

Human Environment Digest

July 30, 2015

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

DOT and the White House to Host "Beyond Traffic: Innovators in Transportation for the Future" Event

The U.S. Department of Transportation and the White House Office of Public Engagement will host a "Champions of Change" event focused on "[Beyond Traffic: Innovators in Transportation for the Future](#)" in October 2015. DOT and the White House are looking for nominations for innovators who have provided exemplary leadership in advancing change that will benefit the Nation's transportation system for decades to come at the local, regional, and/or national level. [Nominations](#) are due by midnight, Saturday, August 1, 2015.

Bicycle/Pedestrian



FHWA Pedestrian & Bicycle Safety Program Publishes "Pedestrian Forum - Summer 2015" Issue

The Federal Highway Administration Pedestrian & Bicycle Safety Program published the latest issue of "Pedestrian Forum." The [summer 2015 issue](#) features articles on the newly released "Separated Bike Lane Planning and Design Guide," road diet case studies, the pedestrian/bicycle counting program kick-off, and several other bicycle and pedestrian resources.

SRTS Publishes Report on Overcoming Violence and Crime with Safety Initiatives

The *Safe Routes to School National Partnership* (SRTS) published "[Taking Back the Streets & Sidewalks](#)" to provide a primer for SRTS professionals looking to address community safety threats that may discourage or endanger students walking or bicycling to school. The report is intended to be a reference for individuals working on violence prevention who are seeking new allies, resources, and approaches in the SRTS movement.

University of Utah Report Analyzes Relationship between Streetscape Features and Pedestrian Activity

The University of Utah Metropolitan Research Center report, "[Streetscape Features Related to Pedestrian Activity](#)," found that street furniture, more ground floor windows, and easy-to-access storefronts, promote more pedestrian activity on city streets. The study examined 20 streetscape features throughout New York City to determine how they correlate to pedestrian traffic volumes. These findings reveal that the most effective tools for increasing walkability are affordable and easy to implement for cities.

Economic Development



New Report Connects Hiking Trails to Positive Economic Impact on Local Communities

The *American Hiking Society* released "[Hiking Trails in America: Pathways to Prosperity](#)," a new report that provides a summary of the last 50 years of trail legislation and development. The report pays special attention to the economic impact of trails on local communities, the outdoor industry, and the Nation as a whole.

Health



CDC Releases Built Environment Assessment Tool

The *Centers for Disease Control and Prevention* (CDC) released the [Built Environment Assessment Tool](#) (BE Tool), which measures the core features and quality of the built environment related to behaviors that affect health, especially behaviors such as walking and biking. The BE Tool assesses features agreed upon by subject matter experts to be most relevant to understanding how specific aspects of the built environment impact health and well-being. CDC designed the BE Tool to compile data across multiple areas of public health, which alleviates some of the challenges posed by the many tools that focus on one particular topic or area.

Livability



FHWA and FTA Announce 2015 Transportation Planning Excellence Award Winners

The *Federal Highway Administration* (FHWA) and the *Federal Transit Administration* (FTA) announced the [winners of the 2015 Transportation Planning Excellence Awards Program](#) (TPEA). TPEA is a biennial awards program developed by FHWA and FTA and co-sponsored by the *American Planning Association*. Winning projects included a bus stop accessibility study in Roanoke, VA, and a multimodal transportation plan that prioritized a bicycle/pedestrian bridge in Portland, OR. The TPEA program provides a unique opportunity to recognize and celebrate the outstanding transportation planning practices performed by planners and decisionmakers in communities across the Country.

HUD Releases Final Rule on Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing

The *U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development* (HUD) has [released a final rule to equip communities that receive HUD funding](#) with the data and tools that will help them to meet long-standing fair housing obligations in their use of HUD funds. HUD's rule clarifies and simplifies existing fair housing obligations for HUD grantees to analyze their fair housing landscape and set locally-determined fair housing priorities and goals through an Assessment of Fair Housing. HUD will provide open data to grantees and the public on patterns of integration and segregation, racially and ethnically concentrated areas of poverty, disproportionate housing needs, and disparities in access to opportunity.

TrADE @ RTC Publishes Transportation Enhancements and Alternatives Spending Report

The *Transportation Alternatives Data Exchange @ Rails-to-Trails Conservancy* (TrADE @ RTC) published the "[2014 Transportation Enhancements and Alternatives Spending Report](#)." The report analyzes States' use of Federal transportation funding from 1992 through 2014. *TrADE @ RTC* provides a web-accessible database and annual report on national and State-by-State funding and expenditures in order to make the Transportation Alternatives Program more accountable and transparent.

APA Releases "Safe Routes to Parks" Brief

The *American Planning Association* released the "[Safe Routes to Parks](#)" [fact sheet](#) to provide planners and parks directors with an outline of the plans, policies, and strategies that planners can pursue to establish safe routes to parks.

APA defines safe routes to parks as the infrastructure that facilitates access to parks through walking, biking, and transit. The fact sheet also provides examples of communities that are establishing safe routes to parks.

Active Living Research Publishes "Designed to Move: Active Cities"

Active Living Research (ALR), an organization administered by the *University of California, San Diego School of Medicine*, released "[Designed to Move: Active Cities](#)," a report that provides a blueprint for city leaders to create an active city. The report includes a comprehensive summary of the evidence supporting the high return on investment of active cities; proven interventions (e.g. parks, transportation, urban design) where cities can focus investments; case studies highlighting cities already designing to increase physical activity; and a list of tools and resources to support creating active cities. [More information](#) about the report is available on ALR's "MOVE!" blog.