

Human Environment Digest

November 17, 2016

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.

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

White House Executive Order Establishes Community Solutions Council

On November 16, 2016, the White House [released an Executive Order](#) establishing a Community Solutions Council. The purpose of the Council is to address specific challenges in communities through greater coordination of Federal assistance and resources. The Council will be led by two co-chairs and its members will include cabinet members and other White House leaders.

FHWA Announces INVEST Funding Opportunity

On November 10, 2016, the *Federal Highway Administration* (FHWA) [announced an applied research funding opportunity](#) for transportation agencies to use its Infrastructure Voluntary Evaluation Sustainability Tool (INVEST) to evaluate the sustainability of projects and programs, identify areas for improvement, analyze options for improving sustainability, and document results. The funding opportunity is available to State departments of transportation (DOTs), metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs), and Federal land management agencies (FLMAs). Applications are due by January 5, 2017.

Bicycle/Pedestrian



NHTSA Issues New Vehicle Sound Requirement to Protect Pedestrians

The *U.S. Department of Transportation's* (USDOT) *National Highway Traffic Safety Administration* (NHTSA) announced the addition of a sound requirement for all newly manufactured hybrid and electric light-duty vehicles in order to help protect pedestrians. The new [Federal safety standard](#) will help pedestrians who are visually impaired as well as other pedestrians detect the presence, direction, and location of these vehicles when they are traveling at low speeds, which will help prevent approximately 2,400 pedestrian injuries each year once all hybrids in the fleet are properly equipped.

PBIC Announces Six Renewing Walk Friendly Communities

The *Pedestrian and Bicycle Information Center* (PBIC) announced that [six communities renewed their Walk Friendly Communities status](#): Corvallis, OR; Chicago, IL; Minneapolis, MN; Austin, TX; Alexandria, VA; and Philadelphia, PA. Austin, TX, moved to a higher level of designation. These communities are being recognized for their success in

improving a wide range of conditions related to walking; such as, safety, mobility, access, and comfort. [Nominate your community](#) for Walk Friendly designation by December 15, 2016.

PBIC Publishes White Paper on Improving Bike/Ped Connectivity During Bridge Rehab

A new *Pedestrian and Bicyclist Information Center* (PBIC) white paper titled, "[Improving Pedestrian and Bicycle Connectivity During Rehabilitation of Existing Bridges](#)," focuses on opportunities to reconnect bicycle and pedestrian networks through bridge rehabilitation projects. The paper presents examples and case studies of completed projects.

League of American Bicyclists Announces New and Renewed Bicycle Friendly Communities

The *League of American Bicyclists* [announced 26 new and 77 renewing Bicycle Friendly Communities](#) (BFC), bringing the total to 404 communities in all 50 States. The BFC program provides a roadmap for building a Bicycle Friendly Community. Since the program's inception, more than 800 distinct communities have applied; and the five levels of the award - Diamond, Platinum, Gold, Silver, and Bronze - provide a clear incentive for communities to continuously improve.

Environmental Justice



AASHTO Publishes 'Practitioners Peer Exchange Environmental Justice Roadmap'

The *American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials'* (AASHTO) Center for Environmental Excellence recently published the "[Practitioners Peer Exchange Environmental Justice Roadmap](#)." AASHTO, in coordination with the *Federal Highway Administration* (FHWA), hosted a national peer exchange on environmental justice in February 2016. Peer exchange participants identified eight focus areas through group discussion, and those focus areas provided the foundation of the Environmental Justice Roadmap.

EPA Announces Environmental Justice Small Grants Request for Proposals

The *Environmental Protection Agency* (EPA) has recently opened a solicitation for [fiscal year 2017 Environmental Justice Small Grants](#). Under this request for proposals, EPA will award grants that support activities designed to empower and educate affected communities to understand environmental and public health issues, and to identify ways to address these issues at the local level. Approximately 40 one-year projects will be awarded at \$30,000 each.

Health



HUD Develops Guide for Post-Disaster Home Restoration

The *U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development* (HUD) developed the "[Rebuild Healthy Homes: Guide to Post-disaster Restoration for a Safe and Healthy Home](#)" with the sole purpose of providing essential information to homeowners as well as volunteers and workers who restore homes damaged by disasters. Based on the principle link between health and housing, proper post-disaster restoration is particularly important for families who have already experienced a potentially traumatic event. Poorly restored homes, due to lack of knowledge or pressure for a speedy rebuild, can create health hazards, and even make existing hazards worse.

Health Impacts of Using Transit

A recent paper in the *Journal of Transport and Health* addresses the question of whether increased physical activity associated with transit actually leads to improved health, titled "[Transit Makes You Short: On Health Impact Assessment of Transportation and the Built Environment](#)." The authors examined the effect of transit mode share and accessibility on general health, body mass index, and height while controlling for socio-economic, demographic, and physical activity factors. They found transit mode share and transit accessibility did not have any significant effect on public health.

Livability



Applications Open for 2017 Five Star and Urban Water Restoration Program

The *National Fish and Wildlife Foundation* (NFWF) and the *Wildlife Habitat Council*—in cooperation with the *U.S. Environmental Protection Agency* (EPA), *U.S. Department of Agriculture* (USDA) Forest Service, *U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service*, *FedEx*, *Southern Company*, and *Alcoa Foundation*—are soliciting applications for the [2017 Five Star and Urban Waters Restoration Program](#). The Five Star and Urban Waters program will award approximately \$2.5 million in grants nationwide for projects that seek to address water quality issues in priority watersheds, such as erosion due to unstable streambanks, pollution from stormwater runoff, and degraded shorelines caused by development.

TRB and ITE Webinar Series: Using the New Highway Capacity Manual

The *Transportation Research Board* (TRB) and the *Institute of Transportation Engineers* (ITE) are [cosponsoring a series of webinars](#) between November 2016 and March 2017 about implementing the new [2016 Highway Capacity Manual 6th Edition \(HCM6\): A Guide for Multimodal Mobility Analysis](#). This series of webinars will present the new analysis procedures incorporated into HCM6 and why these tools are vital to helping analyze today's transportation problems.

University of Minnesota Report Estimates Access to Jobs by Transit

A [new report](#), "Access Across America: Transit 2014," from the *University of Minnesota* estimates the accessibility to jobs by transit in 49 of the 50 largest (by population) metropolitan areas in the United States. The analysis calculated travel times by transit using detailed pedestrian networks and full transit schedules for the 7:00-9:00 a.m. period. The calculations include all components of a transit journey, including "last mile" access and egress walking segments and transfers. Researchers estimated the 10 metropolitan areas with the greatest accessibility to jobs by transit.