

Human Environment Digest

December 3, 2015

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

FTA Seeks Research Proposals about "Multimodal Public Transportation System Connectivity Performance Measures"

As part of the Ladders of Opportunity initiative, the *Federal Transit Administration* (FTA) is [seeking proposals](#) for the "Multimodal Public Transportation System Connectivity Performance Measures" research project. The goal of the research project is to develop performance measures that are useful for communities of varying size to evaluate the level of connectivity of their multimodal public transportation systems. Proposals are due on December 18, 2015.

Citizens' Institute on Rural Design Program is Now Accepting Applications

The [Citizens' Institute on Rural Design](#) (CIRD) program is a leadership initiative of the National Endowment for the Arts, in partnership with the U.S. Department of Agriculture and Project for Public Spaces. Rural communities are invited to apply to the CIRD program, which offers a \$10,000 cash stipend, 2 1/2-day workshop, and access to a wide range of rural design resources. Applications are due January 12, 2016.

Smart Growth America Announces Recipients of its 2016 Free Technical Assistance

Seven communities were announced as the recipients of *Smart Growth America's* 2016 free [technical assistance workshops](#). The communities are: Huntsville, AL; Anchorage, AK; North Little Rock, AR; Longwood, FL; Royal Oak, MI; Kansas City, MO; and Seattle, WA. The workshops will assist those communities in understanding the technical aspects of their smart growth development project and build strategies to achieve their goals.

Bicycle/Pedestrian



New Report Studies a High Shift Cycling Scenario

The *Institute of Transportation Studies* (ITS) at the *University of California Davis* [released a report](#) called, "A Global High Shift Cycling Scenario: The Potential for Dramatically Increasing Bicycle and E-bike Use in Cities Around the World, with Estimated Energy, CO₂, and Cost Impacts." This report examines the potential economic and environmental contributions of dramatically increased urban cycling. The findings show that a large cycling increase could save society a cumulative \$24 trillion between 2015 and 2050, and cut CO₂ emissions by nearly 11 percent in 2050.

The Fort Collins Commuter Study: Impact of Route Type and Transport Mode on Personal Exposure to Multiple Air Pollutants

Colorado State University (CSU) researchers published the first set of results from their "[Fort Collins Commuter Study](#)." The research team monitored the commutes of 45 participants to understand a commuter's exposure to air pollutants dependent on mode and route. The researchers found that exposure varies by pollutant; for example bicyclists are more exposed to particulate matter while drivers are more exposed to carbon monoxide.

Economic Development



HUD Announces New Round of Choice Neighborhoods Planning Grants

The *U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development* (HUD) is now [receiving applications](#) for its Choice Neighborhoods Planning Grant program. This grant seeks to help local communities redevelop severely distressed public housing and transform surrounding neighborhoods. Applications are due February 9, 2016.

Livability



Connectivity Evaluation Resources Tool

The *Federal Highway Administration* (FHWA) released a new tool that allows practitioners and decisionmakers to find resources [related to connectivity](#). The resources highlight the concept of connectivity and provide examples of how researchers and agencies are using connectivity to communicate concerns or develop solutions within their communities.

FHWA's Successes in Stewardship November Newsletter Now Available

The *Federal Highway Administration's* (FHWA) November edition of "Successes in Stewardship" newsletter is now available online. This edition highlights the [2015 Red Book update](#). The "Applying the Section 404 Permit Process to Federal-Aid Highway Projects," also known as the "Red Book," provides tools and techniques to improve highway project requirements including NEPA compliance and Section 404 (Clean Water Act) reviews.

AARP's November Livable Communities Newsletter

The November edition of the AARP "[Livable Communities Newsletter](#)" highlights Auburn Hills, Michigan's initiative to make it a more friendly community for people of all ages. The plan recommends improvements to citywide walkability and bus ridership through improved traveler information and bus shelters.

Increasing Highway Capacity Unlikely to Relieve Traffic Congestion

A policy brief, prepared by the *National Center for Sustainable Transportation*, found that [additional roadway capacity](#) does not alleviate traffic congestion. Research demonstrates that increases in roadway capacity eventually increase vehicle miles traveled (VMT). Moreover, this increase in VMT counteracts the reductions in greenhouse gas emissions that would result from reduced congestion.