

## Human Environment Digest

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July 10, 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

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#### Seattle "Bike Train" Research Targets Childhood Obesity

Dr. Jason Mendoza, a researcher at Seattle Children's Hospital, received funding from the National Institutes of Health to [study correlations between the rise in childhood obesity and a decline in bike riding](#). The study provides bicycles and safety equipment to 40 students at an elementary school in Seattle in exchange for data collected using activity trackers, GPS, and heart rate monitors. Students who participate in the "bike train," which is a group bike ride to and from school each day, will be compared to students in the pilot program who do not bike to school.

#### Connecticut Gauges Pedestrian-Friendliness Using FHWA Checklists

As part of a 5-year plan to track the progress of Connecticut's "complete streets" initiative, [Bike Walk Connecticut](#) recently released a [ranking of each town's pedestrian- and bike-friendliness](#). The rankings are based on public opinion surveys and phone/online surveys to assess municipal leadership and engagement. The public opinion survey was based on Bikeability and Walkability Checklists developed by the *Federal Highway Administration*, the *National Highway Traffic Safety Administration*, the U.S. *Environmental Protection Agency*, the *National Center for Safe Routes to School*, and the *Pedestrian and Bicycle Information Center*.

#### Report: "Integrating Equity in Bike Advocacy"

The League of American Bicyclists released "[Integrating Equity in Bike Advocacy](#)," which discusses the organization's commitment to promoting equitable outcomes in the bicycling community and shares the process they have developed to do so. See the "Webinars" section of this Digest for information on an upcoming webinar about this report.

### Health

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#### FHWA Posts Health in Transportation FAQ

The *Federal Highway Administration* (FHWA) Office of Planning, Environment, & Realty posted "[Frequently Asked Questions](#)" about Health in Transportation. The FAQ addresses a variety of health-related transportation topics, including what opportunities exist to address health through transportation and how health effects are addressed through Federal actions.

### **Michigan State University Releases Mid-Michigan Health Impact Assessment**

The [Mid-Michigan Health Impact Assessment](#) (HIA) is a toolkit designed to help planners, community leaders, and the public in Clinton, Eaton, and Ingham counties, to evaluate the potential health effects of policies, programs, or projects. This toolkit, which was developed by Michigan State University and the Ingham County Health Department, features Geographic Information Systems (GIS) programs that will help inform users of impacts of development in specific locations.

## **Livability**

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### **FHWA Publishes July "Fostering Livable Communities Newsletter"**

The newsletter provides transportation professionals with real-world examples of ways that transportation investments promote livability. [This issue features information on](#) the *Rails-to-Trails Conservancy's* National Trail Development, *Association of Bay Area Governments'* (ABAG) efforts to assess natural hazard risks, Atlanta transit station redevelopment, and more.

### **EPA Releases Flood Resilience Checklist for Flood-Prone Communities**

The U.S. *Environmental Protection Agency* (EPA) published the [Flood Resilience Checklist](#) to help communities prepare for, deal with, and recover from floods, including potential stormwater management strategies. The checklist is part of a new report, "[Planning for Flood Recovery and Long-Term Resilience in Vermont: Smart Growth Approaches for Disaster-Resilient Communities](#)." EPA will host a webinar on lessons learned from the Vermont project. See the "Webinars" section of this Digest for details.

### **Regional Conservation Partnership Program Funding Available**

The National Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) has made [nearly \\$400 million available for mobilizing creative and workable solutions to agricultural production and resource management challenges](#). NRCS, through its Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCCP), is seeking applications from potential partners that feature innovative ideas and resources for accelerating conservation on private lands. Partners will work with producers and landowners to promote the restoration and sustainable use of natural resources on regional or watershed scales. Applications are due on [grants.gov](#) by July 14, 2014.