity.
- [A Foundation for Healthy Transportation](#): The Oregon DOT and the Oregon Health Authority's Public Health Division entered into a memorandum of understanding in 2013 that is shaping the way that transportation agencies at the local, regional, and State level think about public health and vice versa.

## 2016 WORK PLAN

The Working Group's 2016 Work Plan outlined the planned activities for the year. The activities were split into two categories: outreach activities that support individuals and organizations outside the Working Group (including within and outside of USDOT), and Working Group operation activities to improve the function of the Working Group.

## 4. OTHER HEALTH IN TRANSPORTATION ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN 2016

In addition to the Working Group accomplishments described in Section 3, many members had other health in transportation accomplishments within their roles outside of the Working Group. These accomplishments are listed below.

### RESOURCES

- FHWA Office of Human Environment published a [Guidebook for Developing Pedestrian and Bicycle Performance Measures](#) in March.
- NHTSA released its 2014 Traffic Safety Facts for [Pedestrians](#) and [Bicyclists and Other Cyclists](#) in May.
- FHWA kicked off [Every Day Counts Round 4](#) (EDC-4) with webinars and regional summits to present the 11 different innovations. Two of these innovations relate to health and transportation: [Safe Transportation for Every Pedestrian \(STEP\)](#) and [Community Connections](#).

- The [EJ Tools Peer Network](#) held five webinars between May and September. The webinars focused on tools that State DOTs and transportation practitioners use related to environmental justice, including EJSCREEN and American FactFinder.
- FHWA released its [Strategic Agenda for Pedestrian and Bicycle Transportation](#), which is a framework to guide FHWA's pedestrian and bicycle initiatives and investments during the five-year period from FY 16-17 to FY 20-21.
- USDOT published fact sheets on success stories from the [Mayors' Challenge for Safer People, Safer Streets](#). At a summit in September, USDOT recognized the communities that demonstrated the most progress during the Challenge.
- CDC and USDOT have developed an article for the [Journal of Transport and Health](#) on the THT. The article has been accepted for publication in 2017.
- USDOT held the first [Every Place Counts Leadership Academy](#) and released a related [Transportation Toolkit](#). The purpose of these resources is to encourage members of the public to get involved in transportation decisionmaking.
- FAA has released a new version of the [Aviation Environmental Design Tool \(AEDT\)](#), which discusses aviation impacts and environmental justice.

#### FEDERAL FUNDING PROGRAMS

- USDOT announced the [University Transportation Center](#) grants. Two of the new centers have health as one of their focus areas: the Center for Transportation, Environment, and Community Health (led by Cornell University) and the Center for Advancing Research in Transportation Emissions, Energy and Health (led by Texas A&M University).

#### MEMBER PARTICIPATION IN RELATED CONFERENCES AND MEETINGS

- Working Group members participated in several events during the 2016 Transportation Research Board (TRB) Annual Meeting, including the [Institutionalizing Health in Transportation Agency Practice](#) workshop, the [Health and Transportation Subcommittee](#) meeting, and a session titled [Riding the Emerging Mobility Waves – FTA Priorities from Rides to Wellness to Mobility on Demand](#).
- FTA hosted a joint workshop with the [National Academy of Sciences](#) (NAS) to explore data and metrics with respect to healthcare and transportation as a part of the [FTA Rides to Wellness program](#).
- FHWA and FTA co-hosted the 2016 Greater Milwaukee Transportation Summit, a regional meeting on transportation funding and environmental justice. Themes of the summit included the roles of community values and health in transportation planning.
- FHWA held a Livability workshop in Texas's Midland-Odessa region in August. Participants included the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development, the Environmental Protection Agency and FTA.
- Working Group members presented at a session on transportation and health at the 2016 AMPO Annual Conference in Fort Worth, Texas in October.

- The CDC and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation held a [500 Cities project](#) launch event. The purpose of the project is to develop city- and census-tract-level small area estimates for chronic disease risk factors and health outcomes.
- TRB kicked off the [NCHRP 20-112](#), A Research Roadmap for Transportation and Public Health project in December.

## COORDINATION WITH OTHER ORGANIZATIONS AND GROUPS

- NHSTA has a five-year cooperative agreement with the [Safe States Alliance](#). As a part of this agreement, they will be developing the Pedestrian Injury Surveillance Recommendations Report.
- OST participates in the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) [Multimodal Task Force](#).

## 5. PROGRESS TOWARD ACHIEVING 2016 RECOMMENDATIONS

This section lists the recommendations from the 2015 Annual Report, including a status update for each and a brief discussion on how the Working Group will move forward to satisfy each recommendation.

### WORKING GROUP STRUCTURE AND ORGANIZATION

**Recommendation #1:** Split Working Group membership into two categories: active participants and interested parties.

- Status Update:
  - The Working Group was split into two categories: active participants in Working Group activities, who participate in the Working Group’s quarterly meetings, and interested parties, including USDOT employees and others, who receive periodic updates about health in transportation from the Working Group.
- Moving Forward:
  - The Working Group will continue to function in these two groups; the active participants will continue to meet quarterly, and the interested parties will continue to receive updates.

**Recommendation #2:** Reconfigure Working Group meetings to include more in-person time and streamline the process of communicating individual updates.

- Status Update:
  - The Working Group held quarterly meetings 2-3 hours in length, all of which were in-person meetings at USDOT Headquarters.
  - Two of the Working Group meetings included a 45-minute Executive Session, where Working Group members invited their leadership to get an update on Working Group activities and provide feedback to the Working Group.
  - The Working Group used its email list to provide updates between meetings about health in transportation activities happening within and outside of USDOT.

- Moving Forward:
  - The Working Group will continue to hold quarterly in-person meetings and semi-annual Executive Sessions, and will provide updates to Working Group members through the email list between meetings.

**Recommendation #3:** The Working Group will add one or two “co-lead” positions to share the work load of leading the group and to provide another perspective among the Working Group leadership.

- Status Update:
  - Jason Broehm, OST, began serving as co-lead in December 2015. He joined Victoria Martinez, FHWA, who was serving as the Working Group lead.
- Moving Forward:
  - The Working Group will consider adding a third co-lead position in 2017. In 2015, FTA expressed interest in having a new staff member serve as a co-lead.

**Recommendation #4:** The Working Group should develop and maintain a SharePoint site to archive past Working Group documents and facilitate document reviews.

- Status Update:
  - The Volpe Center developed and hosts a SharePoint site that contains Working Group documents, including past and current work plans, meeting notes, and annual reports.
- Moving Forward:
  - The Working Group will use the SharePoint site for document reviews and edits and as a repository for internal and external documents. The Volpe Center will continue to host and manage the site.

## WORKING GROUP FUNCTION AND PURPOSE

**Recommendation #5:** The Working Group will continue communicating within and outside of USDOT about the available resources and needs associated with transportation and health.

- Status Update:
  - As described on pages 2-3, the Working Group conducted a joint webinar with CDC to inform the agency about its transportation funding programs. In addition, Kevin Moody initiated two related projects: one is to develop graphic and visualization tools to advance the Working Group’s objectives, and the other is to improve information exchanges between transportation agencies and stakeholders in communities experiencing health disparities.
- Moving Forward:
  - The Working Group support transportation partner agencies by sharing information about health in transportation and engage them in related discussions.
  - The Working Group will produce and/or provide input to research and communication products that promote healthy outcomes and economic opportunity.
  - The Working Group will continue to develop graphics and/or information that can help educate others on ways transportation can support health.

- The Working Group will develop health in transportation research ideas for USDOT or other entities to address.

## OUTREACH TO INTERESTED PARTIES

**Recommendation #6:** The Working Group will manage communications with a group of interested parties to inform them of Working Group activities.

- Status Update:
  - As described in Recommendation #1 above, the Working Group has maintained communication with USDOT staff who have self-identified as interested in the Working Group, but who are not active members.
- Moving Forward:
  - The Working Group will continue to be a resource to interested parties including opportunities for them to provide ideas for outreach and support.
  - The Working Group will use existing mechanisms (e.g., Human Environment Digest, Livability Newsletter, and Health in Transportation website) to issue quarterly updates that provide information on updates from the Working Group, new health in transportation resources available, upcoming webinars, and available trainings.

## 6. FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE FUTURE OF THE WORKING GROUP

This section provides recommendations for the Working Group to address in 2017 based on discussions at meetings in 2016.

### **Recommendation #1: Communicate with External Audiences using Existing Mechanisms**

The Working Group should use existing mechanisms to share information with non-USDOT audiences. This should include posting relevant information on the Health in Transportation website, including case studies and the Working Group's annual report. It should also include sharing updates in existing newsletters and email blasts, such as the [Successes in Stewardship Newsletter](#), [Human Environment Digest](#), the [Fostering Livable Communities Newsletter](#), and the [Transportation Planning Capacity Building Program](#). Finally, the Working Group should use these and other communication mechanisms to support recent initiatives like the THT and the Framework for Better Integrating Health into Transportation Corridor Planning.

The Working Group should consider preparing standardized PowerPoint presentation or talking points for Working Group members to use for presentations about ways transportation policies, planning and program delivery can support healthy outcomes and access to economic opportunity.

## **Recommendation #2: Continue to Coordinate with CDC**

The Working Group should build upon the relationships and connections made with CDC over the past three years. This effort could include the following activities:

- Continued efforts to link health in transportation data between CDC and USDOT, including implementing the data linkages pilot program currently underway,
- A third collaborative CDC-USDOT workshop (date, topic, and location to be determined).
- Coordinate efforts with CDC to promote health in transportation at the APHA annual meeting in Atlanta, Georgia.

## **Recommendation #3: USDOT Field Staff on Health in Transportation**

The Working Group should continue to consider new options for being a resource for FHWA and FTA field staff on health-related issues, so as to support their ability to quickly address health-related concerns as they arise in planning and project delivery. Some possible opportunities for additional outreach activities include:

- Develop health in transportation sessions for FHWA Learning and Development Seminars to be held in 2017.
- Coordinate with field staff on case studies that highlight best practices in for example using transportation planning or projects to improve multimodal investments or enhance public involvement in ways that support healthy outcomes, and
- Use ongoing USDOT initiatives, such as Planning and Environment Linkages, Context-Sensitive Solutions, bicycle and pedestrian initiatives, the Planning webinar series, or the Eco-Logical webinar series as opportunities to connect with field staff that work in planning or project development.

## **Recommendation #4: Expand Working Group Membership within USDOT**

The Working Group should reach out to agencies and offices within USDOT that are not involved in the Working Group to determine whether they might be interested in participating in Working Group activities. These agencies and offices might include the Federal Railroad Administration, the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration, and the FHWA Offices of Freight Management, Operations, and Civil Rights.

## **Recommendation #5: Leadership in Working Group Activities**

The Working Group should continue to engage USDOT leadership in Working Group activities by inviting USDOT leadership (e.g., Office Directors of Working Group members) to semi-annual Executive Sessions that take place during every other Working Group meeting.