

Human Environment Digest

December 29, 2016

Welcome to the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Office of Human Environment weekly 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.

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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Announcements

Final Rule on Metropolitan Planning Organization Coordination and Planning Area Reform

On December 20, 2016, the *Federal Highway Administration* (FHWA) and the *Federal Transit Administration* (FTA) jointly published a [final rule](#) which revises the transportation planning regulations to promote more effective regional planning by States and metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs). The goal of the revisions is to better align the planning regulations with statutory provisions concerning the establishment of metropolitan planning area boundaries and the designation of MPOs.

Bicycle/Pedestrian



Bicycle-Pedestrian Count Technology Pilot Project Report Released

The *Federal Highway Administration* (FHWA) recently released a new summary report on its "[Bicycle-Pedestrian Count Technology Pilot Project](#)." The purpose of the pilot project was to increase the organizational and technical capacity of metropolitan planning organizations to establish and operate effective bicycle and pedestrian count programs, and to provide lessons learned for peer agencies across the Country.

Environmental Justice



Environmental Justice Fact Sheets on Tolling, and Connected and Automated Vehicles

The *Federal Highway Administration* (FHWA) released two new environmental justice (EJ) fact sheets, titled "[Environmental Justice and Tolling: A Review of Tolling and Potential Impacts to Environmental Justice Populations](#)" and

["Environmental Justice Considerations for Connected and Automated Vehicles."](#) The first fact sheet describes different tolling scenarios and the potential impacts on EJ populations. The second fact sheet describes the benefits and challenges associated with the deployment of connected and automated vehicles, as well as considerations to address potential negative impacts on EJ populations. Both fact sheets provide Federal resources that practitioners can use.

Health



EPA Seeks Public Comments on Candidates for Science Advisory Committee on Chemicals

The *Environmental Protection Agency* (EPA) recently announced a search for candidates for its Science Advisory Committee on Chemicals, which will provide independent scientific advice and recommendations to the EPA on the scientific basis for risk assessments, methodologies, and pollution prevention measures and approaches for chemicals regulated under the Toxic Substances Control Act. Twenty-nine candidates have been identified for consideration. EPA is now soliciting public comments on those candidates. Public comments will be accepted through [public docket number EPA-HQ-OPPT-2016-0713](#) until January 8, 2017.

Livability



Every Place Counts Design Challenge Final Report Released

In December 2016, U.S. Transportation Secretary Anthony Foxx announced the release of the ["Every Place Counts Design Challenge Summary Report."](#) The report summarizes the experiences and lessons learned from the four selected cities – Spokane, WA; Nashville, TN; Philadelphia, PA; and Minneapolis/St. Paul, MN – that participated in the Every Place Counts Design Challenge.

Secretary Foxx Announces "Ladders of Opportunity" Progress Report

U.S. Transportation Secretary Anthony Foxx announced the release of the ["Ladders of Opportunity, Transportation Empowerment Pilot, LadderSTEP, 2015-2016 Report,"](#) which highlights the progress of seven cities that are attempting to achieve upward mobility through transportation decisions in their communities. The *U.S. Department of Transportation* (USDOT) launched the "LadderSTEP" program in 2015 to foster sustainable economic development related to planned transportation projects in seven cities: Atlanta, GA; Baltimore, MD; Baton Rouge, LA; Charlotte, NC; Indianapolis, IN; Phoenix, AZ; and Richmond, VA.

'MPO Guidebook for Using Safety as a Project Prioritization Factor'

The *Federal Highway Administration* (FHWA) recently published a new resource titled ["MPO Guidebook for Using Safety as a Project Prioritization Factor."](#) The purpose of the guidebook is to identify the state of the practice of metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs) using safety as a project prioritization criterion, and to identify potential methods for using safety as a factor in project prioritization. The project included a literature review, interviews with MPOs, and definitions of recommended approaches.

Smart Growth America Expands Complete Streets Consortium Series Eligibility

In Fall 2016, *Smart Growth America* launched the [Complete Streets Consortium Series](#), a technical assistance opportunity for three communities from the same State to work together to implement Complete Streets that are safe and accessible for people of all ages and abilities. In response to feedback, *Smart Growth America* has expanded the eligibility requirements for this assistance. The Consortium Series is now open to any three units or subdivisions of local government, Indian tribe, or regional government. The deadline to submit applications is February 2, 2017.