

Human Environment Digest

January 29, 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

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 agencies, and Federal Lands Highway Divisions are welcome to apply for assistance on the four products. Applications are due on February 13, 2015.

Available Grant Opportunities

The following links provide information on funding and technical assistance opportunities:

- [EPA Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act Grant](#). Applications Due: January 31, 2015
- [EPA Environmental Education Model Grants Program](#) . Applications Due: February 2, 2015
- [EPA Workforce Development and Job Training Grants](#). Applications Due: February 3, 2015
- [NFWF Five Star and Urban Waters Restoration Program 2015](#) . Applications Due: February 3, 2015
- [HUD Choice Neighborhoods Implementation Grant Program](#). Applications Due: February 9, 2015

Bicycle/Pedestrian



Transportation Secretary Foxx Announced "Mayors' Challenge for Safer People and Safer Streets"

On January 22, U.S. Transportation Secretary Foxx launched the [Mayors' Challenge](#) inviting locally elected officials and Mayors to implement seven activities based on the latest innovations in pedestrian and bicyclist safety strategies. Cities who accept the challenge are invited to attend the Safer People, Safer Streets Summit. This event aims to empower local leaders to take action to improve bicycle and pedestrian safety.

TRB Guidebook on Pedestrian and Bicycle Volume Data Collection

The Transportation Research Board's (TRB) National Cooperative Highway Research Program (NCHRP) [Report 797](#) describes methods and technologies for counting pedestrians and bicyclists. Additionally, the report provides guidance on developing a nonmotorized count program and offers strategies on selecting the appropriate counting mechanism.

America Walks Releases Updated Website with Increased Content

The [America Walks website](#) has a new look that includes expanded content. The new "Learning Center" provides practitioners with resources and best practices. Additionally, a section called "Mapping the Movement" allows organizations to upload their information and for the public to track the growth of the walking movement across the Country.

Economic Development



Growing Suburban Low-Income Populations

This month, *The Atlantic* released an article, "[Suburbs and the New American Poverty](#)," that looks at the influx of low-income families living outside of cities. With little transit service in suburban areas, poor populations have few options for getting to places like school, work, and grocery stores. Although suburbs once offered a path out of poverty, that idea may be shifting.

Livability



FHWA's Livable Communities Newsletter January 2015

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) distributed its [Livable Communities Newsletter](#) for the winter quarter. The newsletter highlights different livability activities across the Country. This edition looks at the role of gateway communities for Federal public lands, an affordable housing expansion project in Kentucky, and Florida's bicycle facilities inventory.

Obama Administration Obligates Billions in Grants and Loans for New Transit Projects

An *American Association of State Highway Transportation Officials* (AASHTO) article highlighted the Obama Administration's recent [funding of new transit projects](#), that totals almost \$3 billion. Through the Transportation Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (TIFIA), the Seattle area received \$1.33 billion in a long-term, low-interest loan; and Virginia's Fairfax and Loudon counties received similar loans to expand subway service. The Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority received almost \$1 billion from the FTA New Starts grants.

US Department of Energy's Clean Cities Update

The *U.S. Department of Energy* [published its winter update](#) on the Clean Cities Program. This biannual publication highlights the activities and accomplishments of the more than 100 Clean Cities Coalitions across the Country. Much of this program focuses on the use of clean energy in transportation and the use of clean fuel technologies.

APA's Planning for Post-Disaster Recovery: Next Generation Guidebook

The *American Planning Association* (APA) along with the *Federal Emergency Management Agency* (FEMA) released a guidebook to help agencies plan for unpredictable weather events. The "[Planning for Post-Disaster Recovery: Next Generation](#)" manual outlines the benefits and limitations of achieving resilience.

Public Involvement



Report Exploring Public Outreach with Social Media

A new report published by the *IBM Center for the Business of Government* titled, "Participatory Budgeting: Ten Actions to Engage Citizens via Social Media," examines ways local leaders can bring participatory budgeting to their communities. According to the study, social media platforms may increase the value of participatory budgeting for some cities.