

Human Environment Digest

November 14, 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.

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 Transportation Safety Board Issues Report on Bicyclist Safety

The *National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB)* issued its first [report](#) on bicyclist safety in 47 years. The report updates the NTSB's understanding of bicyclist safety in the U.S. by examining the prevalence and risk factors of bicycle crashes involving motor vehicles and assessing the most applicable countermeasures. The report also includes recommendations for improved roadway design, such as separated bicycle lanes and lower speeds on roads where motor vehicles and bicyclists share the roadway, and methods of enhancing the visibility of bicyclists through technology like adaptive headlights.

Request for Applications for the 2020 Safe Routes to Parks Activating Communities Program

The *Safe Routes Partnership* invites communities and organizations working to improve safe and equitable access to parks to apply for the [2020 Safe Routes to Parks Activating Communities program](#). The program provides tailored technical assistance for seven communities to develop Safe Routes to Parks action plans and awards \$12,500 to each community to begin implementation of those plans. Applications may be submitted [here](#) until December 16.

TRB Publishes Report on Strategies to Improve Pedestrian Safety

The *Transportation Research Board's National Cooperative Highway Research Program* released a [synthesis](#) of strategies and countermeasures to address pedestrian safety via traffic-speed management in urban environments. The report offers best practices, tools, and strategies that cities and local agencies can implement to redesign streets for speeds aligned with pedestrian safety goals.

Report Examines Children Passenger Safety in Rideshare Vehicles

The *Virginia Tech Transportation Institute* released a [report](#) that explores the current state of children passenger safety within rideshare vehicles. Through a series of focus groups and a nationwide survey, researchers identified substantial confusion on the part of parents and rideshare drivers on how to safely transport children in rideshare vehicles. The report offers a set of outreach tools and encourages efforts to offer greater clarity on existing regulations.



Infrastructure

FHWA Publishes Case Study on Wayfinding Signage Enhancements

The *Federal Highway Administration* published a [case study](#) highlighting wayfinding signage enhancements to the regional trail network in Black Hawk County, Iowa. The case study showcases the work by the *Iowa Northland Regional Council of Governments* to coordinate with local stakeholders and use Federal funding to develop a unified system of wayfinding signs for the trails in the area. The initiative enhanced the quality of life for residents and visitors by promoting active transportation and supporting local economic development.

Study Analyzes Bus-Bicycle-Automobile Interactions and Conflicts

The *National Institute for Transportation and Communities* and the *Transportation Research and Education Center* at *Portland State University* released a [report](#) examining bus, bicycle, and automobile interactions and conflicts. Researchers observed these interactions at an intersection in Portland, Oregon, to analyze the number of bus-bicycle conflicts (as a proxy for safety) and to identify bus delays as a result of these interactions. The findings from the report suggest a potential need to relocate transit stops away from signalized intersections to enhance safety and reduce delays, and to improve pavement markings to reduce the risk of dangerous conflicts between bicyclists and buses.



Innovation

Case Study Released on Mobility-on-Demand Services

The *Eno Center for Transportation* published a [case study](#) examining mobility-on-demand (MOD) services in the Los Angeles and Puget Sound regions. MOD services include ridehailing and on-demand micromobility services such as shared electric scooters and bicycles and are typically run by private companies. The case studies offer best practices and lessons learned from existing contracts and partnerships to facilitate knowledge sharing and encourage cooperation between private companies and public entities.

TRB Publishes Report on the Impact of Emerging Technologies on Research Programs

The *Transportation Research Board* published a [report](#) on the impact of transformational technologies on research processes and programs. The report also explores the potential societal impacts from the rise of autonomous vehicles, shared mobility, and additional emerging technologies.

Report Examines Potential Impact of Connected Vehicle Technologies on Bicyclists

The *Transportation Research and Education Center* at *Portland State University* published a [study](#) looking at strategies to increase bicycle mode share by expanding the use of connected vehicle (CV) technologies to bicycles. The report offers a discussion on how CV technologies may reduce barriers to bicycling by improving safety through bicycle-to-vehicle and bicycle-to-infrastructure communication. The report indicates that the widespread adoption of these technologies would better accommodate the needs of a more diverse set of riders helping to promote bicycling and enhance safety.



Accountability

Study Explores Navigation Options for Individuals with Visual Impairments

The *Massachusetts Department of Transportation* published a [report](#) on navigation options for pedestrians with visual impairments as they move through transit stations. The report looks at a research program funded with *Federal Highway Administration* State Planning and Research funds to help the *Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority* determine whether a specific navigation system for the visually impaired is suitable for system wide deployment.

TRB Publishes Report on Pedestrian Navigation App

The *Transportation Research Board* published a [report](#) on pathNav, a pedestrian navigation web app that utilizes smart data and a connected network of sidewalk and pathway data to improve accessibility and walkability. The report provides information on pathNav's ability to increase pedestrian safety and reduce trip and fall injuries; decrease social isolation of people with disabilities and older adults; and increase public transit ridership. The report also examines the performance and acceptability of the app to determine commercial viability.