

## Human Environment Digest

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December 11, 2014

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:

- [Bicycle/Pedestrian](#)
- [Economic Development](#)
- [Environmental Justice](#)
- [Health](#)
- [Livability](#)
- [Public Involvement](#)

## Bicycle/Pedestrian

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### FHWA Updates Pedestrian and Bicycle Funding Information

To reflect the Fiscal Year 2014 pedestrian and bicycle funding, the *Federal Highway Administration* (FHWA) updated its website on [Bicycle and Pedestrian Funding Information](#).

### New Case Studies from America Walks

A new [publication from America Walks](#) examines innovative approaches local leaders are adopting to improve walkability. Ranging from small towns to large cities, the case studies explore the specific policy issues these government officials tackled to increase walking.

### Australian and New Zealand Cycling Infrastructure Case Studies

*Austroroads* published a report with [29 case studies](#) on innovative Australian and New Zealand urban and regional bicycle infrastructure. These case studies are intended to help planners, designers, and engineers better understand ways infrastructure can support active transportation.

## Economic Development

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### Local Foods, Local Places Initiative

Drawing on the *Partnership for Sustainable Communities* and the *U.S. Department of Agriculture's* "Seven Strategies for Economic Development," the Obama Administration selected [26 communities](#) to be part of the Local Foods, Local

Places Initiative. The winning projects all support creating a local food network that supports local economic development by recognizing the importance of the relationship between transportation and the well-being of the community.

## Environmental Justice

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### Centers of Excellence on Environmental Health Disparities Research Grant Extended

The *U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)* and the *National Institutes of Health (NIH)* announced the extension of the Centers of Excellence on Environmental Health Disparities Research grant application. The closing date is now January 13, 2015 at 5:00 PM local time of the applicant. The program is seeking proposals for innovative and multi-disciplinary research to understand mitigation strategies of environmentally-driven health disparities.

## Health

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### How to Better Fight Obesity

A recent *McKinsey* report, "How the World Could Better Fight Obesity," discusses strategies to counter obesity. The paper finds that there is not one single strategy for combating obesity and it is necessary for many organizations and government agencies to work together. The report highlights the importance of building better urban infrastructure to facilitate physical activities, such as walking and bicycling.

### Leveraging Health Funding for Active Transportation Investments

The *Alliance for Biking and Walking* and the *League of American Bicyclists* studied recent funding awards from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention that were used on active transportation projects. These examples show the importance of transportation and public health sectors working together.

### Improving Community Health Through Parks and Trails

The *Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)* released new tools to improve community health through parks and trails. To encourage outdoor activity, this toolkit will help neighborhoods create parks with expanded health benefits. Additionally, the toolkit includes methods for performing a health impact assessment on local parks and trails.

## Livability

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### FTA Announces \$5 Million Available to Improve Transit Options for American Indians, Alaska Natives on Tribal Lands

The Federal Transit Administration announced the availability of \$5 million in competitive grant funds to enhance transit services for residents living on rural tribal lands. The funds can be used for enhancing existing services, launching new services, planning future services, or purchasing equipment.

### FHWA's Successes in Stewardship December 2014

The *Federal Highway Administration's (FHWA)* "Successes in Stewardship" December 2014 newsletter discussed guidelines for conducting effective visual impact assessments. The *FHWA* will soon be releasing updated guidance on how to conduct comprehensive and uniform visual impact assessments.

### ITS Benefits, Costs, and Lessons Learned: 2014 Update Report

The *Intelligent Transportation Systems Joint Program Office* (ITS JPO) released a report titled, "[ITS Benefits, Costs, and Lessons Learned: 2014 Update](#) ." This report examines the different areas ITS has improved the system. Safety, environmental, and congestion mitigation benefits show how ITS has contributed to solving some human environment-related transportation problems.

### **Partners for Places Request for Proposal Round Six**

The [Partners for Places](#) matching grant program is accepting project proposals until January 28, 2015 at midnight. Partners for Places is led by the Funders' Network for Smart Growth and Livable Communities and supported by Bloomberg Philanthropies, JPB Foundation, Kendeda Fund, New York Community Trust, Summit Foundation, and the Surdna Foundation. The program seeks to improve communities by fostering partnerships between local governments and place-based foundations to work together on local projects that promote healthy environments and strong economies.

### **Guide on Building Sustainable Farms, Ranches, and Communities**

The *National Sustainable Agriculture Information Service* compiled information on Federal programs that can be used to support [agriculture and forestry enterprises](#). The guide includes information on sustainable land management practices, and resources for improved community development.

## **Public Involvement**

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### **TransitCenter Survey Looks at Transit Riders**

The *TransitCenter* published results from its Mobility Attitudes Survey in the report, "[Who's on Board 2014](#)." The survey examines the changing perceptions of transit riders that are contributing to increasing ridership. Some highlights from the findings include: Americans want to live in mixed-use developments, young people are more likely to use transit than older people, and there is no regional "cultural bias" against transit.