



# FHWA's Fostering Livable Communities Newsletter

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## Introduction

The Federal Highway Administration's (FHWA's) Fostering Livable Communities Newsletter is intended to provide transportation professionals with real-world examples of ways that transportation investments promote livability, such as providing access to good jobs, affordable housing, quality schools, and safer roads. The FHWA Livable Communities Newsletter also includes topics related to Safe Routes to School (SRTS), Context Sensitive Solutions, and Environmental Justice. To access additional tools and resources, or to learn more about FHWA's Livability Initiative, please visit FHWA's Livability [website](#) or the interagency Partnership for Sustainable Communities (PSC) [website](#). The PSC is a partnership of three Federal agencies: the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT), the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), and U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). To read past issues of the newsletter, visit [www.fhwa.dot.gov/livability/newsletter/](http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/livability/newsletter/). To subscribe to the newsletter, visit [GovDelivery](#).

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Creating more livable communities through transportation choices



## Supporting MPOs with the Bicycle-Pedestrian Count Technology Pilot Project

Jeremy Raw, Community Planner, FHWA Office of Planning

To improve conditions and encourage safe bicycling and walking as healthy and environmentally friendly forms of transportation, local transportation agencies need reliable data to guide planning processes. By collecting bicycle and pedestrian counts, agencies can shift to performance-based planning, analyze trends over time, and evaluate the effectiveness of particular projects and interventions.



Figure 1: Counting bicycles on Floyd Avenue in Richmond, Virginia. (Image courtesy of Richmond Regional Transportation Planning Organization)

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) works to support pedestrian and bicycle data collection through research projects, reports, and technical assistance. Recently, FHWA completed a one-year effort, the [Bicycle-Pedestrian Count Technology Pilot Project](#), aimed at exploring challenges and opportunities for metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs) that seek to establish bicycle and pedestrian counting programs. In the spring of 2015, FHWA offered grants to 10 MPOs that did not yet have bicycle and pedestrian counting capabilities.

The project grants funded the purchase of counters, along with installation and analysis activities, that would permit each MPO to gather bicycle and pedestrian counts to support

their planning processes. Each of the selected MPOs also participated in a series of technical support webinars and developed plans for using the count data, ranging from corridor evaluation to support for comprehensive bicycle and pedestrian planning.

This summer, FHWA expects to publish a final report summarizing the project, to be posted to the [project's webpage](#). The report will detail the experiences of the MPOs, what they learned through the process, and their recommendations to other agencies considering the development of a pedestrian and bicycle counting program. The technical support materials developed during the project will also be assembled and made available to the public on the [webpage](#). The materials will provide information on selecting and procuring counters, determining their appropriate placement, and testing and installation. The materials will also offer suggestions on how to

### **Participating Metropolitan Planning Organizations**

- Providence Metropolitan Planning Organization (Providence, Rhode Island)
- Greater Buffalo-Niagara Regional Transportation Council (Buffalo, New York)
- Richmond Regional Transportation Planning Organization (Richmond, Virginia)
- Puerto Rico Metropolitan Planning Organization (San Juan, Puerto Rico)
- Palm Beach Metropolitan Planning Organization (Palm Beach County, Florida)
- Fresno Council of Governments (Fresno, California)
- Indianapolis Metropolitan Planning Organization (Indianapolis, Indiana)
- Ohio-Kentucky-Indiana Regional Council of Governments (Cincinnati, Ohio)
- Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (Milwaukee, Wisconsin)
- Memphis Metropolitan Planning Organization (Memphis, Tennessee)

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manage the count data, along with data analysis techniques in support of bicycle and pedestrian planning goals.

The Bicycle-Pedestrian Count Technology Pilot Project is one of a series of initiatives currently underway at FHWA to improve bicycle and pedestrian planning and trend analysis with counts. Related efforts include adding bicycle and pedestrian data to the Traffic Monitoring Analysis System, which houses motorized traffic counts from every State, and providing guidance on coding count data in the standard format published in FHWA's [Traffic Monitoring Guide](#).

By gathering more consistent and reliable pedestrian and bicycle data, agencies will ultimately be able to plan more effectively for these active modes, while gauging success by monitoring ongoing performance.

## Transportation Alternatives Program Performance Management Guidebook

Christopher Douwes, Community Planner, FHWA Transportation Alternatives Program

Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Act (MAP-21), the 2012 surface transportation authorization, created the Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) to provide funding for a variety of smaller-scale transportation projects. The TAP primarily supports pedestrian and bicycle facilities; recreational trails; safe routes to school projects; community improvements such as historic preservation and vegetation management; and environmental mitigation related to stormwater and habitat connectivity. MAP-21 also placed new emphasis on performance management to introduce accountability and transparency into transportation decisionmaking, improve the performance of the transportation system, and achieve better returns on investment, measured in terms of social, environmental, and economic outcomes.

The Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act of 2015 replaced the TAP with a set-aside of [Surface Transportation Block Grant](#) (STBG) Program funds called the "Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside," retaining eligibility for all projects and activities that were eligible under the TAP. The FAST Act did not include any significant changes to performance management affecting this guidebook.

FHWA developed the [TAP Performance Management Guidebook](#) to provide sample performance objectives and measures that States, MPOs, and project sponsors may consider as they administer,

implement, and evaluate TAP projects and program outcomes. The guidebook promotes voluntary best practices to ensure program transparency and accountability, but does not establish requirements or standards. The guidebook aligns with the national goals and FHWA's [Transportation Performance Management](#) measures.

The guidebook provides an overview of FHWA's performance-based planning and management, a discussion of resource requirements, how to manage limited resources, and a step-by-step method to create a performance-based planning and programming approach tailored to the TAP.

The research for the guidebook, which took place in 2014, found that few States or MPOs had much information about the TAP, but a number of States and MPOs had promising practices. The guidebook highlights these noteworthy practices, which include examples such as providing training for project applicants, evaluating existing and

### What is Transportation Performance Management?

FHWA defines Transportation Performance Management as a strategic approach that uses system information to make investment and policy decisions to achieve national performance goals. In short, Transportation Performance Management:

- Is systematically applied, a regular ongoing process;
- Provides key information to help decisionmakers allowing them to understand the consequences of investment decisions across multiple markets;
- Improves communications between decisionmakers, stakeholders, and the traveling public; and
- Ensures targets and measures are developed in cooperative partnerships based on data and objective information.



proposed conditions, and ensuring that projects match State and MPO plans and priorities. The guidebook also provides ideas about how to rate and select projects, including count data (for example, to measure pedestrian and bicycle facility use); crash and safety data; and data on environmental impact or benefit.

FHWA's seven-step Performance Management Framework serves as the foundation of this guidebook, which describes each step in detail. The steps are:

1. Develop goals and objectives.
2. Select performance measures.
3. Identify trends and targets.
4. Identify strategies and analyze alternatives.
5. Develop plan-level investment priorities.
6. Develop program-level investment priorities.
7. Maintain ongoing monitoring, evaluating, and performance reporting.

The guidebook notes that performance management will require some investment. It provides information about how to make efficient use of resources to ensure that funds are used in an effective manner. It also points out that program staff can make incremental changes to select and use performance-based elements consistent with available resources and data.

Although the guidebook focuses on the TAP, readers will find they can use the concepts for any small-scale program, especially the [Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside](#) under the FAST Act, but also the [Recreational Trails Program](#) or State-funded programs. See FHWA's [Transportation Alternatives Performance Management Guidebook webpage](#) for more information.

#### **Guidebook Appendices with Additional Information**

- Appendix A provides examples of performance measures for enhancing project delivery and measures for the major TAP categories (pedestrian and bicycle facilities, community improvements, and natural environment projects).
- Appendix B shows how to measure and track performance, including data concepts (baselines, before and after, primary and secondary, and geographic scale) and data sources (safety, infrastructure condition, congestion and reliability, economic, and environmental).
- Appendices C and D provide sample approaches at the MPO and State levels.
- Appendix E provides information resources for performance management.
- Appendix F provides examples of project evaluation criteria.

## **AASHTO Environmental Justice Peer Exchange**

Foreword by Fleming El-Amin, Community Planner, FHWA Office of Human Environment

The American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) Center for Environmental Excellence (CEE) and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Office of Planning, Environment, and Realty co-hosted an *Environmental Justice Peer Exchange* on February 17 and 18, 2016. The Peer Exchange was conducted to help State DOT and metropolitan planning organization (MPO) attendees build capacity and knowledge on environmental justice. The participants included representatives from 13 State DOTs and six MPOs who shared challenges, best practices, and lessons learned including deficiencies in practice that guided the development of an *Environmental Justice (EJ) Roadmap*. The *EJ Roadmap* describes current practices and actions that AASHTO, FHWA, and practitioners could consider to advance the state of the practice for EJ. On May 18, [FHWA and AASHTO held a joint webinar](#) to discuss the key focus areas of the *EJ Roadmap*. Below are reflections and key takeaways from four of the Peer Exchange participants.

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I attended the conference as an environmental practitioner at MassDOT and a representative of AASHTO's Standing Committee on the Environment. The Peer Exchange was informative and provided me with a much better understanding of some of the successful tools and effective public outreach strategies used to integrate EJ considerations into transportation decisions. I was particularly impressed with the case studies presented by our MPO partners and the robust GIS based mapping tools they have developed to help assess EJ impacts and compare alternatives. I look forward to implementing some of the best practices into project development at MassDOT.

**– Kevin Walsh, Director of Environmental Services, Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT) Highway Division**

It was an honor to represent the Miami-Dade MPO at the AASHTO EJ Peer Exchange in Washington, DC. The face-to-face exchange of ideas was a very positive experience that allowed participants to better relate to one another, and to gain knowledge from collective experiences that can strengthen our own local EJ programs. While the Miami-Dade MPO provided a presentation on its GIS, internet-based "Transportation Outreach Planner," the chance to talk in an open forum with others from around the country was an eye-opening experience that led to more ideas to consider. Some of these takeaways included:

- Developing a local EJ roundtable to provide support and assistance to one another;
- Fully understanding that the face of our communities has changed, especially as it relates to "Head of Households";
- Identifying different locations to perform outreach, such as the local DMVs where you always have a captive audience; and
- Accessing various resources to better understand the changing demographics of our communities.



*Figure 2: Participants take part in the Environmental Justice Peer Exchange. (Image courtesy of AASHTO)*

**– Elizabeth Rockwell, Public Involvement Manager, Miami-Dade Metropolitan Planning Organization**

At the AASHTO EJ Peer Exchange, I felt completely supported as I joined with my peers from across the country, to share my own experience as a practitioner of public involvement and environmental justice at my MPO, and to hear about others experience with their DOTs and MPOs as well. The Exchange provided an opportunity to participate in meaningful conversations and workshops with my peers who collectively offered a wealth of knowledge that was shared freely with humor and comradery.

My expectations were met. Prior to the Exchange I was privy to first-hand tutorials on EJ Mapping, and exchanges on EJ demographics, however, I had the unanticipated benefit of sharing my own experience. As a result, the Peer Exchange affirmed that those of us who practice the art of implementing environmental justice have a unique



responsibility and expertise that arise when working to ensure the application of EJ is incorporated throughout the planning process.

**– Kendall Miller, Public Involvement and Title VI Administrator, Hampton Roads Transportation Planning Organization**

The EJ Peer Exchange was the perfect opportunity for equity advocates. I was able to improve my knowledge of the issues and approaches being used to address environmental justice, as well as being given an opportunity to share my own experiences. The Exchange raised provocative questions and provided “out of the box” approaches on future requirements and creative solutions for practitioners.

My takeaways listed below will be used to strengthen the update of our Public Participation Plan and build on our engagement efforts in the Wichita region.

- Establish credibility. Be a part of the community, not an issue (sky) diver! Be trusted partners.
- Successful projects not only solve transportation concerns but leave a community better than when it started.
- Acknowledge transportation is about more than transportation projects and requirements.
- Partnerships between MPOs and State transportation agencies need to be strengthened during project development and delivery.
- Stronger internal partnerships among State transportation department planning teams and project delivery teams are needed.
- Visuals are not just images for showing the outcomes, but effective tools for communicating the importance of transportation to a community, metropolitan area, or State.
- More practical applied education in EJ analysis is needed for current practitioners.

**– Gloria Jeff, Principal Planner, Wichita Area Metropolitan Planning Organization**

For more information, see the [materials from the EJ Peer Exchange](#) on the AASHTO website.

## Mayors’ Challenge Progress Update

Anthony Burton, Policy Analyst, USDOT Office of the Under Secretary for Policy

Launched in early 2015, the USDOT’s [Mayors’ Challenge for Safer People, Safer Streets](#) is in its final stretch, scheduled to conclude with a capstone summit event at USDOT Headquarters in Washington, DC in September 2016. The summit event will include an awards ceremony, opportunities for communities to share their stories, and a discussion of next steps related to pedestrian and bicycle initiatives.





Figure 3: Secretary Foxx on a trip to Denmark, Amsterdam, and Norway. (Image courtesy of USDOT Office of the Secretary)

### Special Mayors' Challenge International Learning Opportunities

In April 2016, the USDOT offered two unique opportunities for participating mayors and city staff to learn from international leaders on pedestrian and bicycle transportation. One was to participate in the Washington, DC [ThinkBike](#) Workshop. At ThinkBike Workshops, Dutch cycling experts provide hands-on assistance to help American practitioners improve bicycle planning and design in their communities. The Mayor of Springfield, OR, as well as staff from three other Mayors' Challenge cities—Nashville, TN; Chattanooga, TN; and Austin, TX – were able to bring home lessons learned from the site evaluations and brainstorming sessions of the ThinkBike Workshop.

That same week, Transportation Secretary Anthony Foxx visited Copenhagen, Denmark; Amsterdam, the Netherlands; and Oslo, Norway as part of an ongoing

effort to learn from international partners about innovative ways to meet the transportation challenges of the future. The trip focused on sharing best practices in bicycle and pedestrian safety. Secretary Foxx was joined by three Challenge mayors—Steve Adler of Austin, TX; Charlie Hales of Portland, OR; and Pete Buttigieg of South Bend, IN. [Mayor Adler authored a blog post](#) on his experience, and Secretary Foxx shared a [Fast Lane blog post](#) summarizing the lessons learned from the trip.

### Communities Report Progress on their Mayors' Challenge Initiatives

Many communities participating in the Challenge are actively measuring and reporting on their progress during the Challenge:

- **Austin, TX** has compiled an [interim progress report](#), posted on its website for public awareness. The report measures advancement on initiatives within each of the seven Challenge activity areas. Some of the highlights include progress on implementing a bike master plan, complete streets metrics reporting, and a multi-pronged public outreach campaign on traffic safety.
- **Miami-Dade County, FL** launched a [Safer People, Safer Streets Local Action Team](#) that has drafted an [Action Plan](#). The Plan presents specific actions aimed at reducing pedestrian and bicycle crashes, while also encouraging more biking, walking, and transit use. Miami-Dade's comprehensive Action Plan includes complete streets projects, road diet pilots, a bicycle/pedestrian counting program, before/after evaluations, as well as educational and encouragement programs.
- **Santa Monica, CA** adopted its [Pedestrian Action Plan](#) in February. The city cited the Mayors' Challenge as an added impetus for adopting the Plan and for prioritizing safety in its transportation planning and design efforts. The city

FHWA is in the process of conducting Transit Road Safety Audits in four Mayors' Challenge cities—Asheville, NC; Myrtle Beach, SC; Springfield, OR; and Tucson, AZ. FHWA is leading teams of stakeholders to identify safety issues and appropriate countermeasures to improve safety at transit facilities in each of the four cities. These four cities applied for this technical assistance through the Mayors' Challenge.



gathered community input on locations of safety concern, analyzed pedestrian count data, and developed eight goals including Vision Zero and creating a barrier-free network.

Some of the participating cities shared their experiences during a recent Mayors' Challenge webinar series (Part 1 recording [here](#), Part 2 recording [here](#), Part 3 recording [here](#)). The webinars highlighted the progress different Challenge cities have made: Columbia, SC; Louisville, KY; and Charlotte, NC. The series also provided Mayors' Challenge communities with information on related programs for which the Challenge provides a good foundation. These programs include [Bicycle Friendly Communities](#), [Walk Friendly Communities](#), and safety programs like Toward Zero Deaths.

For more information, visit the [Mayors' Challenge website](#) or email [pedbikesafety@dot.gov](mailto:pedbikesafety@dot.gov).

## Technical Assistance with Place-Based Initiatives

Ben Williams, Community Planner, FHWA Resource Center and Team Lead, Macon SC2 Pilot

Since its founding in 1967, one of the primary roles of FHWA has been to provide technical assistance to States and local communities. FHWA's technical assistance has evolved over the years to meet changing transportation challenges. In 2012, President Obama issued Executive Order 13602, establishing a White House Council on [Strong Cities, Strong Communities](#) (SC2) as an innovative approach for supporting cities experiencing challenges such as population and job loss, persistent poverty, and capacity constraints in an era of ever dwindling resources. Through SC2, 19 Federal agencies work together in partnership with committed city leaders as they implement locally driven economic visions. The Federal agencies most active in the initiative include the Department of Housing and Urban Development, the Department of Transportation, the Environmental Protection Agency, the Department of Energy, and the Department of Education. SC2 will ultimately work with over 80 cities through two primary assistance methods:

1. **SC2-Deployed Federal Community Solutions Teams:** In this 14-city pilot, a Federal SC2 Team Lead works within the mayor's office for two years, coordinating a Federal interagency team to support the city's vision.
2. **SC2 National Resource Network (NRN):** To further scale and develop the SC2 model and reach up to 80 additional cities, the SC2 Council established the SC2 [National Resource Network](#) to provide direct technical assistance. City staff can post questions to the NRN's "[311 for Cities](#)" and receive responses from experts.

SC2 Pilot Cities	
First Round	Second Round
Chester, PA	Brownsville, TX
Cleveland, OH	Flint, MI
Detroit, MI	Gary, IN
Fresno, CA	Macon, GA
Memphis, TN	Rockford, IL
New Orleans, LA	St. Louis, MO
Youngstown, OH	Rocky Mount, NC

### SC2 Pilot in Macon, Georgia

The SC2 Council selected Macon-Bibb County in the second round of pilot cities with deployed Federal community solutions teams. The Team Lead works in the Mayor's office and coordinates with 15 Federal agencies in support of the local vision for Macon-Bibb. Because many of the issues in Macon relate to transportation, FHWA provided several staff to serve as team leaders of the effort. The SC2 team supported the following transportation-related initiatives:

- Expanding the Middle Georgia Regional Airport and related businesses providing high paying jobs for the area.
- Diversifying some of the current military related economy to a more logistics and inland port-based economy.



- Reconstructing the I-75/I-16 interchange, while mitigating the impacts upon historic neighborhoods.
- Expanding the region’s pedestrian and bicycle trails.
- Establishing electric bus transit service as part of a complete streets corridor in the revitalizing city center.
- Coordinating a passenger rail connection between Macon and Atlanta and identifying funding opportunities.



*Figure 4: Macon’s historic 100-year-old Terminal Station, home to the Macon-Bibb County Transit Authority, the city’s central bus terminal. It may soon serve passenger rail (Image courtesy of Chris Floore, Macon-Bibb County).*

In addition to the transportation projects, the SC2 interagency Federal team assisted with redeveloping various areas of the city, addressing brownfield contamination, and supporting job growth with small business and low-income neighborhood financial assistance.

The SC2 team assisted Macon-Bibb in securing Federal funds that they otherwise would not have known to consider. The city has also been able to more effectively combine the Federal funds with funds from philanthropic organizations to address local projects. The SC2 team’s technical assistance has enhanced livability by helping to facilitate efforts to reduce crime, keep kids in school, redevelop neighborhoods, address polluted and abandoned properties, and redesign the downtown.

#### Steps After SC2

The pilots with Federal SC2 teams will conclude at the end of 2016, though the pilot cities will continue many of the initiatives that began with SC2 support. Each SC2 team will complete a legacy plan focused on institutionalizing the relationships developed through the effort, to support ongoing work.

Looking beyond SC2, the Office of Management and Budget’s (OMB) Community Solutions Task Force is working with numerous Federal agencies to ensure the endurance of similar place-based partnerships in support of locally driven goals. For example, in February 2016, 16 Federal agencies, including USDOT, signed a memorandum of agreement on interagency technical assistance, agreeing to work together to advance community goals. These goals include fostering economic growth, increasing opportunity, building local capacity, and creating healthier and safer communities.

Within the USDOT, collaboration between agencies has led to the launch of Secretary Foxx’s [Ladders of Opportunity Initiatives](#), which include the [Federal Transit Administration’s Ladders of Opportunity](#) transit modernization and expansion funding program; the FHWA’s [Ladders<sup>TEP</sup>](#); and Community Connections, the USDOT White House Community Solutions Fellow assignment.



For those interested in place-based programs, the Partnership for Public Service’s [Delivering Outcomes for Communities](#) course provides training on the topic. To join OMB’s Community Solutions Community of Practice listserv, provide your contact information at the [Community Solutions website](#).

## Fostering Livability on Commercial Highways and Arterial Streets

David Leyzerovsky, Project Associate, Project for Public Spaces

FHWA’s Context Sensitive Solutions (CSS) program fosters livability along suburban commercial corridors by presenting strategies for improving walkability, multimodal access, and functionality.

In March 2016, CSS hosted a [webinar presenting success stories of this type of suburban transformation](#), featuring speakers discussing local projects. The presenters discussed two locations that are in the process of transitioning from auto-dominated commercial roadways to multimodal, livable corridors—South Boulevard in Charlotte, NC, and Bridgeport Way in University Place, WA. They related successful strategies including changes in infrastructure redesign, transit access, street design standards, and land use policy.

These successful cases also reflect a more fundamental shift in U.S. land use patterns. The overarching change in land use patterns enables communities to foster livability as development shifts from sprawling, auto-centric patterns to more compact and walkable neighborhoods centered around commercial boulevards. This shift is likely the result of various factors such as local land use policies; an increased desire for walkable, mixed-use communities; and evolving consumer behavior in response to high gas prices and the convenience of online shopping. Moreover, demographic changes underlie what some planners regard as the urbanization of traditional suburban developments. This article reviews the South Boulevard case from Charlotte, NC presented in the webinar, as well as an additional example from Arlington, VA, the Columbia Pike corridor.



*Figure 5: South Boulevard pedestrian improvements in Charlotte, NC. (Image courtesy of Danny Pleasant, city of Charlotte)*

A series of land use and transportation policy and infrastructure changes over the last dozen years has facilitated the multimodal redevelopment of Charlotte’s South Corridor. The Lynx Blue Line light rail opened to serve this corridor in 2007, with construction of the line costing \$465 million. The city spent an additional \$50 million on the South Corridor Infrastructure Program (SCIP) to improve connectivity and pedestrian infrastructure in the one-mile radius areas around the new Blue Line stations. The goals of the SCIP program are to improve accessibility, promote economic development, get people to the stations, and build neighborhoods around the stations. The city made pedestrian and bicycle improvements on streets parallel to and connecting to South Boulevard, creating a connected network along the corridor. Also in 2007, the city adopted new [Urban Street Design Guidelines](#) (USDG) based on complete streets principles. These Guidelines focus on creating safe and comfortable streets for all users, considering the land use/transportation connection, and engaging stakeholders during the planning and design process. The South Corridor Station Area Plans applied the USDG during the planning process to select appropriate street classifications and street intervals based on planned land uses. Between 2006



and 2015, the private sector invested \$1.5 billion in this South Corridor, with new mixed-use development served by the Blue Line and pedestrian improvements. Charlotte plans to extend the Blue Line further south, and mixed-use development continues along the corridor.

A **form-based code** is a land development regulation that fosters predictable built results and a high-quality public realm by using physical form (rather than separation of uses) as the organizing principle for the code. A form-based code is a regulation, not a mere guideline, adopted into city, town, or county law. A form-based code offers a powerful alternative to conventional zoning regulation.

– *Form-Based Codes Institute*

Columbia Pike in Arlington, VA presents another notable commercial corridor transformation. The redesign was planned to encourage mass transit investment, specifically the adoption of a new streetcar along the corridor. To do this, Arlington County implemented a form-based code in order to incentivize denser development along the corridor, while maintaining a Main Street character that encourages walkability. The code was adopted in 2003 and included guidance on frontage types, streetlight lines, building height, and minimum parking setbacks. In exchange for building according to these new standards, developers could build at densities considerably higher than the surrounding areas. Since adopting the form-based code in 2003, the [Columbia Pike Corridor](#) has added a 52,300 square-foot community center; a public plaza and mini-park; 213,000 square feet of

commercial space; and 1,935 residential units, 439 of which are committed to people earning less than 60 percent of the area’s median income. While adoption of the plan did not lead to the streetcar the community had wanted, it did encourage investment in bus transit. Arlington County is slated to spend \$12.4 million for 23 upgraded bus stops. The new bus shelters will include real-time transit information displays, and more space for people. Thanks to this mix of efforts, the Columbia Pike Initiative received the [Congress for New Urbanism’s award for “Best Corridor Plan”](#) in June 2014.

Commercial strip redesigns can be an effective strategy to revitalize a corridor and foster a multimodal, livable environment. Considering the high vacancy rate along commercial strips around the U.S., it is likely that these types of strategies will be adopted with ever greater frequency. To learn more about successful commercial strip redesigns, consider Ellen Dunham-Jones and June Williamson’s seminal book [Retrofitting Suburbia](#).

## Safe Routes to School: Taking Youth Pedestrian and Bicyclist Safety Beyond the Trip to School

Colleen Oliver, Communications Manager, Safe Routes to School Programs, University of North Carolina Highway Safety Research Center



Figure 6: Students at Oakhill Elementary participate in an event in Streamwood, IL. (Image courtesy of the National Center for Safe Routes to School)

Young people need to be protected from dangers presented by vehicle traffic as they walk or bike around their communities. The National Center for Safe Routes to School (SRTS) encourages States, regions, and cities to use SRTS as a foundation for advancing traffic safety for young pedestrians and bicyclists, whether they’re going to school, visiting a friend’s home, walking through a park, or going to a part-time job.

Safety has always been at the core of the SRTS Program. Local agencies can use SRTS strategies and accomplishments as a springboard for broader initiatives that create safer streets and paths for children and people of all ages. This year, the National Center is leading efforts to help communities integrate child and youth safety into initiatives such as Vision Zero, Toward Zero Deaths, and other safety plans.

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Last fall, the National Center hosted the *Roundtable on Safe Routes to School: Ten Years of Progress*, held at U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT) Headquarters in Washington, DC. One focus of the event was to discuss the idea of using SRTS as a foundation to improve safe walking and biking for children and youth traveling to any destination. In April, the National Center released the report [Advancing Safe Walking and Bicycling for Youth](#). This report features input from the more than 40 transportation and public health professionals and advocates who participated in the National Center’s roundtable. It includes findings from the National Center’s [Creating Healthier Generations: A Look at 10 Years of the Federal Safe Routes to School Program](#) and input from State SRTS coordinators. The report offers the following five ways that SRTS can be used to improve safety for young people as they move around their communities:

1. Provides a logical starting point for innovative infrastructure to improve driver and pedestrian safety behavior at crossings.
2. Creates opportunities to try behaviors and inspire community-wide change.
3. Serves as a starting point for using bold ideas to tackle difficult safety issues like speeding.
4. Creates safe networks for walking and bicycling.
5. Attracts a robust base of support by promoting broader community benefits.



Figure 7: Students at Oakhill Elementary participate in an event in Streamwood, IL. (Image courtesy of the National Center for Safe Routes to School)

To bring greater attention to the need for safer streets for children and youth, the National Center for SRTS is partnering with USDOT Secretary Anthony Foxx’s initiative, the [Mayor’s Challenge for Safer People, Safer Streets](#), to encourage mayors to participate in the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Walk to School Day in October 2016. Since Walk to School Day began with strong support from mayors, this collaborative effort will enhance the message around youth traffic safety.

Mayors will be encouraged to use the event to talk about how they prioritize youth traffic safety, and their plans to make streets safer for young people. The National Center for SRTS is convening an advisory group to explore how specific measures for children can be integrated into Mayor’s Challenge activities, Vision Zero plans, and other plans for cities and counties.

Moving forward, the National Center will continue to engage its partners by encouraging them to use SRTS strategies to build communities where children can move around safely. SRTS projects have extended the benefits of SRTS beyond safety and can help enhance community life for everyone.



## Student Travel Analysis Reveals Communities Continue to Support Active Transportation

Colleen Oliver, Communications Manager, Safe Routes to School Programs, University of North Carolina Highway Safety Research Center

New research from the [National Center for Safe Routes to School](#), FHWA's clearinghouse for Safe Routes to School (SRTS), finds that more children and families in communities across the country are choosing active transportation for their trips to school.

The new findings are based a survey of parents of children from 5,700 schools located in all 50 States and Washington, DC. The participating schools conduct Safe Routes to School activities to differing degrees, from those just starting SRTS programs, to those schools that have been doing scores of SRTS activities for years. In total, researchers collected 970,253 survey responses from parents between 2007 and 2014.

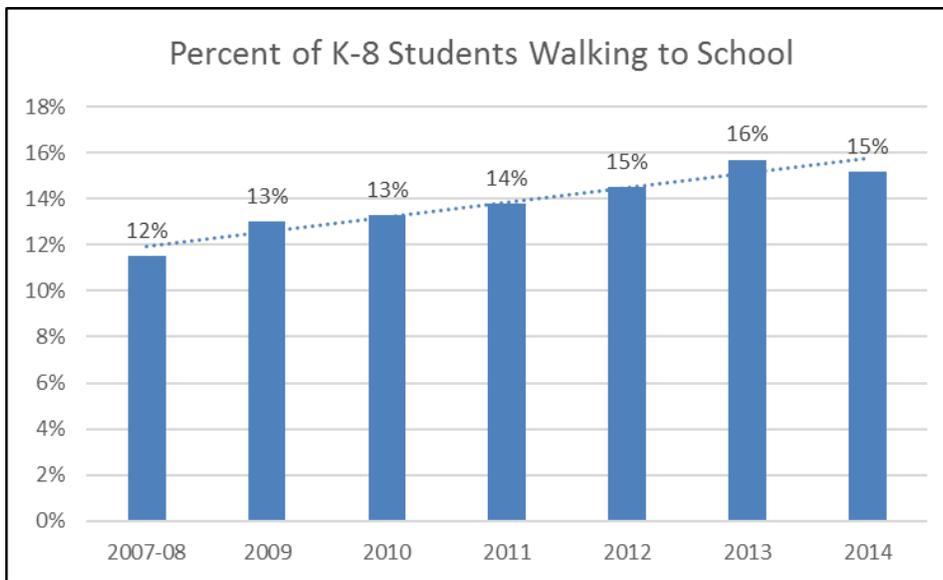


Figure 8: Survey data showing an upward trend in percent of K-8 students walking to school between 2007 and 2014.

The new data indicates that the percentage of children walking to and from school increased significantly since 2007 and has most recently leveled off in 2014. The percentage of children in kindergarten through eighth grade who walked to school in the morning increased from 11.5 percent to 15.7 percent between 2007 and 2013, and decreased slightly to 15.2 percent in 2014.

Similarly, the percentage of children in the same age range who walked home from school increased from 14.6 percent to 19 percent from 2007 to 2013, and dipped slightly to 18.1 percent in 2014.



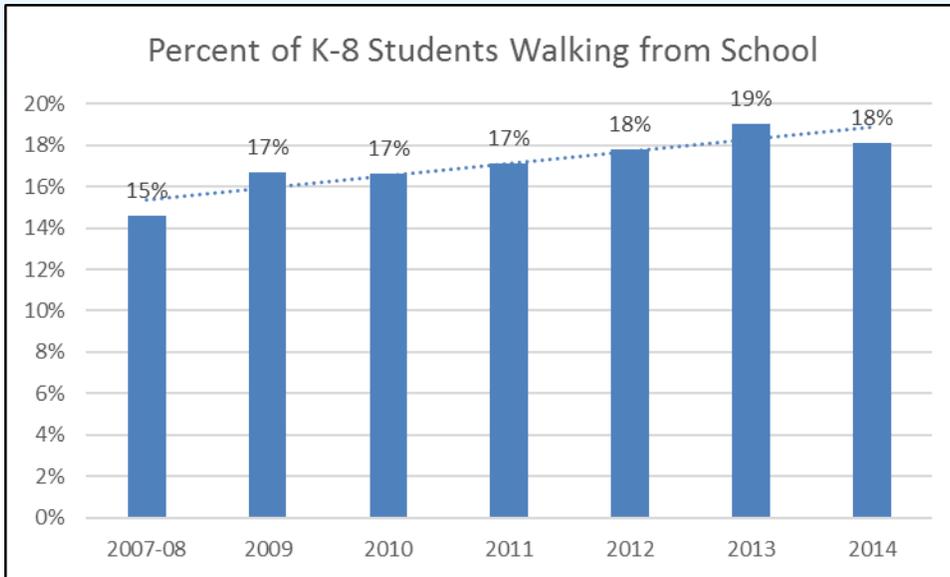


Figure 9: Survey data showing an upward trend in percent of K-8 students walking home from school between 2007 and 2014.

Interestingly, the National Center’s research shows that the strongest predictor of walking to school was whether parents perceive that their child’s school encourages walking or biking to school. Additionally, parents’ perceptions of how much fun walking and biking to school is for their children is a strong predictor of whether their children bike to school.

This research reflects the promising pattern of increasing interest in walking and bicycling to school across the country. A full report detailing the results of this student travel survey will be released in July 2016 on the [National Center’s website](http://www.nationalcenter.org).



## Announcements/New Resources

- As part of the [Ladders of Opportunity](#) program, the U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT) announced the [Every Place Counts Design Challenge](#), which aims to build awareness about neighborhoods bifurcated by highways, identify innovative practices to reconnect communities, and inform the transportation life cycle. During July, the USDOT will host a two-day design session in each of the four finalist communities. [Secretary Foxx delivered a presentation](#) on the importance of reconnecting communities at the Center for American Progress in March.
- The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) released its "[Guidebook for Developing Pedestrian and Bicycle Performance Measures](#)," which aims to help communities develop performance measures that can fully integrate pedestrian and bicycle planning in ongoing performance management activities.
- In June, FHWA released the [Bike Network Mapping Idea Book](#), which highlights ways that different communities have mapped their existing and proposed bicycle networks. It shows examples of maps at different scales, while also demonstrating a range of mapping strategies, techniques, and approaches. Facility types represented on the respective maps and legends are each different because they represent a community's unique context and needs.
- FHWA published an article, "[Environmental Justice: The New Normal for Transportation](#)," in its *Public Roads* magazine underscoring the importance of environmental justice in the decisionmaking process.
- FHWA released new guidance in May 2016 to clarify that there is [no Federal regulation or policy that requires specific minimum level of service \(LOS\) grades on the National Highway System](#). The traditional automobile LOS performance measure has been the industry standard for decades, though it does not take safety, livability, other modes, or environmental impacts into account. Broad use of auto LOS without additional measures can lead to roadway expansion and induced vehicle demand, encouraging people to drive more rather than use active modes.
- Newtown Pike Extension Project videos are now available on FHWA's Livability website under the [Livability Videos](#) tab. The two videos show how effective transportation planning, project development, and design preserved and enhanced the quality of life in the Davis Park Community. The 30-minute video can be used as an instructional tool for practitioners and the 8-minute video provides an overview for transportation decisionmakers and the public.
- The FHWA Office of Planning, Environment and Realty updated the [FHWA Environmental Justice \(EJ\) website](#), including reorganizing information and providing new content to help users gain a better understanding of environmental justice. The website features new resources, such as EJ webinar recordings, and includes new sections on the history of EJ and a discussion on EJ, Title VI, nondiscrimination, and equity. The website now highlights featured items and quick EJ references so that both practitioners and the public can more easily find information. Check out the newly updated site to learn more about environmental justice in the context of creating and sustaining an equitable transportation system.
- In April, FHWA published "[Pursuing Equity in Pedestrian and Bicycle Planning](#)," a resource that discusses equity considerations in pedestrian and bicycle planning.
- As part of the White House Placed-Based Initiative, which is intended to revitalize our government by inspiring a new generation to serve and transform the way government works, the Office of Management and Budget has developed a Federal [Community of Practice website](#) and [listserv](#).
- USDOT's Fast Lane blog recently published an article titled "[Breaking Down Walls to Opportunity: Where Health & Transportation Collide](#)." Written by a special advisor to Secretary Foxx on health and transportation, the article highlights the importance of taking an interdisciplinary approach to understanding the link between access, opportunity, and health.
- The Bicycle Transportation Alliance has posted the [presentation slides from its 2016 Oregon Active Transportation Summit](#). The speakers presented on livability and safety topics including multimodal street design, public space, transportation justice, and bicycle sharing.

