

Human Environment Digest

July 31, 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.

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Bicycle/Pedestrian



FHWA Publishes "Questions & Answers about Design Flexibility for Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities"

The *Federal Highway Administration's* (FHWA) Offices of Planning, Environment, and Realty; Infrastructure; Safety; and Operations jointly [developed a Q & A](#) as a follow-up to FHWA's Bicycle and Pedestrian Facility Design Flexibility [memorandum](#) published on August 20, 2013. The questions and answers pertain specifically to the *National Association of City Transportation Officials'* (NACTO) "Urban Street Design Guide" and are intended to clarify issues regarding design flexibility.

NHTSA Publishes July Issue of "Safety in Numbers"

The *National Highway Traffic Safety Administration* (NHTSA) published the July edition of "Safety in Numbers, [Preventing Two-Wheeled Tragedies: The Mistakes We All Make](#) ." This issue discusses the dangers of riding bicycles at night, while drunk, as well as common mistakes that drivers make that contribute to crashes. It also features specific safety tips for both bicyclists and drivers.

Environmental Justice



Researchers Propose "Just Green Enough" Model to Prevent "Environmental Gentrification"

A [new paper](#) by University of California, Berkeley professor Jennifer Wolch and colleagues, suggests using a "just green enough" model to improve green spaces and health outcomes in low-income communities. This model "seeks to remedy injustices without introducing fancy amenities than can radically transform a neighborhood." The authors also suggest that urban green space projects need more integrative sustainability policies to protect communities.

The Atlantic CityLab Examines "How Low-Income Commuters View Cycling"

CityLab, with support from a team of *American University* students, [surveyed 260 commuters in two surveys](#) in 2012 and 2013 in Washington, D.C. They found the following: (1) poor respondents spend more time commuting; (2) most people, poor and non-poor alike, still want cars; and (3) cycling isn't popular among the urban poor (yet). To increase cycling rates among the poor, the researchers recommend advocating gradual policy changes in the short-term and that transportation policy must support a socio-cultural shift towards bicycling. Lastly, they say "excessively denigrating automobiles might hinder cycling adoption and even poverty reduction goals."

PeopleforBikes Explores Why More African-Americans Don't Ride Bikes

[Studies and reports increasingly](#) show that more minority communities are using bicycles as a means of transportation. However, they also show that a disproportionate number of bicyclists are middle class Caucasians. This may be because many African-American communities see bicycles, and therefore carlessness, as a "badge of poverty." Organizations such as *PeopleforBikes* and the *League of American Bicyclists* are advocating for ways to help minority and low-income communities better understand the benefits of using bicycles as a primary mode of transportation.

Health



CDC Publishes "State Indicator Report on Physical Activity, 2014"

The "[State Indicator Report on Physical Activity, 2014](#)," presents state-level information on physical activity behaviors and on environmental and policy supports for physical activity. The report, published by the *Centers for Disease Control* (CDC), captures information regarding the percentage of adults in each State who usually bike or walk to work and discusses health-focused transportation opportunities such as the Safe Routes to School program.

Livability



EPA Announces FY 2015 Brownfields Area-Wide Planning Grant Guidelines

The *U.S. Environmental Protection Agency* (EPA) announced the [availability of funding](#) to eligible entities who wish to develop an area-wide plan for brownfields assessment, cleanup, and subsequent reuse. This funding is for research, technical assistance, and/or training activities directed to one or more brownfield site(s) located in a specific area (such as a neighborhood, district, local commercial corridor, community waterfront or city block). Proposals must be submitted by September 22, 2014.

FHWA and FTA Open Call for 2015 Transportation Planning Excellence Award Nominations

The *Federal Highway Administration* (FHWA) and the *Federal Transit Administration* (FTA) announced that the [2015 Transportation Planning Excellence Award](#) (TPEA) nominations will be open August 1, 2014, through September 15, 2014. The TPEA program is a biennial awards program offered by FHWA and FTA in partnership with the *American Planning Association* (APA) and the *Transportation Research Board* (TRB). The TPEAs recognize outstanding initiatives across the country that develop, plan, and implement innovative transportation planning practices. The awards are open to any organization, agency, group, or individual in the public, private, or non-profit sectors.