

Human Environment Digest

February 25, 2016

Welcome to the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Office of Human Environment bi-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

USDOT Announces Round Eight of TIGER Funding

U.S. Transportation Secretary Anthony Foxx [announced \\$500 million will be made available for transportation projects](#) across the country under an eighth round of the highly successful "[Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery](#)" (TIGER) competitive grant program.

TIGER Grant, LadderSTEP Support Progress in Baton Rouge

Melvin "Kip" Holden, the Mayor-President of East Baton Rouge Parish and the City of Baton Rouge, Louisiana, recently wrote a "[Fast Lane](#)" [blog post](#) about the U.S. Department of Transportation's investments in his city. In addition to a "[Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery](#)" (TIGER) grant to begin planning a modern streetcar system in Baton Rouge, Secretary Foxx also selected the city as one of seven cities to participate in the "Ladders of Opportunity Transportation Empowerment Pilot," or "[LadderSTEP](#)."

Bicycle/Pedestrian



Atlanta DOT LadderSTEP Initiative Will Improve Pedestrian Infrastructure

Atlanta Mayor Kasim Reed discussed the projects that the U.S. Department of Transportation "LadderSTEP" program will bring to his city in a recent "[Fast Lane](#)" [blog post](#). The City of Atlanta will soon begin construction on a new pedestrian bridge connecting to the Vine City MARTA station and crossing over Northside Drive.

Economic Development



EPA Publishes Framework for Creating a Smart Growth Economic Development Strategy

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) released "[Framework for Creating a Smart Growth Economic Development Strategy: A Tool for Small Cities and Towns](#)," a report that provides a step-by-step guide for small- and mid-size cities to develop an economic growth strategy. Strategies include addressing the available transportation options and improving biking and walking facilities, with the ultimate goals of supporting businesses, supporting workers, and improving quality of life.

Environmental Justice



USDOT Will Host Civil Rights Virtual Symposium

The U.S. Department of Transportation's (USDOT) Office of Civil Rights will host "[Speaking with One Voice: Accelerating Access to Opportunity](#)," a 3-day virtual event that will connect stakeholders and perspectives across the civil rights transportation community. Presentations will take place in virtual web conference meeting rooms during the 3-day event on March 8-10, 2016. Registration is now open.

2016 National Conference on Environmental Justice Will Take Place March 9-12

The "[2016 National Conference on Environmental Justice](#)" will take place on March 9-12, 2016. Leaders from various sectors will discuss new ideas and new approaches to building healthy communities. The program will feature the needs and challenges of communities, governments, municipalities, tribes, faith-based organizations, and others with an interest in health disparities and environmental justice. Information about the [agenda](#) and [training sessions](#) is now available.

Health



Journal of Environmental Health Publishes Parks and Environmental Health Article

The Journal of Environmental Health recently reprinted an article from the Centers for Disease Control called "[Parks: An Opportunity to Leverage Environmental Health](#)," which provides questions for parks departments to discuss with the communities they serve. These questions cover topics such as park access for at-risk children, the availability of walking and biking routes between parks and schools, and park signage.

Parks & Recreation Article Encourages Parks and Health Departments to Collaborate

The magazine Parks & Recreation recently published "[Breaking Down Barriers - Parks and Recreation Connecting with Public Health](#)," an article that discusses the benefits of increasing collaboration between local parks departments and health departments. The ultimate goal of these collaborations is to make "the healthy choice the easy choice" for residents.

Livability



T4America Releases 2016 State Transportation Policy Innovations Report

Transportation for America (T4America) released "[Twelve Innovations in State Transportation Policy States Should Consider in 2016](#)," a report that outlines 12 transportation policy solutions either passed legislatively or instituted through administrative action in States. According to T4America, these policy examples expand transparency and accountability, boost State and local economies, invest in innovation within States, save money, and improve safety for the traveling public

FHWA Report on the Benefits of Planning and Environment Linkages Includes Public Involvement Successes

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) released "[PEL Benefits: Measuring the Benefits of Planning and Environment Linkages](#)," a report that explores and documents the benefits stemming from the incorporation of [Planning and Environment Linkages](#) (PEL) strategies into State, regional, and local planning and project development processes. This report includes five case studies from across the country that detail different implementations of PEL strategies. Common benefits documented in the report include improved public involvement and a flexible evaluation of alternatives, among others.

T4America Publishes Creative Placemaking and Transportation Guide

Transportation For America (T4America) published "[The Scenic Route: Getting Started with Creative Placemaking and Transportation](#)," a guide to introduce creative placemaking to transportation planners, public works agencies, and local elected officials who are on the front lines of advancing transportation projects. The guide describes what creative placemaking is, why it is a useful planning strategy, ways to avoid displacing existing residents, and tools for successful implementation.

Partnership for Sustainable Communities



EPA Announces Federal Planning Assistance for Broadband and Sustainable Community Development

Communities interested in using broadband service to help revitalize small-town main streets and promote economic development are encouraged to apply for [Cool & Connected](#), a pilot program sponsored by the [U.S. Department of Agriculture Rural Utilities Service](#) and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Office of Sustainable Communities.

PSC Partner Agencies Announce Local Foods, Local Places Initiative Communities for 2016

In January, the White House Rural Council along with six Federal agencies, including the U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT), announced the [selection of 27 communities](#) that will participate in the "[Local Foods, Local Places](#)" initiative. Local Foods, Local Places is a Partnership for Sustainable Communities (PSC) program that helps communities increase economic opportunities for local farmers, promotes green spaces, and improves access to healthy local food.