

Human Environment Digest

September 17, 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

National Walk to School Day is October 7

On October 7, National Walk to School Day will be observed in a variety of formats across communities this year due to COVID-19. Events will take place virtually, within neighborhoods, or at schools, depending on the local context, and [registration](#) is now open. The *National Center for Safe Routes to School* released [20 Ideas for Walk to School Day in 2020](#) including virtual participation activities.

Study Analyzes Vehicle Safety Criteria Between Younger and Older Drivers

The *Traffic Injury Prevention Journal* published a [study](#) examining risks associated with vulnerable driver groups in New Jersey by focusing on young, newly licensed drivers, older drivers, and drivers in low-income areas. The study suggests younger and older drivers experience higher rates of crash risk and fatalities, and those living in low-income areas are disproportionately represented in serious and fatal crashes. Researchers analyzed Statewide crash and licensing data over a seven-year period, cross referencing with information from the *National Highway Traffic Safety Administration Product Information Catalog and Vehicle Listing platform* to determine safety characteristics of the vehicle fleet among a range of drivers. The findings indicate the youngest and oldest drivers, as well as drivers of all age groups living in low-income areas, are more likely to drive older, less safe vehicles that lack safety features such as side airbags.

Study Examines Impacts of Docked Bikeshare Programs on Bicycle Crashes

The *Transport Findings Journal* published a [study](#) analyzing the effects of implementing docked bikeshare programs in eight Canadian and American cities. Using survey data of self-reported crashes, researchers aimed to better understand whether the introduction of this new mode impacts the rate of reported bicycle crashes in communities. The findings suggest that reported bicycle crashes overall did not increase after implementing bikeshare programs, and decreased in areas such as Boston, Montreal, and Toronto which had existing bikeshare programs in place.



Infrastructure

U.S. DOT Announces Availability of \$70 Million for Nationally Significant Federal Lands and Tribal Projects Grants

The U.S. Department of Transportation (U.S. DOT) announced the availability of \$70 million in [grant funding](#) for Nationally Significant Federal Lands and Tribal Projects (NSFLTP). The funding opportunity will support cities, States, Tribal governments, and Federal lands management agencies with the construction and repair of roads and bridges serving Tribal or Federal lands. To help address rural needs and enhance key rural routes, the NSFLTP grant program will consider projects located in rural areas with goals and actions that are consistent with U.S. DOT's [Rural Opportunities to Use Transportation for Economic Success](#) initiative. The NSFLTP [Notice of Funding Opportunity](#) application period will remain open through November 2, 2020.

BUILD Grant Project Addresses Downtown Connectivity and Pedestrian Safety in Pembroke, North Carolina

The *Town of Pembroke, North Carolina* received a [\\$5.2 million grant](#) through the *U.S. Department of Transportation Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development* program to improve pedestrian safety and connectivity in the downtown district. The project improves access to Tribal lands and the University of North Carolina at Pembroke campus through various multimodal infrastructure improvements. Once completed, the project will enhance safety for community members and visitors, improving quality of life and economic development in a rural area.

BUILD Grant Project Supports Development of Downtown Riverfront in Toledo, Ohio

The *Toledo Metropolitan Area Council of Governments* received a [\\$23.6 million grant](#) through the *U.S. Department of Transportation Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development* program to develop the Glass City Riverwalk in the city of Toledo, Ohio. The project encourages multimodal transportation around a regional riverfront through the creation of a shared-used path network. The project will improve connectivity between nearby neighborhoods and businesses, provide additional recreational opportunities for residents and visitors, and promote public health and economic growth in the area.

Study Discusses Role of Green Infrastructure in Supporting Mobility in Environmental Justice Communities

The *National Institute for Transportation and Communities* at *Portland State University* published a [study](#) discussing the role of green infrastructure in mitigating flood impacts in environmental justice communities in Arizona. The study demonstrates how flooding and extreme storm events present major challenges to the transportation system in communities across the country, and particularly the mobility impacts on low-income and minority populations. Researchers conducted a flood vulnerability assessment to identify priority locations for improvements to mitigate transportation system flooding. The findings highlight comprehensive neighborhood-scale green infrastructure in the public right-of-way as an effective approach in areas with moderate flooding conditions.



Innovation

NACTO Releases Report on Shared Micromobility

The *National Association of City Transportation Officials* published a [report](#) on shared micromobility in 2019. The report discusses the growth and use of shared micromobility across the country, including shared bicycles and electric scooters (e-scooters) and electric bicycles. The report found that there was a 45 percent increase in dockless e-scooter programs between 2018 and 2019 in communities. The report also notes that shared bicycle and e-scooter trips are replacing trips by motor vehicle, walking, and transit. It provides a snapshot of trends, challenges, and opportunities to support policy development and decision making.

GHSA Report on Micromobility Highlights Role of State and Local Partners

The *Governors Highway Safety Association* published a [report](#) discussing challenges associated with shared micromobility systems, as well as opportunities for States and local partners to help address issues. The research analyzes micromobility challenges across six categories: oversight, funding, data collection, enforcement, infrastructure, and education, including growth trends and COVID-19 impacts. It captures research findings led in coordination with a panel of Federal, State, and local roadway safety officials, as well as bicycle and rideshare advocates, micromobility providers, and public health practitioners. It also highlights solutions related to community engagement, education programs, funding, and training opportunities.

NABSA Releases State of the Industry Report on Shared Micromobility

The *North American Bikeshare Association* published a [report](#) discussing the trends and growth of the shared micromobility industry in 2019. The report examines successes and challenges in shared micromobility including traditional bicycles, electric bicycles, and electric scooters. It analyzes data points for 292 cities across several topics such as rider demographics, trends by vehicle type, system statistics by city size, operating costs and revenues, operating characteristics, equity, and community benefits. The findings indicate riders in North America took 157 million micromobility trips across 194,000 vehicle types in 2019, in which 36 percent of the rides replaced a car trip.



Accountability

Approaches with Underserved Populations in Regional Active Transportation Plan

The *Federal Highway Administration* published a [case study](#) discussing noteworthy community engagement approaches with traditionally underserved populations, including Hispanic and Tribal communities, in the Lake Tahoe region during the development of a regional Active Transportation Plan. The plan facilitates increased active transportation and transit through the planning process to shift more trips to these modes, and to address the seasonal increases in traffic. The outreach process highlighted how many residents rely on the regional bicycle and pedestrian network for mobility needs, and identifies areas for improvement where people felt unsafe. It also identified Tribal priorities including safety along major roadways, connectivity of existing active transportation infrastructure, and the importance of protecting Tribal sacred sites during construction.

FHWA Releases Updated Livability Fact Sheets

The *Federal Highway Administration* (FHWA) released updates to a series of fact sheets discussing how livability considerations during the transportation decision-making process can benefit communities. Through the [Transportation](#)

[and Livability](#) resources, FHWA provides support to State departments of transportation, regional planning agencies, Tribes, and other partners in both rural and urban settings. The most recent updates focus on the topics of [Economic Development](#), [Safety](#), and [Rural Livability](#). The Economic Development fact sheet discusses how targeted transportation investments can improve access to jobs, education, shopping, and goods movement through compact development, relocation decisions, and increased connectivity. Safety promotes safer roads for all users, including strategies to combine safety and redevelopment, repurpose spaces, and create bike-friendly cities. Since rural communities vary widely, Rural Livability focuses on providing transportation choices and connections to a broad audience through projects enhancing quality of life, improving safety for students, and creating active transportation networks.

Fact Sheet Describes Best Practices for Complete Streets Regional Policy Development

The *Safe Routes Partnership* released a [fact sheet](#) discussing notable practices and resources in regional complete streets policy development, including ideas for collaboration between regional and local jurisdictions. The fact sheet also outlines policy considerations and case studies to assist metropolitan planning organizations and regional agencies with complete streets planning, funding, and construction.