

## Human Environment Digest

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February 12, 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

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### Secretary Foxx Promotes Mayors' Challenge for Safer People, Safer Streets

U.S. Department of Transportation (U.S. DOT) Secretary Foxx is [challenging mayors and local elected officials](#) to take significant action to improve safety for bicycle riders and pedestrians of all ages and abilities over the next year. Cities can sign up online to join the challenge or they can email their Team Leader's contact information to [pedbikesafety@dot.gov](mailto:pedbikesafety@dot.gov).

### SHRP2 Implementation Assistance Program Accepting Applications

The second Strategic Highway Research Program (SHRP2) is now accepting applications for the fifth round of [SHRP2's Implementation Assistance Program](#). State Departments of Transportation, metropolitan planning organizations, local governments, Tribal governments, and Federal Lands Highway Divisions are welcome to apply for assistance on the four products. Applications are due **tomorrow**, February 13, 2015.

## Bicycle/Pedestrian

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### FHWA Releases Recreational Trails Program Annual Report

The *Federal Highway Administration* (FHWA) posted the [2014 Recreational Trails Annual Report](#). The report describes the Recreational Trails Program (RTP) and projects funded in Federal fiscal year (FY) 2013. It provides information about program funding and administration, the RTP database, and how States used funds. The report also illustrates eligible project types, documents the benefits of the program, and discusses national trends and issues affecting trails.

### Smart Growth America Announces Best Complete Streets Policies of 2015

The *National Complete Streets Coalition*, a *Smart Growth America* program, examines and scores Complete Streets policies each year, comparing adopted policy language to the *Coalition's* 10 elements of an ideal Complete Streets policy. In the past year, more than 70 jurisdictions adopted Complete Streets policies. [This year's report](#) highlights the 11 agencies that led the Nation in creating and adopting comprehensive Complete Streets policies in 2014.

## Economic Development

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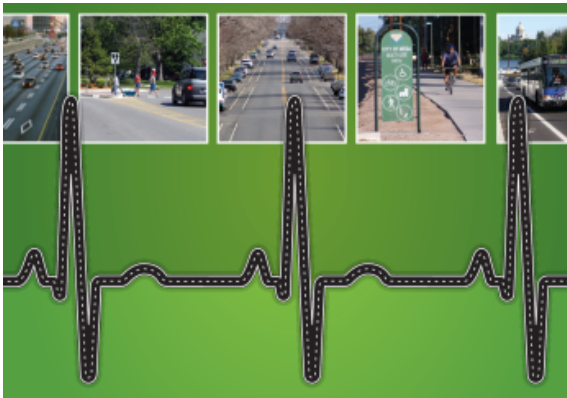


### PolicyLink and USC Launch the National Equity Atlas

Developed by PolicyLink and the *University of Southern California's Program for Environmental and Regional Equity*, The [National Equity Atlas](#) is a tool to help create a more equitable, sustainable, and resilient economy. The Atlas is a comprehensive data resource that is designed to track, measure, and make the case for inclusive growth in America's regions and States. The Atlas contains data on demographic changes, and racial and economic inclusion for the largest 150 regions, all 50 States, the District of Columbia, and the United States as a whole.

## Health

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### EPA's Proposed 2016 Budget Emphasizes Importance of Communities' Environmental Health

The *U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) proposed 2016 budget* of \$8.6 billion seeks to further key work in addressing climate change and improving air quality, protecting water quality, safeguarding the health and safety of the public from toxic chemicals, supporting the environmental health of communities, and working toward a sustainable environmental future for all Americans. Central to this work is an emphasis on supporting State, local, and Tribal partners and working with them to deliver on environmental and health improvements.

## Environmental Justice

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### United Way Releases Study on Financial Hardship in the U.S.

The *United Way*, in partnership with *Rutgers University*, developed a series of new, standardized measurements that quantify the size of the workforce in States that are struggling financially. Through a [series of State reports](#), *United Way* introduced Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed (ALICE) measures, which represent the population of individuals and families who are working, but are unable to afford basic housing, food, child care, health care, and transportation needs. The United Way ALICE Reports provide county-by-county and town-level data on the state of financial instability among households.

## Livability

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### FHWA to Host "Livability Principles at Highway Interchanges" Webinar

The *Federal Highway Administration's* (FHWA) Office of Human Environment will host a "[Livability Principles at Highway Interchanges](#)" webinar on February 26, 2015, from 3:00 - 4:30 PM ET. The webinar will feature two highway interchanges that were designed to prioritize multiple modes of travel and network connectivity, to complement neighboring land uses, and to minimize their physical and environmental footprints. Presenters will share best practices on stakeholder engagement, ramp and public realm design, and prioritizing multimodal safety and mobility in their projects.

### **FHWA Updates Transportation Alternatives Program Q&A Fact Sheet**

The *Federal Highway Administration* (FHWA) revised the "[Transportation Alternatives Program \(TAP\) Questions & Answers](#)" fact sheet to address questions and comments received from June 2013 through October 2014. The Q&A fact sheet answers questions about sub-allocation, matching funds and transfers, flexibility of excess reserved funding (ability to use TAP funds for CMAQ-eligible projects), project eligibility, use of [Recreational Trails Program](#) funds, and priorities for [Safe Routes to School](#) projects. This Q&A supersedes and replaces the version from June 10, 2013.

### **FHWA Issues Climate Change and Extreme Weather Resilience Order**

The *Federal Highway Administration* (FHWA) signed FHWA Order 5520, [Transportation System Preparedness and Resilience to Climate Change and Extreme Weather Events](#), which states that it is FHWA policy to integrate consideration of climate and extreme weather risks into its planning, operations, policies, and programs. This new Order formalizes FHWA's commitment to this issue, guides the agencies' implementation of relevant MAP-21 provisions and recent Executive Orders, and identifies how the agency intends to continue to lead the transportation industry in making the Nation's highways more resilient.

### **FHWA Completes Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment Pilot**

The *Federal Highway Administration* (FHWA) completed Phase 2, Task 4, of a comprehensive, multi-phase study of climate change impacts in the Central Gulf Coast Region. Phase 2 focused on resiliency research in the Mobile, Alabama region, and Task 4 developed [a set of vulnerability assessment tools](#) from research in the Mobile region for use around the Country. These tools include: the Transportation Climate Change Sensitivity Matrix, a Guide to Assessing Criticality in Transportation Adaptation Planning, the CMIP Climate Data Processing Tool, and the Vulnerability Assessment Scoring Tool (VAST).

### **The National Historic Preservation Act Has Moved to Title 54 in the U.S. Code**

The National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) was moved from Title 16 of the United States Code (U.S. Code), to [Title 54](#), as of December 19, 2014. The provisions of the newly codified NHPA may be found starting at section 300101. This recodification was carried out as part of a larger effort to better organize all the statutes related to the National Park Service, which plays a key role in the NHPA due to its duties connected to the National Register of Historic Places, and the State and Tribal Historic Preservation Offices.

### **Report Ranks 70 Cities' Tech Transportation Options**

The *U.S. PIRG Education Fund* and the *Frontier Group* released "[The Innovative Transportation Index: The Cities Where New Technologies and Tools Can Reduce Your Need to Own a Car.](#)" The report shows how well American cities are using technology-enabled services and tools for their transportation needs. It ranks major American cities on the number of different types of new transportation technology options available in each city, including: car-sharing, ride-sharing, ride-sourcing, taxi-hailing, bike-sharing, public transit navigation apps, and virtual transit ticketing.

### **Vermont Transportation Board Studies Millennials' Transportation Preferences**

The Vermont Transportation Board released "[Getting Millennials from A to B](#)" after hosting a series of public hearings at college campuses around the State during the fall of 2014. The report found Vermont's transportation system unattractive to young adults due to inconvenient public transportation stops and schedules; a lack of safe and well-lit bicycle facilities; and a lack of well-maintained and well-lit pedestrian facilities, such as: sidewalks that connect their homes to nearby restaurants and shops. In response to these findings, the Vermont Agency of Transportation plans to implement a car-sharing pilot program in Montpelier and will partner with Smart Growth America to improve bicycle and pedestrian facilities in the State.

### **EcoDistricts Incubator Applications are Open**

*EcoDistricts*, a nonprofit organization that promotes sustainable urban development, has announced a call for applications for the [EcoDistricts Incubator](#). The Incubator is a 3-day intensive, project-based workshop designed to help neighborhood- and district-scale development teams learn about the *EcoDistricts* approach to sustainable urban development. The 2015 Incubator will be held in Portland, OR, May 18-20, 2015. Applications are due by 12:00 PM PST on Friday, March 6, 2015.