

Human Environment Digest

October 18, 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.



Safety

NHTSA Report Reveals a Drop in the Traffic Fatality Rate

A recent Research Note released by the *National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA)* [revealed a decrease in traffic fatalities in 2017](#) after two consecutive years of steady increases. The report notes that the recent decline in fatalities occurred even as road travel and vehicle miles traveled by Americans across the country continues to increase. According to NHTSA's data, the downward trend has continued through the first half of 2018, indicating a general increase in safety along roadways across the country.

TRB Releases Report on New Systemic Safety Analysis Method

The *Transportation Research Board's (TRB's) National Cooperative Highway Research Program (NCHRP)* [released a recent report that provides a systemic safety analysis method](#) to proactively identify sites for safety improvements for pedestrians. The systemic approach enables transportation agencies to accurately identify, prioritize, and select effective countermeasures for areas with a high risk of pedestrian-related crashes. The report can serve as a resource for agencies looking to improve data management and to support future systemic safety analyses.

TRB Publishes Report on Improving Traffic Safety Culture

The *Transportation Research Board's (TRB's) National Cooperative Highway Research Program (NCHRP)* published a resource [providing transportation agencies with a strategic approach to transforming traffic safety culture](#) in order to reduce deaths and injuries. The strategic approach is designed to sustain improvements in traffic safety for all road users, including non-motorized users.

Three Cities Renew Walk Friendly Designation

The *Walk Friendly Communities (WFC)* program [recently renewed designations for three communities](#) for their commitment to prioritize pedestrians and create safe, comfortable, and inviting places to walk. Asheville, North Carolina; Tallahassee, Florida; and Atlanta, Georgia were originally designated as Walk Friendly Communities in 2013, based on their efforts to expand opportunities for walking and improve pedestrian safety. Over the past five years, each community has continued to make strides to improve conditions for pedestrians and create inviting places to walk.



Infrastructure

FHWA Announces Funding Opportunity for Tribal and Federal Lands

The *Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)* [announced a funding opportunity](#) through its *Nationally Significant Federal Lands and Tribal Projects (NSFLTP)* program. The program is accepting applications for \$300 million in grant funding to build and repair a public highway, road, bridge, trail, or transit system that serves tribal or Federal lands. Applications will be accepted on a rolling basis, with the first deadline being December 17, 2018. Interested agencies may contact [Jeffrey Mann](#), FHWA Office of Program Development, for additional information.



Innovation

USDOT Releases Latest Guidance for Autonomous Vehicles

The *United States Department of Transportation (USDOT)* released the third version of its Federal guidance for autonomous vehicles. The latest resource, "[Preparing for the Future of Transportation: Automated Vehicles 3.0](#)," builds upon previous guidance released by the USDOT and incorporates results from extensive stakeholder engagement. The new report reinforces USDOT's commitment to supporting safe integration of automation into the entire transportation system.

FHWA Announces New Edition of National Traffic Control Manual

The *Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)* [announced an update to the "Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices for Streets and Highways"](#) in preparation for the future of autonomous vehicles. The new edition of the document will propose to streamline processes and reduce burdens on State and local agencies in order to promote greater safety and efficiency on roadways. In addition, the latest edition will provide agencies with greater flexibility and promote innovation to improve travel for drivers, pedestrians, and cyclists.

NCSL Releases Legislative Primer on Electric Bicycles

The *National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL)* recently [released a legislative primer outlining State electric bicycle laws](#). E-bikes have grown in popularity in recent years due to their low-speed electric motor, which provides a boost of power to climb hills, thus extending the range of trips where a bicycle can be used. The document reviews current legislation on e-bikes in States throughout the country and provides extensive information on the electric bicycle classification system along with registration and licensure requirements.

Article Examines How Cities are Using Bike Share Data to Improve Streets

A recent article published by the *MIT Technology Review* examines [how city planners and officials are using ridership data](#) from bike share companies to understand how to best allocate bicycle parking and where to invest in new bicycle infrastructure. This new collaboration between city officials and private companies indicates how cities are leveraging new innovations to help improve their streets and efficiently investing in multimodal transportation infrastructure.



Accountability

FTA Recognizes Rural Transportation Agencies for Outstanding Service

The *Federal Transit Administration's (FTA's)* Acting Administrator K. Jane Williams recently [recognized six rural transit systems that exemplify strong community service](#). The awarded transit agencies have demonstrated a commitment to outstanding service and improving their communities' infrastructure. This year's awards were given to transit agencies that have played an important role in helping rural Americans access schools, health care, jobs, and other opportunities.

NHTSA Publishes Manual on Pedestrian and Bicycle Crash Coding in FARS/CRSS

The *National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA)* released an updated [Pedestrian Bicyclist Crash Typing Manual for coders](#) using the Fatality Analysis Reporting System (FARS) and the Crash Report Sampling System (CRSS). The manual and corresponding software were developed to describe the sequence of events leading to crashes between vehicles and non-motorized road users in order to help prevent future crashes.

Registration Now Open for Webinars on the NPS Active Transportation Guidebook

The *National Park Service (NPS)* [Active Transportation Guidebook: A Resource on Supporting Walking and Bicycling for National Parks and their Partners](#) aims to assist and inspire parks and their partners to identify and pursue opportunities that enhance active transportation to and within national parks. The NPS is holding two webinars that will provide an overview of the topics included in the Guidebook, featuring guest speakers who will describe active transportation projects and programs at parks around the country. The target audience for these webinars is park staff and partner organizations interested in learning more about active transportation opportunities in and around national parks. The first webinar, [Building Safe Active Transportation Infrastructure](#), will take place on October 31st. The second webinar, [Programs, Partnerships, and Technologies for Active Transportation](#), will take place on November 5th.