

Human Environment Digest

October 17, 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

FHWA Releases Bicycle and Pedestrian University Course

The *Federal Highway Administration* recently published a Pedestrian and Bicycle Transportation [University Course](#). The course is designed to support educators in civil engineering, urban planning, and related fields to help students become familiar with basic policies, practices, tools, and design principles to create bicycle and pedestrian-friendly communities. The course materials incorporate the latest resources, best practices, and examples in the field to support a safe, vibrant, and multimodal system.

Call for Applications for the 2020 Vision Zero for Youth Leadership Award

The *Vision Zero for Youth* is now accepting [applications](#) for its 2020 Vision Zero for Youth Leadership award. This award is given annually and recognizes communities in the United States that are leading initiatives prioritizing children's pedestrian and bicycle safety. Applications may be submitted [here](#) until December 8.

TRB Publishes Analysis on the Decline of Traffic Fatalities from 2008 to 2012

The *Transportation Research Board's National Cooperative Highway Research Program* released a [publication](#) that identifies the factors contributing to a decline in traffic fatalities in the United States from 2008 to 2012. Traffic-related deaths declined by 25.4 percent during this period, which was the greatest decline over a comparable period in the last 30 years.



Infrastructure

FHWA Releases Report on 2018 Urban Congestion Trends

The *Federal Highway Administration* published a [report](#) on urban congestion trends during 2018 in the 52 largest metropolitan areas in the United States. The report indicates that congestion measures at a national level were relatively unchanged from 2017 to 2018. The report offers an analysis of congestion in each metropolitan area and describes successful operational strategies and performance management approaches implemented by State and local transportation agencies to mitigate congestion.

New U.S. DOT Initiative Addresses Disparities in Rural Transportation Infrastructure

The *U.S. Department of Transportation* announced the Rural Opportunities to Use Transportation for Economic Success (ROUTES) [initiative](#) to address disparities in rural transportation infrastructure. The initiative is designed to promote safety in rural areas and invest in rural transportation networks to improve the economic competitiveness of these areas.

New Resources on Navigating Main Streets as Places

Project for Public Spaces and *Main Street America* released a [People-First Transportation Toolkit](#) designed to promote safety, walkability, and economic vitality within main street districts. The resource provides guidance to local officials,

transportation professionals, and community advocates on how to evaluate streets and transportation through the lens of placemaking in order to balance the needs of mobility and other activities. A four-part [webinar series](#) will offer an overview of the key research and strategies for developing people-first commercial corridors.

MTI Paper Evaluates Impact of Traffic Stress on Bicycling

The *Mineta Transportation Institute* at *San Jose State University* published a [report](#) examining the level of traffic stress framework (LTS) used to evaluate the quality of roadways for bicycling. The LTS aggregates variables to enable the comparison of bicycling comfort and safety across a diverse set of road segments. The report uses data from a sample of street segments in Portland, OR and Austin, TX to calculate LTS classifications and examine the relationship between LTS and cyclist satisfaction.

Recent Publication on Sustainable Multimodal Travel

The *World Road Association* published a [report](#) on best practices and strategies for organizing existing urban transportation systems to promote sustainable multimodal travel. The publication examines the daily needs of inhabitants of urban regions and offers a number of mobility solutions to improve quality of life, promote sustainable travel, and reduce congestion. These solutions consider the impacts of the shared economy and address how emerging technologies will continue to reshape urban transportation networks.



Innovation

U.S. DOT Hosts Mobility for All Summit

The *U.S. Department of Transportation* will host the [Access and Mobility for All Summit](#) on Tuesday, October 29. The summit will raise awareness of U.S. DOT and government-wide efforts to improve access and mobility for people with disabilities, the elderly, and low-income individuals. The event will also include an opportunity to learn about and provide input on Federal and non-Federal actions to support expanded access to mobility through new and emerging technologies and service models. Individuals are asked to [register](#) for the in-person event by Tuesday, October 22 and for the webcast by Monday, October 28.

October 2019 FHWA Multimodal Connectivity Newsletter Available

The October 2019 edition of the *Federal Highway Administration* [Multimodal Connectivity Newsletter](#) is now available. The newsletter provides transportation professionals with real-world examples of ways in which multimodal transportation investments promote livability and achieve safer communities through the support of accelerated project delivery, technology, and design innovation. This edition includes articles on geofencing efforts, an e-scooter expansion, a microtransit pilot, and shared mobility planning.

Report on Best Practices for Measuring Active Transportation

The *Louisiana Department of Transportation* published a [report](#) on best practices and available methods to measure active transportation to support the development of an efficient and cost-effective bicycle and pedestrian count program. The findings indicate that the development of systematic active transportation monitoring is feasible and scalable using a combination of traditional and emerging technologies.

Report Examines Electric Buses in the United States

The *United States Public Interest Research Group* published a [report](#) examining the outcomes of six electric bus pilots in the U.S. The report found that the pilots produced a number of environmental benefits from reductions in air pollution, as well as financial benefits from reduced maintenance and fuel costs. The report also discusses various technological and economic hurdles that early adopters have faced and had to overcome.



Accountability

UC Berkeley Releases Case Study on Women's Perceptions of Cycling

The *University of California at Berkeley* published a [case study](#) that examines the gender gap of cycling within the U.S. The case study found that safety, women's perception of safety, family obligations, and a lack of women cycling to be the driving factors behind the cycling gender gap. Researchers recommend greater investment in protected bicycle infrastructure and placing greater sensitivity towards women when planning and designing bicycle lanes in order to help ease perceptions of safety and encourage more women to cycle.