

## Human Environment Digest

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**November 12, 2020**

Welcome to the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Office of Human Environment biweekly email digest. This digest shares the latest information from a range of Federal and non-Federal sources, addressing transportation and its relationship to the human environment. Through this information exchange, FHWA hopes to foster dialogue at all levels and continue to further the state of the practice on these important topics in support of safety; infrastructure, including accelerated project delivery, access to jobs, and community revitalization; technology and design innovation; and accountability, including, data-driven decisions and performance-based planning.

For more information on any of these topics, see the FHWA Related Links on the sidebar.

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\*The information provided in this mailing does not necessarily reflect the view of the Federal Highway Administration or the U.S. Department of Transportation.



### Safety

#### **TRB Guidebook and Research Plan Outlines Considerations to Improve Transportation Access to Health Care Services**

The *Transportation Research Board Transit Cooperative Research Program* published a [guidebook and research plan](#) to help communities improve connections between transportation and health care. The research explains efforts to improve public health are most effective when they capture the range of factors impacting overall health outcomes, known as social determinants of health. It outlines considerations and resources to help communities build local partnerships and develop shared goals, providing example case studies of agencies collaborating with health care providers to improve transportation access to medical and other wellness-related services.



### Infrastructure

#### **FHWA Hosting Seminar on Curbside Management and Freight Deliveries**

The *Federal Highway Administration Office of Freight Management and Operations* and *Office of Planning* are hosting "Talking Freight" Seminars to provide technical assistance, training, tools, and information on freight planning. The session on [November 18 at 1:00-2:30 PM ET](#) will discuss local approaches to curbside freight management, including how communities examined commercial vehicle delivery patterns and addressed freight delivery needs in the context of general curbside usage needs within their communities. The seminars are free and open to the public.

#### **Research Examines Curbside Management Strategies to Mitigate the Impacts of Ridehailing Services on Traffic**

The *Transportation Research Record: Journal of the Transportation Research Board* published a [study](#) evaluating two curbside management strategies in an area where people commute to work using ridehailing services in Seattle, Washington. Researchers tested a change in curb allocation from paid parking to passenger load zones (PLZ) with ridehailing services using geofencing. This strategy directs drivers and passengers to designated pick-up and drop-off locations on a block. The findings suggest increased PLZ allocation and geofencing reduced the number of pick-ups/drop-offs in the travel lane, decreased vehicle dwell time, increased curb use compliance, and increased passenger satisfaction.

#### **Study Highlights Effects of Bus Stop Improvements on Ridership and ADA Accessibility**

The *National Institute for Transportation and Communities* published a [study](#) analyzing the effects of bus stop improvements, such as shelter and seating, on ridership in Salt Lake City, Utah. Researchers conducted a multi-phased study in 2014-2017 to determine whether, and to what extent, the facility improvements are linked with changes in stop-level ridership and demand for Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) paratransit service. It explains the physical features of bus stops are an important influence on a user's decision to ride, particularly those with mobility limitations. The findings suggest bus stop improvements are associated with increases in stop-level boardings as well as decreases in ADA paratransit demand due to ADA paratransit riders switching to scheduled-service transit based on the added features.



## Innovation

### **FHWA Releases Micromobility Fact Sheet and Activity Sheets**

The *Federal Highway Administration* (FHWA) released a [micromobility fact sheet](#) providing an overview of the evolution of shared micromobility devices such as bicycles, scooters, electric-assist bicycles, and electric scooters. It outlines micromobility planning considerations across six topic areas: (1) safety and infrastructure; (2) access and mobility; (3) equity; (4) data; (5) regulation; and (6) funding. It features related resources as well as brief success stories that highlight improved access and mobility and data sharing practices. In addition to the fact sheet, FHWA also published two activity sheets, describing micromobility research and coordination efforts across [FHWA](#) and throughout [U.S. Department of Transportation](#).

### **Research Analyzes Impacts of E-bikes on Travel Behavior**

The *Journal of Transport & Health* published a [study](#) examining the impact of electric bicycles (e-bikes) on travel behavior. Researchers conducted a literature review to better understand factors influencing e-bike use and to identify related research priorities. The findings indicate younger adults are motivated by the environmental benefits e-bikes provide by reducing motor vehicle use, while older adults are likely to recreationally ride e-bikes for potential health benefits. It also highlights barriers to e-bike use such as perceptions of safety when riding in motorized traffic or alongside pedestrians and other vulnerable road users. The study suggests several priorities for further research such as the impact of adopting e-cycling on travel behavior in non-bicyclists, and how device availability effects travel behavior.

### **Learning Module Describes Shared Mobility Funding Strategies and Partnership Opportunities**

The *Shared-Use Mobility Center* released a [learning module](#) outlining innovative funding strategies for local shared mobility projects including bikeshare, carshare, microtransit, and other modes. It discusses traditional government funding sources and other common partnership funding sources communities often use for shared mobility projects, such as Federal and State grants. The module provides examples of local pilot projects leveraging innovative partnerships and funding strategies, such as employer-based programs and permit fees, to support project costs as well as long-term implementation and programming.



## Accountability

### **Fact Sheet Discusses Approaches to Safe Routes to Parks in Complete Streets Policies**

The *Safe Routes Partnership* published a [fact sheet](#) discussing an integrated approach to safe routes to park through complete streets policy development. The fact sheet outlines three methods to better connect parks and complete streets, such as prioritizing projects, aligning outdoor recreational goals with transportation and health priorities, as well as coordinating performance measures. Coordination between parks and complete streets can increase safety and equitable access to everyday destinations.

### **Tools Highlight Practices in Neighborhood Walkability Assessments**

*America Walks* released a [set of resources and an online video](#) providing information to support community walk audits. The resources explain how walk audits can provide effective tools in engaging the broader community to collaboratively identify active transportation issues and improvements. In partnership with the *Northern Virginia Regional Commission*, the video provides considerations in planning community walk audits such as goal setting, inviting local leaders and officials, and prioritizing safety when assessing mobility solutions.