Pedestrian & Bike Forum Newsletter

Source: Dan Burden

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Request for Information on Improving Road Safety for All Users on Federal-Aid Projects

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) published a notice of Request for Information (RFI) on Improving Road Safety for All Users on Federal-Aid Projects in the *Federal Register* earlier this year. The RFI requested comments on whether changes to the FHWA Design Standards regulation or other FHWA regulations are needed to facilitate the development of Complete Streets and Complete Networks that serve all users; how the safety performance of Federal-aid projects should be assessed; and how to include measures that improve safety performance across Federal-aid projects. The RFI included background information and twenty-seven questions, grouped into six general topic areas. There were 881 individual comments received from 125 respondents; most supported updating and/or want more requirements. Following is a summary of the common themes that were identified by the responses to the RFI.

Table 1. Respondent Summary

Respondent Type	Comments
Advocacy	19
Concerned Citizen	49
Industry Organization	13
Local Agency	10
Regional Agency	9
State DOT	23
Other	2
Total	125

There was a total of 125 unique respondents representing State, regional, and local transportation agencies; industry and advocacy groups; and members of the public.

Design Standards Common Themes

-Eliminating fatalities and serious injuries is the primary goal, consistent with National Roadway Safety Strategy and Safe System Approach.
-Prioritize safety for all users as a necessary condition of Federal-Aid Highway Program Projects.
-Clarify language such as "highest practical and feasible level of safety."
-Make including design features that provide safety benefits for all users the default.
-Adopt additional publications as standards, such as National Association of City Transporation Officials guides and other publications.

Safety Performance Assessments Common Themes

-Practices for assessing safety performance vary by State/agency (e.g. types of projects, tools and methods used, etc.).
-Encourage safety assessments to be conducted at the planning/project development and/or design stage.
-Post-implementation evaluations primarily on Highway Safety Improvement Program-funded projects.
-Industry and advocacy support additional requirements for safety assessments on all projects.

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U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration

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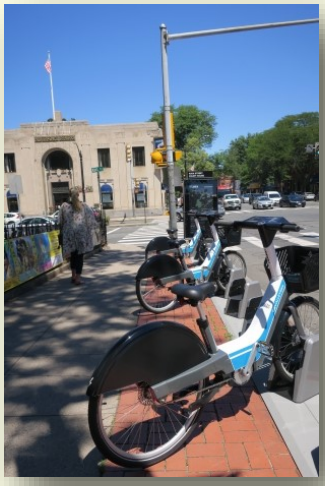

Source: Toole Design Group

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-Not enough is being done to improve safety for all users.
-Most States prefer to retain flexibility in determining their safety assessment process.
-Others did not express opposition, as they believe their internal policies and processes meet the intent of the safety assessments.

FHWA is in the process of developing a summary report. The report will be shared externally and is anticipated in early 2024.

The FHWA may use the information gathered through public comments to consider future rulemaking options related to design standards for projects, for safety performance assessments on Federal-aid projects, or to develop guidance or resources (i.e., case studies, informational briefs) that can assist agencies with improving safety for all users on all Federal-Aid projects.

For more information contact: Phillip.Bobitz@dot.gov,

The Future of E-Bikes Research Study

The FHWA recently published information on electric bicycles (e-bikes), including a literature review, fact sheet, research, and a series of case studies. E-bikes present an opportunity to reduce car travel, improve health, and increase access for traditionally underserved populations. The relationship between e-bikes and safety, infrastructure, equity, and the environment is of interest to decision makers and potential riders.

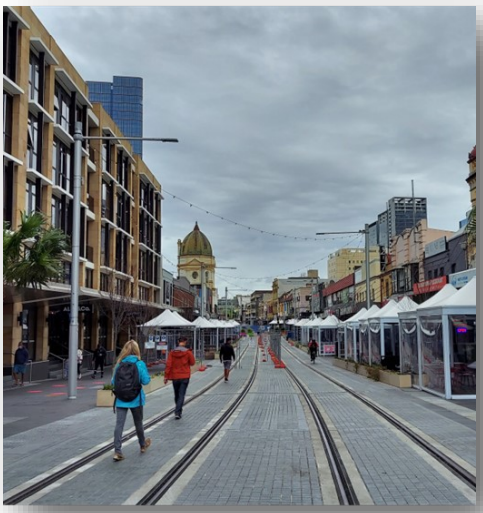
FHWA is advancing research on e-bikes to better understand e-bike trends and impacts, and how jurisdictions around the country are managing them. FHWA previously published The Future of E-Bikes on Public Lands Research Study. Also available is Bicycle and Pedestrian Planning, Program, and Project Development Guidance. Within this guidance, see Shared Micromobility and Electric Bicycle Use.

Source: FHWA

Global Benchmarking Webinar Series: Improving Pedestrian Safety on Urban Arterials

As mentioned in the last edition of this newsletter, FHWA recently completed a study on Australian and New Zealand approaches to reducing pedestrian fatalities and serious injuries on urban, signalized arterial roadways. A four-part webinar series shared the results of the study, focusing on key research findings and recommendations (part 1); the movement and place framework (part 2); integration of road safety audit processes into new projects (part 3); and network-level approaches for speed management (part 4).

Panelists from FHWA, Pedestrian and Bicycle Information Center , the U.S. Department of Transportation Volpe National Transportation Systems Center, and agency representatives from the United States, New Zealand, and Australia described how these approaches in policy, planning, and design may be applied to U.S. arterials roadways. The well-attended webinars were recorded and can be viewed here.



Source: FHWA

Case Study: Cincinnati Uses Quick-Build Project to Address an Urgent Safety Need

Around the country, cities and communities are deploying quick-build projects. Using low-cost materials like paint, concrete wheel stops, and flexible posts, these projects offer community members and decision makers a chance to try temporary infrastructure improvements that can provide immediate safety improvements, give feedback, and identify what will work best for the community.

The Pedestrian and Bicycle Information Center and National Center for Safe Routes to School developed a case study that documents a resourceful quick-build project in Cincinnati, Ohio, to address an urgent safety problem threatening child pedestrians in an underserved neighborhood. The project offers several insights that can inform other cities interested in implementing quick-build projects.

Safe System Approach for Speed Management

The Safe System Approach for Speed Management report helps practitioners understand the impacts of speed on traffic safety, explore linkages between speed management and the Safe System Approach, and implement a speed management program that is aligned with the Safe System Approach. The report provides practitioners with a five-tiered framework for setting and achieving Safe System Approach aligned speed limits. Furthermore, it contextualizes the five tiers through case studies and examples demonstrating how agencies have been able to overcome institutional barriers and rally behind Safe System Approach principles to enact speed management programs with proven, measurable reductions in operating speeds and crashes.

Speeding – exceeding the posted speed limits or traveling too fast for conditions – was a contributing factor in 29% of all fatalities in 2021. USDOT's National Roadway Safety Strategy (NRSS) recognizes the importance of the Safe System Approach in preventing serious injuries and fatalities. Safe Speeds is a core principle of the approach, and the NRSS includes strategies to implement a robust, multi-modal speed management program that combines roadway design, speed limit setting, education, and enforcement.

If you have any questions please contact Anyesha Mookherjee at anyesha.mookherjee@dot.gov.

Updated FHWA Lighting Handbook 2023

The FHWA's Safety Design/Roadway Departure Team recently posted a key resource for Lighting Safety Design on the Safety/Visibility webpage—The FHWA Lighting Handbook. The nighttime fatality rate on the Nation's roadways is three times higher than the daytime rate, and 76 percent of pedestrian fatalities occur at night.

Enhancing nighttime visibility along our nation's roadway system and where non-motorists mix with traffic during darkness will save lives. FHWA has used a focused approach to safety for many years, based on findings that almost 90 percent of the traffic fatalities in the United States happen in these three areas: Intersections, Pedestrians and Bicyclists, and Roadway Departure. Improving nighttime visibility through lighting can benefit all three program areas and can safely connect people to the community and essential services.

The handbook is an update of the document published in 2012 by the FHWA and has been prepared to provide recommendations to lighting designers and State and local officials concerning the design and application of roadway lighting. It is not intended to be a detailed design guide but serves primarily as a resource for policy makers and the design and construction community. It helps these practitioners evaluate potential needs, benefits, and applicable references when considering a roadway or street lighting system.

The primary goal of this handbook is to improve safety using common roadway lighting applications with a focus on how best to apply roadway lighting in various applications and is therefore educational in nature. This Handbook will also serve as a valuable resource for the EDC 7 Safety Initiative – Nighttime Visibility for Safety which encompass Traffic Control Devices and Lighting. EDC-7 was discussed in more detail in the Summer 2023 Edition of this newsletter.

For more information, contact Joseph.Cheung@dot.gov.

New Resources from Partner Agencies

FTA Issues Advisory to Improve Safety for Pedestrians and Cyclists Around Buses

The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) issued a safety advisory to recommend that transit agencies take action to reduce bus-to-person collisions, which remain a top safety concern. Between 2008 and 2021, bus-to-person collisions accounted for 15 percent of all transit fatalities.

To improve bus safety, transit agencies should identify hazards that may cause or contribute to bus-to-person collisions, assess the associated safety risk and implement mitigations to reduce the likelihood and severity of those collisions. Find fact sheets, guidance and training available for transit providers on identifying safety hazards, completing a safety risk assessment and developing mitigations at FTA's website.

As mentioned in the Fall 2022 edition of this newsletter, the FHWA and FTA released Improving Safety for Pedestrians and Bicyclists Accessing Transit. This guide is intended for transit agencies, State and local roadway owners, and regional planning organizations. In addition to identifying how access to and the use of transit has changed, including the range of modal choices, this guide addresses the safety of a variety of vulnerable road users, such as pedestrians, bicyclists, and micromobility users.

US Access Board: Notable Changes in Public Right-of-Way Accessibility Guidelines Final Rule

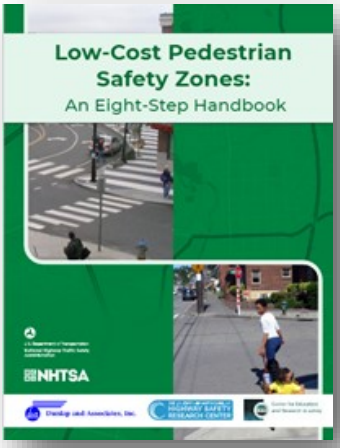
The US Access Board recently issued its final rule on accessibility guidelines for pedestrian facilities in the public right-of-way (PROWAG). These guidelines make notable changes from their previously proposed drafts and guidelines. To highlight these changes, the US Access Board provides more detail on these and other notable changes with links to their specific sections within the final rule and is offering a series of training videos.

A webinar (recorded) on October 5 addressed PROWAG requirements, how government agencies can make their pedestrian facilities accessible, and the minimum technical requirements for various spaces and elements in the public right-of-way. The Board also provides free technical assistance on accessibility of public right-of-way via email at row@access-board.gov.

Low-Cost Pedestrian Safety Zones and Countermeasures

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration recently released Low-Cost Pedestrian Safety Zones: An Eight-Step Handbook and accompanying resource Low-Cost Pedestrian Safety Zones: Countermeasure Selection Resource. They were developed for State Highway Safety Offices and transportation professionals seeking to support and implement low-cost, quick countermeasures to address pedestrian safety.

The handbook describes the process of developing and using low-cost pedestrian safety zones. The resource report details low-cost countermeasures as part of pedestrian safety zone efforts.



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This *Pedestrian and Bike Forum* is available on the Web at http://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/ped_bike/pedforum/

To receive information on future newsletters, please use the e-subscription service provided on this site: https://public.govdelivery.com/accounts/USDOTFHWA/subscriber/new?topic_id=USDOTFHWA_102

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