

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. 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](#). To read past issues of the newsletter, visit www.fhwa.dot.gov/livability/newsletter/. To subscribe to the newsletter, visit [GovDelivery](#).

Creating more livable communities through transportation choices



Rails-to-Trails Conservancy Takes National Trail Development to the Next Level with T-MAP

Dr. Tracy Hadden Loh, Research Director
Rails-to-Trails Conservancy

In 2014, the [Rails-to-Trails Conservancy](#) is launching a \$1.2 million, three-year initiative to create the next generation of trail planning data collection instruments, methodologies, and analysis tools for trail planners and trail builders in the United States (U.S.). Through the Trail Modeling Assessment Platform (T-MAP), the organization is working with 12 communities across the country to develop and test a suite of analytical models that quantify trail system connectivity, trail demand, and healthcare savings from increased physical activity.

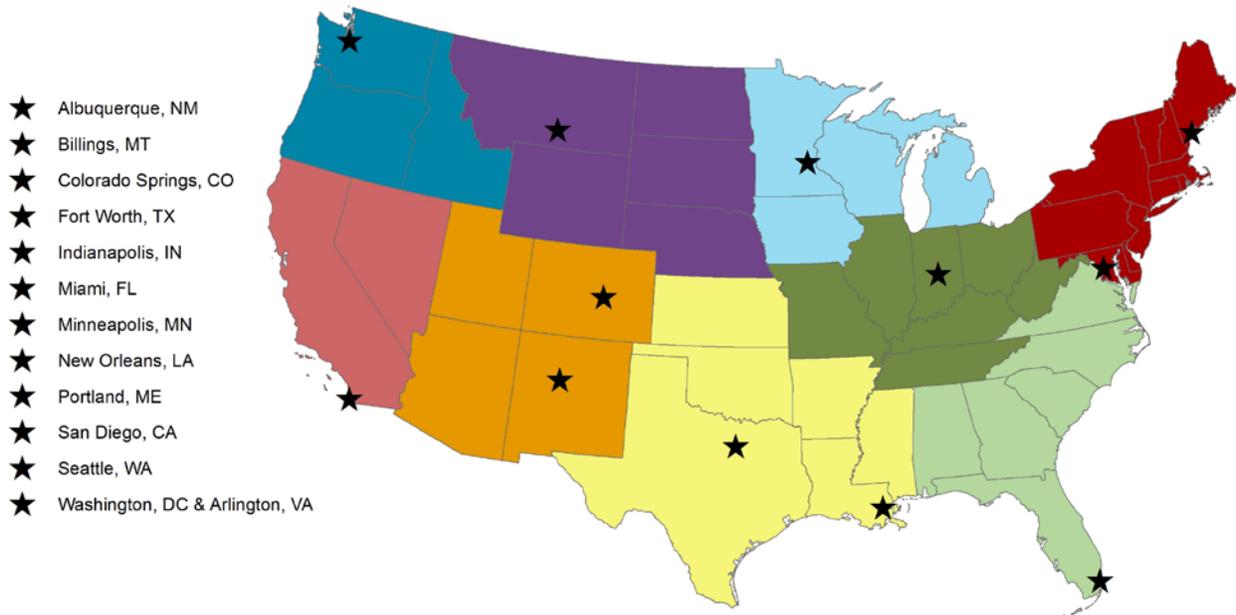


Figure 1: Twelve urban areas throughout the climactic zones of the United States are participating in the Trail Modeling and Assessment Platform research project at the Rails-to-Trails Conservancy. The communities are Arlington, VA; Albuquerque, NM; Billings, MT; Colorado Springs, CO; Fort Worth, TX; Indianapolis, IN; Miami, FL; Minneapolis, MN; New Orleans, LA; Portland, ME; San Diego, CA; and Seattle, WA.

Over the last 20 years, Federal, State, and local governments have invested billions of dollars to create trails in communities across America, but the full societal benefit has not been assessed and published, due, in part, to limited data availability. The vision for T-MAP is to transform trail development and empower trail planners with robust, evidence-based, and easy-to-use tools that will enable them to manage, prioritize, and advocate for trails.

The T-MAP models include the following:

1. **Geographic Information Systems (GIS) method for measuring trail system connectivity:** The tool will assist a variety of community development processes, such as gap analyses of existing trails, equity analyses, and benchmarking.
2. **Demand factoring and forecasting models:** One model will enable planners and traffic engineers to convert short-term local trail traffic counts for pedestrians and cyclists into annual estimates of traffic volumes using temporal



adjustment factors for each climactic zone in the country. A second model will use regression analysis to estimate trail use at locations where traffic is not monitored, including potential future trails.

3. **Tools that translate trail use into financial savings related to health and transportation impacts:** During the second year of T-MAP, the Rails-to-Trails Conservancy will create an online calculator quantifying—in dollars—the health impact of trail use through avoided health-care expenditures due to increased physical activity. The Rails-to-Trails Conservancy will develop a second tool that estimates the economic impacts of trail use in the transportation sector, incorporating factors such as gasoline consumption, greenhouse gas emissions, and road maintenance.

The primary investigators for T-MAP include Dr. Tracy Hadden Loh, Research Director for the Rails-to-Trails Conservancy; Dr. Gregory Lindsey of the University of Minnesota; Dr. Michael Lowry of the University of Idaho; and Dr. Thomas Gotschi of the University of Zurich.

According to Dr. Michael Lowry, “we find ourselves at a tipping point, when relatively small investments to improve connectivity of trail infrastructure promise outsized returns, because we will be fully realizing the benefits of past investment. Recent advances in both GIS and trail traffic monitoring technology mean that we are poised to address data issues and assemble the comprehensive datasets necessary to create the next generation of planning tools for trails.”

For more information on T-MAP, visit www.railstotrails.org/tmap or email Dr. Tracy Hadden Loh at tracy@railstotrails.org.

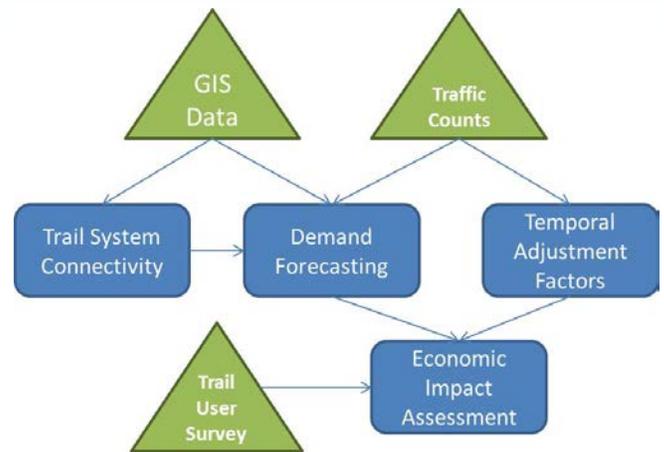


Figure 2: The Trail Modeling and Assessment Platform (T-MAP) includes three data inputs and four model outputs. The research team will use traffic counts from trails throughout the U.S. to generate temporal adjustment factors. The team will use GIS data to create a trail connectivity matrix. The team will combine these two data sources to produce a trail demand forecasting model. Finally, the team will use a trail user survey to create two impact assessment calculators related to healthcare costs and transportation.

Federal Partners Convene Roundtable Discussion in Garland, Texas

Kirk Fauver, Environmental and Transportation Coordinator
FHWA – Texas Division

The Region 6 PSC held a roundtable discussion on April 16, 2014 at the Granville Arts Center in Garland, Texas. Sixty people participated in the roundtable from the Federal Transit Administration (FTA), U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), City of Garland, Garland Chamber of Commerce, North Central Texas Council of Governments, Texas Department of Transportation, FHWA Texas Division, and Garland Workforce Center.

The purpose of the roundtable was to engage in dialogue with a diverse group of stakeholders in Garland. Attendees discussed key environmental, transportation, workforce, and housing issues affecting the city; identified new areas of connection; gathered insights; and shared best practices from community and business leaders to foster livable and economically resilient communities. During the event, the Region 6 PSC informed participants about various partnership activities at the Federal, regional, and local levels.



Many attendees participated in an optional walking tour of the downtown Garland redevelopment and transit-oriented development (TOD), as well as, an open house and reception for an infill housing project in Garland. For additional information, please contact Kirk D. Fauver at: kirk.fauver@dot.gov or (512) 536-5952.

AARP Provides Resources for Livable and Age-Friendly Communities

Amy Levner, Manager
AARP – Livable Communities, Education & Outreach

“Central to the creation of livable communities is the possibility for everyone, regardless of age or ability, to travel safely. Yet, many of our nation’s roads do little to meet the needs of the growing population of older Americans.”

-Excerpted from the [Complete Streets in the Southeast Tool Kit](#) released in 2014 by Smart Growth for America, the National Complete Streets Coalition, and AARP

As many as 10,000 baby boomers turn 65 every day, and that rate will continue until 2030, by which time more than 70 million people, or nearly one in five Americans, will be 65 or older. While many of these older adults will continue to drive, some — including the estimated one in five older adults who do not drive — will seek other transportation options and may have difficulty finding them.



Figure 3: AARP logo.

AARP is working to raise awareness among elected officials, policy makers, community leaders, planners, citizen activists, and the general public about the need for neighborhoods, towns, cities, counties, and States to foster age-friendly, livable communities.

AARP reports that many communities are not age-friendly, as evidenced by the following statistics:

- An AARP survey of adults age 50 and older reveals that almost 40 percent of respondents do not have adequate sidewalks near their homes, and nearly 50 percent cannot safely cross their community’s main roads.
- Adults age 65-plus account for one in five pedestrian deaths, according to the 2014 “[Dangerous by Design](#)” report released by Smart Growth for America, the National Complete Streets Coalition, AARP and others.
- Six out of 10 older adults do not live within a 10-minute walk of public transportation. In communities that do have public transit systems, many bus and train routes are designed primarily for rush hour commuters, leaving others with fewer schedule options, reaching limited destinations.

According to AARP, two complementary approaches can overcome these transportation challenges. First, communities can ensure that residents of all ages and abilities have access to a range of transportation options (including public and specialized transit services) and that streets are safe for walking and bicycling as well as for driving. Second, policy makers can coordinate housing, transportation, and land-use policies to promote the development of walkable, transit-oriented communities that allow older adults to live near essential services.



To help in these efforts, AARP provides several programs and resources, including the following:

AARP Network of Age-Friendly Communities

This network is an affiliate program of the World Health Organization (WHO) Global Network of Age-Friendly Cities and Communities, which encourages leaders to improve the quality of life in their communities in eight key livability domains. Learn more at aarp.org/agefriendly.

AARP Active Living Workshops

Working in partnership with the nationally recognized “town-making” experts of the Walkable and Livable Communities Institute, AARP promotes Active Living Workshops that help stakeholders identify where and how to improve the livability of their cities, towns, and neighborhoods.

AARP Driver Safety

The AARP Smart Driver Course, the nation’s largest classroom and online driver safety course, is designed especially for drivers age 50 and older. More than 15 million participants have completed AARP’s volunteer-led driver safety classroom and online courses.

Livable Communities Advocacy

AARP’s advocacy work promotes model legislation and includes efforts to adopt Complete Streets (also known as Safe Streets) legislation at the Federal, State, and local levels. See aarp.org/safestreets.

Public Policy Institute

The Public Policy Institute develops evidence-based policy analysis and solutions that serve as the basis for AARP’s livable communities initiatives. Research focuses on Complete Streets, TOD, human services transportation coordination, affordable and accessible housing, and State livability policies and practices.

AARP Livable Communities Online Resources

Curated for use by elected officials, policy makers, legislative staffs, community leaders, and citizen activists, aarp.org/livable is an active, centralized, online repository of information and resources about age-friendly, livable communities. In addition, AARP Livable Communities publishes a free monthly e-newsletter, regularly posts to the Livable Communities blog, and shares information with followers and others on Twitter via @LivableCmnty.

Follow these links for an AARP archive of materials related to transportation issues and older adults:

- Transportation resources
- Complete Streets resources

If you have questions or suggestions, please email AARP Livable Communities at livable@aarp.org.



Figure 4: Icon of the AARP Livable Communities Program.



Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) Assesses Risks Due to Natural Hazards

Dana Brechwald, Earthquake and Hazards Specialist
Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG)

The [Bay Area Housing and Community Multiple Hazard Risk Assessment](#) project seeks to assess the vulnerability of housing and populations in the San Francisco Bay Area to seismic and sea level rise hazards, with a particular focus on the region's planned high growth areas. The assessment will help the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) develop hazard mitigation, adaptation, and smart growth strategies to address both existing risks and risks in planned future growth areas. ABAG is the comprehensive regional planning agency and Council of Governments for the Bay Area.



Figure 5: Anchorage at Marina Bay in the Richmond Priority Development Area. This new development, and others like it, is designed to accommodate the majority of new growth over the next 40 years and provide strategies for developing new housing.

For decades, ABAG has focused on improving the quality of life for San Francisco Bay Area residents. In recent years, ABAG has worked to create complete communities through the development and implementation of Priority Development Areas (PDAs), transit-focused communities slated to receive 80 percent of new housing units and 66 percent of new jobs over the next 40 years. ABAG and the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (the Metropolitan Planning Organization) first introduced PDAs in the region's integrated long-range transportation and land use strategy, Plan Bay Area, adopted in July 2013. Through more efficient land use planning, Plan Bay Area aims to meet the requirements of California's SB 375. Under SB 375, each of the State's 18 metropolitan areas must develop a Sustainable Communities Strategy to accommodate future population growth and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

The Bay Area has a long history of natural hazards, particularly seismic events. The impacts of sea level rise and other flooding events seriously threaten the built environment. Many PDAs are within or adjacent to areas that may experience extreme ground shaking, liquefaction, temporary flooding, or permanent inundation. Yet these areas, mostly adjacent to the Bay shoreline, are highly desirable areas for development due to existing infrastructure, good transit connections, and proximity to major employment hubs like San Francisco, Oakland, and San Jose. Other less vulnerable areas may not meet smart growth criteria such as transit access, so the Bay Area is learning to plan intelligently to balance sustainability and resilience.

ABAG, in association with its sister agency, the Bay Conservation and Development Commission (BCDC), is conducting a multi-hazard assessment of the region's most vulnerable housing stock and communities. Working with a diverse stakeholder group, including subject matter experts and representatives from various Bay Area nonprofits and jurisdictions, the ABAG/BCDC team has developed ways of measuring vulnerability.



The team developed 10 indicators of community vulnerability, including housing and transportation cost burden, home ownership, household income, level of education, racial/cultural composition, transit dependence, language, and age.

The team also identified a suite of characteristics based on known combinations of hazard, location, units, stories, and age that are associated with vulnerable building types commonly found in the Bay Area.

Finally the team mapped these community and housing vulnerability characteristics across the region, along with seismic and flood hazards, to identify areas of overlap. This allowed the project team to zoom into parts of the Bay Area that have unique vulnerability profiles and that need targeted strategies to ensure that growth is both safe and in fulfillment of local and regional growth goals. Throughout the summer of 2014, the team will, in conjunction with a project team from AECOM and other stakeholders, use the results of the vulnerability assessment to develop a suite of planning strategies for local jurisdictions that will help guide how future development will respond to both existing and future vulnerabilities.

Indianapolis Cultural Trail Provides Healthy Transportation Options and Draws Development

Jamison Hutchins, Bicycle and Pedestrian Coordinator
City of Indianapolis – Office of Sustainability

Lauren Day, Program Manager
Indianapolis Cultural Trail, Inc.

Since May 2013, Indianapolis and the Indianapolis Cultural Trail have celebrated multiple successes: increased pedestrian and bicycle traffic, the implementation of a public bike sharing system in downtown Indianapolis, and recognition as a national model for protected biking and walking facilities. The Indianapolis Cultural Trail, which was partially funded by a \$20.5 million Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) grant, is an eight mile landscaped path that

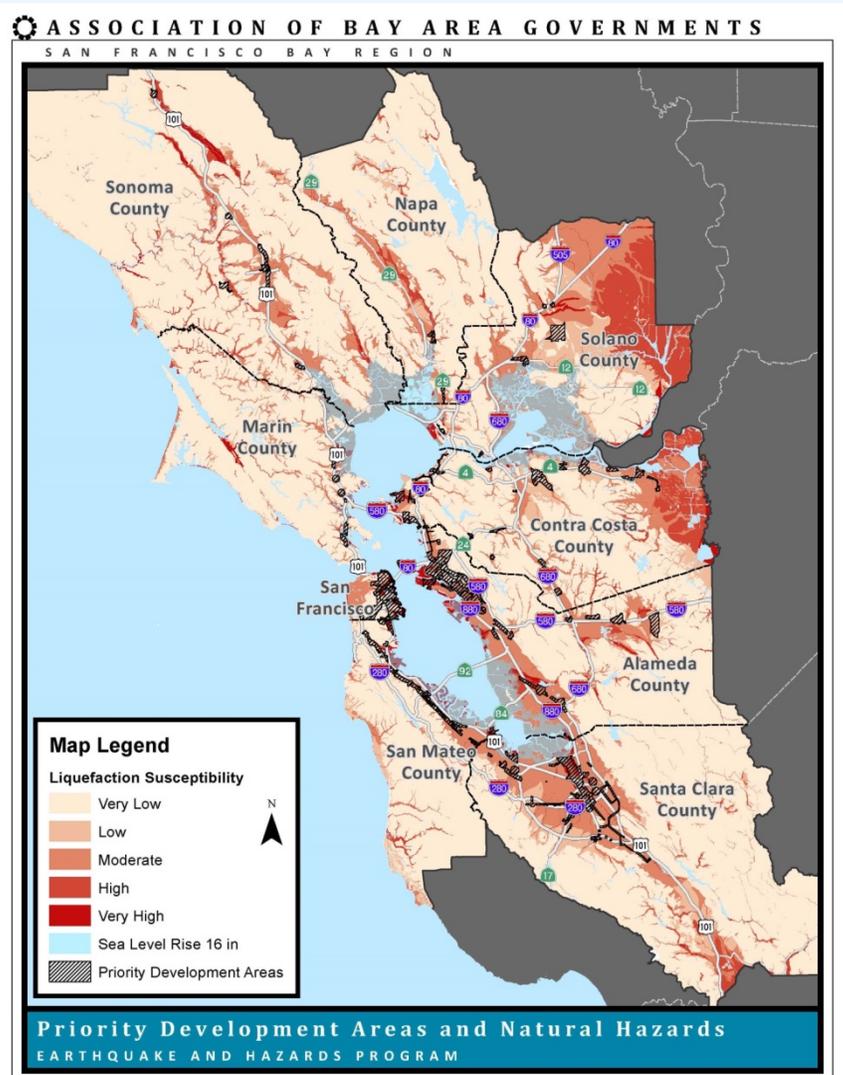


Figure 6: A multi-hazard map of the Bay Area, showing designated Priority Development Areas. The Bay Area is subject to both seismic hazards and flooding due to sea level rise. This map illustrates the location of the region's Priority Development Areas in relation to mapped natural hazards. While the whole region is subject to strong ground shaking from earthquakes, liquefaction and flooding tend to be concentrated around the bay margins, where the majority of existing development and infrastructure already exist.



winds through downtown Indianapolis and is both a linear park and a commuter route, leading to Indianapolis being ranked among the New York Times [52 Places to Go in 2014](#).

May 2013 was the official grand opening of the full eight miles of the [Indianapolis Cultural Trail: A Legacy of Gene and Marilyn Glick](#). Former Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood, Indiana Congressman Andre Carson, and Indianapolis Mayor Greg Ballard, along with other community partners, started the appropriately-named “Get Down On It” celebration with a ribbon cutting, followed by a full day of free public programming all along the Cultural Trail. Hundreds of people enjoyed the live entertainment, activity and music that lined the eight miles of downtown Indy.



Figure 7: Indiana Pacers Bikeshare user.

Indianapolis Cultural Trail, Inc., the nonprofit responsible for managing the Cultural Trail, launched Indiana Pacers Bikeshare on April 22. Indianapolis now joins more than 30 U.S. cities with a public bike sharing system. All 25 bike share stations are located on or near the Cultural Trail giving Indy residents and visitors access to 250 bikes through a day pass or an annual membership. Pacers Bikeshare adds to an existing network of world-class bicycle infrastructure and is expected to enhance the user experience by offering an exciting, healthy, and new way to travel the city.

The Cultural Trail, while providing a safe and beautiful way to move about the city, is also an economic driver. More than 28 new businesses have opened Trail-side since 2013, and a successful mixed-use development nearby cites the Cultural Trail as a number one amenity. Most notably Virginia Avenue and the Fletcher Place neighborhood have seen intense investment and growth in the years since the Trail construction began. What used to be abandoned brownfields and surface parking are now market-rate apartments, condos, and thriving businesses. Sixty-three percent of surveyed Trail-side businesses report significantly increased pedestrian and bicycle traffic.

A strong example of the Trail’s impact in the development world is the recently announced mixed-use high rise Market Tower along the Alabama Street Corridor of the Trail, which is planned to break ground in summer of 2014. Considering that two previous efforts to redevelop the former home of Market Square Arena had failed, this project is an indication of the economic health of Indianapolis as well as the lasting impact of and confidence in the value of the Trail.

The Trail has raised the bar for other bicycle facilities in the city. The high level of protection and security it has offered users has pushed Indianapolis’ bike program to connect to the Trail, with facilities that offer comparable levels of protection. While Indianapolis has striped over 80 miles of on-street bike lanes and 70 miles of greenway trails, physically-separated lanes and trails are the preferred choice moving forward. Indy’s dedication to quality bicycle



Figure 8: Trail-side businesses are accessible by foot or by bike.



infrastructure is reflected in its selection as one of six cities nationwide to participate in the [Green Lane Project](#), which aims to highlight the benefits of protected cycle tracks. Transportation Secretary Anthony Foxx recently visited Indianapolis for the Green Lane Project kick off summit to highlight the Cultural Trail as an example of a successful project that received funding from the TIGER program.

A more detailed [June 2013 case study](#) on the Indianapolis Cultural Trail is available on the Partnership for Sustainable Communities website.

Bike Friendly Business Districts in Long Beach Redefine Shopping and Dining Locally

Charles Gandy, President
Livable Communities, Inc.

Bike Friendly Business Districts (BFDs) are a new development strategy that business improvement districts and main street associations are using to help members to grow in place. Originating in Long Beach, California in 2010, BFDs have reshaped and reactivated many of the city's commercial districts resulting in significantly increased revenue and new jobs.

Business improvement districts use BFD campaigns to engage the city, local business owners, and local shoppers and diners. They start with the premise that the best customers live within a mile of the shopping district – biking or walking distance. The argument is that safe pedestrian and bicycle access, combined with incentives to shop locally, will encourage more neighbors to spend money in the neighborhood. Four business improvement districts in Long Beach created BFDs and reported the following successes:

1. Installation of street decks (or parklets), a small sidewalk extension that provides public greenspace and other amenities, at four restaurants resulted in a 30 percent increase in gross revenue and the hiring of four to six new employees at each business
2. Bicycle-related businesses have opened and/or expanded in each district
3. The city has significantly increased investment in bicycle facilities and traffic calming strategies in adjacent neighborhoods
4. Significantly more people are walking or bicycling to shop after business partners installed infrastructure and began campaigns
5. Total customer parking spaces increased through added bicycle parking

Building on the [League of American Bicyclists 5 Es](#) and adding a sixth “E”, BFD strategies are organized via the framework shown below:

Engineering

- Create bicycle parking near store fronts
- Install street decks or small parks to attract potential customers
- Provide bicycle/pedestrian access to the BFD with bicycle lanes, sharrows, protected bicycle lanes, traffic calming infrastructure, and bicycle-friendly safety signage

Education

- Host seminars to engage and educate all members of



Figure 9: Example of a street deck.



the business improvement district or main street association on the BFD program

- Share successful marketing strategies focused on the benefits of biking and walking to replace short car trips
- Distribute safety education materials through schools, churches, neighborhood associations, etc.
- Host bicycle education classes, rodeos, group rides, and social events

Encouragement

- Offer special savings to those who shop by bicycling, walking, or transit. Create a branded outreach program with banners, postcards, posters, brochures, email newsletters, social media, and websites
- Encourage local businesses to use cargo and delivery bikes branded with the business improvement district's name and colors
- Create a bicycle-friendly map of the BFD
- Nominate bicycle district ambassadors (e.g. scouts, teens, and college students)

Enforcement

- Partner with local law enforcement to first educate on road rules for bicycles, cars, and pedestrians, and then enforce tickets and fines

Evaluation

- Use online surveys to measure before and after impacts of BFD initiatives
- Hold frequent check-in meetings with key BFD stakeholders

Events

- Host BFD events such as:
 - Bicycle + Fashion shows to showcase local boutiques and bicycle shops
 - Festivals and open street events
- Add BFD elements such as bike valet, free or low cost bicycle repair, short bicycle safety clinics, and helmet fittings to other events in the business improvement district



Figure 10: Delivery bike for local business.

Charlie Gandy created and developed the Bicycle Friendly Business District strategy in collaboration with [Bike Long Beach](#). He has led seminars and coaching sessions for elected officials, planners, business improvement district managers, and advocates on creating successful BFD strategies. For more information, email him at: gandy.charles@gmail.com.

Atlanta Uses Redevelopment at Transit Stations to Reach Community Goals

Amanda Rhein, Senior Director of Transit Oriented Development
Metropolitan Atlanta Rapid Transit Authority (MARTA)

The Metropolitan Atlanta Rapid Transit Authority's (MARTA) transit oriented development (TOD) program has made much progress over the past few years building upon MARTA's previous TOD efforts in the 1980s, 1990s, and 2000s. As the United



States' ninth largest transit system, the areas around MARTA's 38 rail stations present some of the most desirable opportunities for TOD in the southeastern United States. MARTA has three main goals for advancing a TOD program:

1. Increase revenue
2. Increase ridership
3. Create vibrant communities around MARTA rail stations

In the first quarter of 2014, MARTA took four significant steps toward its goals. The agency: (a) launched an exciting partnership with the [Urban Land Institute \(ULI\)](#); (b) advanced negotiations with Walton Communities on the King Memorial TOD; (c) selected a development partner for the Avondale TOD; and, (d) released a Request for Proposals for the Edgewood/Candler Park TOD.

The Atlanta District Council of the Urban Land Institute recently invited MARTA to participate in the newly-created Livable Communities Council. Their mission is to improve metro Atlanta's quality of life through smart growth, with a particular focus on TOD and walkable communities. Comprised of 50 local leaders in real estate development and public policy, the Livable Communities Coalition will provide key input on development around existing and future transit. The group will be working with MARTA over the next six months on two specific projects: identifying a viable TOD opportunity on the south or west line and transforming Lindbergh Station into a model TOD.



Figure 11: Rendering of the proposed development at King Memorial Station.

In summer 2013, MARTA released a Request for Qualifications and a Request for Proposals for King Memorial Station. MARTA received several strong submissions, and in December 2013 the MARTA Board of Directors approved the selection of Metro Atlanta-based Walton Communities as the development partner. Walton Communities' proposed development program for King Memorial currently includes 386 multifamily units, 20 percent for affordable housing, and approximately 15,000 square feet of ground floor retail.

MARTA also partnered with the Decatur Development Authority to redevelop the south parking lots at Avondale Station in the City of Decatur. In early 2014, staff from the two organizations reviewed and evaluated qualifications and proposals and the MARTA Board of Directors authorized negotiations with the Decatur Development Authority and the recommended development partner, Columbia Ventures. The team envisions a vibrant mixed-use node that complements surrounding development, enhances accessibility to the site and station, celebrates the unique character of the station, and establishes a sense of place.



Figure 12: Rendering of proposed central plaza at Avondale Station.

The proposed project is slated to include 530 apartments, including 116 affordable senior independent living units, 74 condominiums, and 25,000 square feet of commercial space. The site plan features a central plaza, which will serve as an amenity for residents, transit riders, and the surrounding community.



Partnering with Invest Atlanta, MARTA released a Request for Proposals for the redevelopment of the south parking lots at Edgewood/Candler Park Station in February 2014 with responses due that April. The five-acre parcel in the Edgewood neighborhood is within walking distance of the Edgewood Retail Shopping Center to the west and a bakery to the east, with the surrounding community consisting primarily of residential uses.

The community has articulated a vision for mixed-use development with a focus on green space that provides increased connectivity to the surrounding community. These exciting examples, and a number of other projects near MARTA rail stations, help satisfy the demand for livable, vibrant communities that has grown from the community's 40-year investment in public transit in Atlanta.



Figure 13: Rendering of proposed redevelopment at Edgewood/Candler Park Station.

FHWA Texas Division Receives “Good Neighbor” Sustainability Achievement Award

On April 30, 2014, USDOT awarded the FHWA Texas Division the “Good Neighbor” Award during the 2014 USDOT Sustainability Achievement Awards ceremony. The FHWA Texas Division won this award largely due to the leadership of Environmental and Transportation Planning Coordinator Kirk Fauver., He was recognized for his efforts related to the annual PSC Region 6 livability summits, which took place over the past four years in Dallas, Houston, San Antonio, and Austin. Over 500 participants attended the summits to learn about best management practices, real world examples, and public-private partnerships related to livability, sustainability, and community building. The FHWA Texas Division is planning a fifth livability summit for August 2014 in El Paso, Texas, in col.laboration with the Region 6 PSC.



Figure 14: Photo of Kirk Fauver (left) receiving the “Good Neighbor” Sustainability Award from Al Alonzi (right) Acting FHWA Texas Division Administrator.

Spotlight on Region 10

Region 10 (Alaska, Idaho, Oregon, and Washington) reported multiple recent livability-related updates. Here are some highlights from the region:

- **Streamlined Contracting for Livability Projects Receiving both FHWA and HUD Funding** – The Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) and the FHWA Washington Division successfully saved money and time in combining Federal resources from FHWA and HUD in support of a roadway reconstruction project in Sultan, Washington. The scope of work for the project included replacement of the sanitary sewer system under the road, replacement of the curb and gutter, curb ramp upgrades, full pavement reconstruction, and a new sidewalk. The agencies were able to save money and time because of the [Livability Initiative Under Special Experimental Project](#)



[\(SEP\) Number 14 \(SEP-14\)](#), which allows States to request approval to bypass FHWA contracting requirements in favor of HUD's requirements for jointly funded livability and sustainability projects. The purpose of SEP-14 is to assess: the effectiveness of using HUD funding for highway projects, the impact on competition whenever HUD's requirements are used on a project funded jointly by FHWA and HUD, and the extent to which the alignment of contracting requirements promotes livability. Agencies may use this strategy for any eligible project that is too complex to split into multiple contracts.

- **Tribal comprehensive planning and project development workshop in Shelton, Washington** – Local Partnership staff from HUD and United States Department of Agriculture – Rural Development (USDA-RD) worked with the Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians (ATNI) and the Energy Innovation Foundation to host a tribal comprehensive planning and project development workshop in Shelton, Washington. More than 54 participants represented 19 different tribes from the Pacific Northwest. In addition to serving as a forum to share best practices and receive technical assistance, the workshop also provided an opportunity for tribes to discuss community planning and sustainable project development needs with each other, and to provide feedback to Federal agencies. During the workshop, Federal staff provided an update on PSC priorities and policies, and facilitated discussions with participants to elicit feedback on Federal support for sustainable community planning and implementation.
- **City of Kelso's Economic Development Toolkit Aided by Smart Growth Implementation Assistance** – Staff from HUD and EPA attended the kick-off call for the City of Kelso's Smart Growth Implementation Assistance from EPA. The goal of the technical assistance is to develop a replicable economic development toolkit that not only advances economic development, but also focuses on infill and redevelopment to achieve better environmental outcomes, as well as address health and equity issues in the community.
- **Strategic Planning Retreat** – More than 20 staff from HUD, FTA, FHWA, EPA, and USDA-RD attended a strategic planning retreat for the local PSC. Attendees agreed upon three themes to guide their work in the next year: (1) sustaining Federal investments by supporting recipients of Sustainable Communities' grants; (2) promoting community health and resilience by sharing resources and best practices with communities in need; and, (3) institutionalizing PSC work by building capacity in interagency regional and State-based partnerships through outreach and collaboration. Each State-based team proposed action items for 2014, and discussed strategies to leverage local work to benefit the communities they serve throughout the four-State region.
- **Grandview, Washington Seeks to Make Downtown More Inviting for All Users** – Inspired initially by a streetscape architect hired by the small city in the early 1990s, Grandview wanted to help people walk more. In 2006, Grandview created an action plan called "Downtown Alive!" to reinvigorate its downtown through streetscape improvements that would make it more comfortable and safe. By 2008, Grandview had raised \$3.8 million from 10 different sources to fund the improvements. In 2009, Grandview received its largest funding contribution of \$2.03 million from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA). WSDOT, which administered all of the Federal and some of the State funds, partnered with local officials to make the project a success. In 2011, the project received the Director's Award from the WSDOT Office of Highways and Local Programs and the FHWA Washington Division Office. Washington's [Complete Streets & Main Street Highways Program](#), conducted with FHWA, featured "Downtown Alive!" as a case study.



Announcements/New Resources

- The FHWA webinar on “Programs and Policies to Advance Livability” occurred on April 17. [Click here](#) to view the recording.
- The FHWA Human Environment (HE) Digest is a weekly electronic compilation of the latest announcements and resources pertinent to the human environment. [Register here](#) to receive the HE Digest.
- The FHWA report, [Advancing a Sustainable Highway System: Highlights of FHWA Sustainability Activities](#), includes information on livability and the human environment.
- FHWA released a [report](#) that summarizes the progress and results of FHWA's Nonmotorized Transportation Pilot Program (NTPP) from August 2005 through December 2013.
- FHWA updated the [Land Use and Transportation Toolkit](#)
- Join the discussion! The FHWA Livable Communities Discussion Board is an online public forum for users to participate in discussion threads and engage with colleagues on questions and ideas related to livable communities. Have a question or idea to post? Check out the site at: <https://www.transportationresearch.gov/dot/fhwa/livablecommunities/>.

