

Human Environment Digest

April 9, 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.

Contents:

- [Announcements](#)
- [Bicycle/Pedestrian](#)
- [Economic Development](#)
- [Health](#)
- [Livability](#)
- [Partnership for Sustainable Communities](#)
- [Public Involvement](#)

Announcements

USDOT Announces 2015 TIGER Grant Competition

On April 2, 2015, U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT) Secretary Foxx [announced](#) the latest round of TIGER grant funding. This round will provide \$500 million for innovative transportation projects across the country. Pre-Applications are due May 4, 2015, and final applications are due June 5, 2015. For more information, potential applicants should visit www.dot.gov/TIGER.

Bicycle/Pedestrian



Smart Growth America Releases "Evaluating Complete Streets Projects: A guide for practitioners"

Smart Growth America released "[Evaluating Complete Streets Projects: A guide for practitioners](#)" to introduce practitioners to the use of performance measures that reflect multimodal needs and that are relevant to all individuals using transportation systems. The guide provides general steps that agencies can take to evaluate projects, suggested measures and metrics for common Complete Streets goals, tips for sharing successes, and further resources for communities ready to determine why and how performance measurement can be applied to Complete Streets project evaluation.

TRB Publishes "Pedestrians 2014" and "Bicycles and Motorcycles 2014" Journal Issues

The *Transportation Research Board* (TRB) published "[Volume 2464 / Pedestrians 2014](#)" and "[Volume 2468 / Bicycles and Motorcycles 2014](#)" in March 2015. These TRB Journal issues include a variety of studies and papers that explore topics such as pedestrian and bicyclist safety measures, health and wellness benefits, new technologies, and cost-benefit analyses related to infrastructure upgrades. Each volume contains 18 articles.

Economic Development



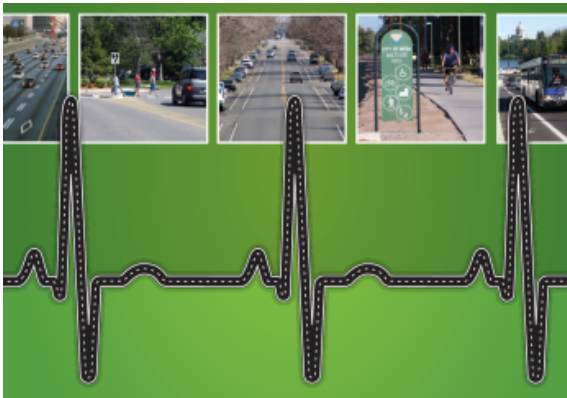
Brookings Institute Report Finds Distance is Growing Between People and Jobs in Major Metros

A new *Brookings Institute* analysis, "[The growing distance between people and jobs in metropolitan America](#)," reveals how regional economic and demographic trends shape access to employment opportunities, particularly for disadvantaged populations and neighborhoods. The report found that between 2000 and 2012, the number of jobs within the typical commute distance for residents in a major metro area fell by 7 percent. In addition, the report says residents of high-poverty and majority-minority neighborhoods experienced particularly pronounced declines in job proximity during the reporting period.

Smart Growth America Hosts "The Fiscal Implications of Development Patterns" Webinar

Smart Growth America (SGA) hosted "The Fiscal Implications of Development Patterns" webinar on Monday, April 6, 2015. The webinar discussed a [new model](#) designed by SGA to help municipalities understand to what degree the choice of development patterns impact costs for local government and how those decisions affect a municipality's budget and tax revenues. A [recording of the webinar](#) is now available on the SGA website.

Health



CDC Launches Community Health Status Indicators 2015 Tool

The *U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention* (CDC), launched Community Health Status Indicators (CHSI) 2015, an [interactive web application](#) that produces health profiles for all 3,143 counties in the United States. Each profile includes key indicators of health outcomes; such as, health care access and quality, health behaviors, social factors, and the physical environment.

Urban Land Institute Releases Building Healthy Places Toolkit

The *Urban Land Institute's* "[Building Healthy Places Toolkit: Strategies for Enhancing Health in the Built Environment](#)" outlines evidence-supported opportunities to enhance health through changes in approaches to buildings and projects. Developers, owners, property managers, designers, investors, and others involved in real estate decisionmaking can use the strategies in this report to create places that contribute to healthier people and communities.

Active Living Research Infographic Shows Active Kids Learn Better

A [new infographic](#) from *Active Living Research* (ALR), a [program](#) that is administered by the University of California, San Diego School of Medicine, features evidence on how physical activity and fitness may help school-aged children maximize their academic performance. It also provides an overview of the effects of physical activity on the developing brain. Children can add more activity to their day by walking or bicycling to school; suggestions on ways that children can safely use active transportation methods to travel to school can be found on the [Safe Routes to School](#) website.

Livability



Center for Environmental Excellence Releases "Benefits of Transportation: Telling America's transportation and environment story"

The *Center for Environmental Excellence* (CEE) released "[Benefits of Transportation: Telling America's transportation and environment story](#)," which outlines strategies for reframing and increasing the reach of each State DOT's messaging about the environmentally beneficial activities it conducts. This [research](#) yielded several high level recommendations for communications and environmental staff at State DOTs as well as a number of "next steps" activities.

SHRP 2 "Activity-Based Travel Demand Models: A Primer" Report is Now Available

The *Second Strategic Highway Research Program* (SHRP 2) published "[Activity-Based Travel Demand Models: A Primer](#)," which describes activity-based travel demand model concepts and practical considerations associated with implementing them. Part 1 of the guide is intended to help managers, planners, and hands-on practitioners make informed decisions about model development and application. Part 2 examines the practical issues that transportation agencies face in migrating from traditional to "advanced" travel demand models.

NITC Transportation for Livable Communities Pooled-Fund Research Application Deadline Approaching

The *National Institute for Transportation and Communities* (NITC) is continuing funding for its [Transportation for Livable Communities Pooled-Fund research program](#) for a second year. Through the program, NITC will institute a process by which cities, counties, MPOs, and other regional or local agencies can pool relatively small pots of research dollars to leverage NITC funds for a single project. Research problem statements from agency partners are due by April 15, 2015. Research statements must be submitted online at <http://ppms.otrec.us/>.

The New Climate Economy Project Releases Sprawl Subsidy Report

The *New Climate Economy* (NCE), a project of the *Global Commission on the Economy and Climate*, released the "[Sprawl Subsidy Report](#)" in March 2015. The report investigates evidence that current development policies result in economically excessive sprawl. It also identifies current policy distortions that encourage sprawl and discusses factors to consider when determining the optimal amount and type of urban expansion for various types of cities. The *Global Commission on the Economy and Climate* was established by seven countries to serve as an independent initiative to examine how countries can achieve economic growth while dealing with the risks posed by climate change.

Partnership for Sustainable Communities



USDA Awards Grants to Help SNAP Participants Buy Healthy Foods

The *U.S. Department of Agriculture* (USDA) [awarded \\$31.5 million in funding](#) to local, State, and National organizations to support programs that help participants in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) increase their purchase of fruits and vegetables. The grants are funding pilot projects, multi-year community-based projects, and multi-year large-scale projects across the Country.

Public Involvement



FTA Invites Comments on Proposed Policy Guidance for the Capital Investment Grant program

The *Federal Transit Administration* (FTA) invites [public comment on interim policy guidance](#) the agency has proposed for the Capital Investment Grant (CIG) program. If adopted, this proposed interim policy guidance will complement FTA's regulations that govern the CIG program by providing a deeper level of detail about the methods for applying the project justification and local financial commitment criteria for rating and evaluating New Starts, Small Starts, and Core Capacity Improvement projects, and the procedures for getting through the steps in the process required by law. Comments are due May 8, 2015.