

Human Environment Digest

December 12, 2019

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.

In Memoriam: *The FHWA is sad to share the news of the sudden passing of Joe Burns. Joe has long been a champion of advancing a multimodal transportation system that improves both the human and natural environment. He accomplished this through his past roles as the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service National Transportation liaison to FHWA, the U.S. Forest Service National Transportation Ecology Program Leader, and most recently in his Forest Service positions of National Threatened, Endangered & Sensitive Species Program Leader and Technology Transfer Specialist for the Office of Sustainability and Climate. Joe spent countless volunteer hours supporting Transportation Research Board Committees including: Ecology and Transportation, GIS & Applications, Environmental Analysis, Archaeology & Historic Preservation, Environmental Justice, Environmental Issues in Transportation Law, and the Special Task Force on Climate & Energy. Joe's energy, enthusiasm, and friendship will be missed by all. A [remembrance board](#) has been set up to express condolences and remember Joe through stories and pictures. A Celebration of Joe's Life will be held in Washington D.C. January 11, 2020 at 3pm at the Marriott Marquis Hotel Salon J. Donations in Joe's memory can be made to The Wildlife Society [Endowment Fund](#).*

Please note that there will not be a Human Environment Digest on December 26.

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

New Geographic Summary of Pedestrian Fatalities

The *National Highway Safety Traffic Administration* published a geographic [summary](#) of traffic fatalities across the country. The summary identifies patterns in urban areas and provides data on the counties and metropolitan areas with the highest fatality rates. The report continues with a discussion of the recent rise in pedestrian fatalities between 2009 and 2018 and lays the groundwork for future research on potential mitigation strategies to improve safety.



Infrastructure

Call for Proposals for the 2020 Walk/Bike/Places Conference

The *Project for Public Spaces* announced a [call for proposals](#) for the upcoming 2020 Walk/Bike/Places Conference, to be held in Indianapolis, Indiana from August 4-7, 2020. Proposals are being accepted from the public, private, non-profit, and academic sectors on a variety of topics including planning, advocacy, health, and transit. Proposals may be submitted [here](#) for the roles of breakout presenter, peer coach, or poster presenter until January 3, 2020.

New Guide on River Access Planning

The *National Park Service* and *River Management Society* recently published a [guide](#) to river access planning in collaboration with several Federal and non-profit partners. The guide serves as a resource for planners in the design of new river access sites and provides methods and strategies to integrate river access into larger infrastructure projects. Also included are several case studies indicating how projects may promote more equitable access to river-based recreation.



Innovation

Study Offers Insights into the Future of Personal Mobility

The *Massachusetts Institute of Technology* published a [study](#) exploring major factors affecting the future of personal mobility from 2020 to 2050. The study used a scenario-based approach to examine how different economic and environmental factors will shape the future of personal mobility at various scales, from global and national markets to policy and mobility choices at the city and individual levels. The study examines the potential disruptions and changes that lie ahead in order to anticipate how these changes may play a role in shaping the future of personal mobility.

Report Explores International Ride-hailing Regulations

The *Rudin Center for Transportation* at *New York University* published a [report](#) that examines the state of ride-hailing in 13 cities around the world. The report addresses a number of regulatory areas including data sharing agreements, revenue generation from ride-hailing trips, strategies to reduce congestion, and driver pay protections. The publication seeks to help cities learn from each other's regulatory approaches to craft more effective policies.

Researchers Develop New Metric to Measure Mobility Potential

The *U.S. Department of Energy* released a [report](#) outlining a new metric designed to measure mobility potential. The Mobility Energy Productivity (MEP) metric tracks changes in mobility in a specific place over time and factors in how technological advancements and infrastructure improvements may impact mobility. By analyzing changes in mobility over time, the MEP metric is able to holistically measure the existing and potential impact of all mobility options allowing policymakers and planners to quantify how certain decisions may impact a variety of factors such as congestion, air quality, and cost to the user and the public.



Accountability

Report Explores Importance of Gender Equity in Transportation

The *International Transport Forum* released a [report](#) outlining how transportation connectivity helps improve access to opportunities for women and girls. The report highlights examples from across the world showing how improving access to jobs, schools, and health services can serve as a powerful force for economic development, social inclusion, and women's empowerment.

PBIC Publishes Resources on School Travel Data

The *Pedestrian and Bicycle Information Center* published two new resources that examine school transportation mode share data and the factors associated with travel to school. The first [info brief](#) explores the data from the 2017 National Household Travel Survey to identify considerations for how children are traveling to school. The second [resource](#) summarizes reports from four different agencies, highlighting the diversity of ways that school travel data are being collected and used, and offering strategies for agencies of all sizes to consider.

NITC Releases New Travel Demand Model

The *National Institute for Transportation and Communities (NITC)*, led by researchers at the *University of Utah*, released a [report](#) on their new travel demand model. This model will help planners better predict accuracy of travel demand due to greater sensitivity to new variables that affect travel behavior. These variables include vehicle ownership, intrazonal travel, and multimodal mode choices. This model can be used to forecast future travel patterns and develop long-range regional plans.

Research Examines Quality of Bicycle and Pedestrian Count Data

A *Portland State University* [research project](#) funded by *NITC* aims to create a method for checking the data accuracy of bicycle and pedestrian counters. The project explores the efficacy of types of quality checks under various circumstances, including data collected with different types of counters. Researchers analyzed continuous bicycle and pedestrian count data stored in the [Bike-Ped Portal](#), a *NITC* funded data archive of bicycle and pedestrian count data, which currently contains over four million count records from five States. The goal of this research is to help agencies clean data that were collected using a variety of methods, enabling agencies to better analyze data for planning projects.