

## Human Environment Digest

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**November 15, 2018**

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.

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

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### Safety

#### **FHWA Publishes Safety Evaluation of Protected Left-Turn Phasing and Leading Pedestrian Intervals on Pedestrian Safety**

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) released [a report](#) evaluating the safety effects of two countermeasures with respect to vehicle-pedestrian crashes: protected left-turn phasing and leading pedestrian intervals. The report concluded that left-turn phasing reduced vehicle-vehicle injury crashes but did not have statistically significant impacts for vehicle-pedestrian crashes, though the strategy may be more beneficial when there are higher pedestrian and vehicle volumes. The study found that leading pedestrian intervals reduced vehicle-pedestrian crashes.

#### **Cities are Making Left Turns Safer with 'Wedges'**

*Streetsblog* recently released [an article](#) detailing how more cities are installing "slow turn wedges" and other left-turn traffic calming treatments to enhance pedestrian safety. These treatments usually take the form of posts placed out in the intersection, forcing drivers to slow down and follow the proper path while making left turns.

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### Infrastructure

#### **FHWA Releases New Resource on Strategies for Accelerating Multimodal Project Delivery**

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) published a guidebook on "[Strategies for Accelerating Multimodal Project Delivery](#)." This resource focuses on specific strategies and techniques for accelerating multimodal project delivery, with a priority on opportunities to efficiently and effectively build out connected multimodal networks in concert with major highway, intersection, and bridge projects. It includes examples of standalone pedestrian and bicycle projects, retrofits in built environments, and ongoing maintenance activities. It highlights proven techniques that agencies are using to get high quality results, and opportunities to address barriers or delays in the project delivery process. The recording of the recent webinar on Accelerating Multimodal Project Delivery is available [here](#).

#### **AASHTO Publishes Case Studies Featuring Connecticut and Pennsylvania**

Complementing the Accelerating Multimodal Project Delivery resource, the *Center for Environmental Excellence* by the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) recently released two new case studies: "[Connecticut DOT Helps Towns Accommodate Walking and Bicycling through Road Safety Audits](#)" and "[PennDOT Seeks Local Input to Build Better Connections for Communities](#)."

#### **Webinars on the NPS Active Transportation Guidebook are Now Available**

Recordings from the *National Park Service (NPS)* Active Transportation Guidebook webinar series are now available. The webinars provided an overview of the topics included in the Guidebook and included a number of guest speakers who described active transportation projects and programs at national parks around the country. The slides and recordings from the webinars can be accessed on the [NPS Bicycles and Pedestrians webpage](#).

#### **City of Columbus Releases Smart City Playbook**

Columbus, Ohio has been testing transportation technologies to advance smart city systems and improve mobility for all users. The city recently released the [Smart Columbus Playbook](#), which was designed to support other cities in jump-starting the process of becoming smart cities. The resource offers articles, webinars, case studies, and data for city leaders to leverage when beginning smart city programs and initiatives. The playbook recognizes the unique contexts of different cities, but is designed to serve as a broad model for cities to work with partners and engage residents to improve quality of life through smart mobility.

### **New Report Identifies the Economic Benefits of Strong Public Transit**

A recent report released by the *Metropolitan Planning Council*, titled [Transit Means Business](#), found that a strong presence of transit options plays a major role in attracting and retaining jobs in urban areas. The report examined the economic effects from transit presence in a number of cities across the United States and revealed that transit is a major factor in boosting economic development. Specifically, the report states that businesses located near transit benefit from greater resiliency and stronger labor pools.

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## **Innovation**

### **FHWA Publishes Community Connections Innovations Handbook**

The *Federal Highway Administration's (FHWA's)* Community Connections initiative is about using transportation innovations, partnerships, and technologies to bring communities together and connect people to services and opportunities. FHWA produced the [Community Connections Innovations Handbook](#) to help practitioners understand and apply Community Connections Innovations in their work and to inspire greater collaboration for project success. The Handbook provides a wealth of information including more detailed information and examples on the benefits of Community Connections projects; a Toolbox of techniques, strategies, and approaches; and the first steps of applying Community Connections. The tools and resources cover a wide range of contexts, scales, project sizes and types, modes, and applications - illustrating the different ways these tools can be leveraged for outcomes that engage communities more effectively, improve multimodal access, and streamline project delivery.

### **Portland Study Reveals the Potential Benefits of Dockless Electric Scooters**

A recent study completed by the *Portland Bureau of Transportation* [examined the usage of dockless e-scooters](#) in the city of Portland, Oregon. Most notably, the report found that a sizable portion of survey respondents are using e-scooters to replace automobile trips and either reducing or considering reducing their automobile ownership. The study suggests that if cities across the country are able to successfully integrate e-scooters into their transportation networks, they may be able to use the new technology to reduce congestion and promote livability.

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## **Accountability**

### **FHWA Releases FY 2019-2022 Strategic Plan**

The *Federal Highway Administration's (FHWA's)* [Strategic Plan](#) for fiscal years 2019 to 2022 adopts the U.S. Department of Transportation's goals and aligns its strategic objectives and related program initiatives and performance measures with the Department's Plan. The FHWA Strategic Plan reflects the priorities of Agency leadership including *Safety, Infrastructure, Innovation, and Accountability*.

### **TRB Publishes Report on Changes in Market for Public Transportation**

The *Transportation Research Board's (TRB's)* [Transit Cooperative Research Program \(TCRP\)](#) released a [recent report that seeks to better understand how changes in demographics, travel preferences, and markets for public transportation](#) affect transit ridership in the present and future. The document specifically examines how different demographic factors and current attitudes towards transit affect an individual's likelihood to ride public transportation. The report is accompanied by seven technical appendices that highlight the researchers' modeling practices and provide further analysis.

### **Report Examines Effects of TNCs in Urban Areas**

The *San Francisco County Transportation Authority (SFCTA)* published a report [examining the effect of transportation network companies \(TNCs\) on congestion in and around San Francisco](#). The report found that after accounting for increased employment and population, evidence suggested that TNCs may be responsible for increased travel times, increases in miles traveled, and speed declines across the city. Researchers anticipate congestion to worsen in future years and are asking planners to promote public transit along with improvements to bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure to help reduce the number of cars on the road.