

**HEALTH IN TRANSPORTATION WORKING GROUP
2015 ANNUAL REPORT**

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The Health in Transportation Working Group 2015 Annual Report provides an overview of the Working Group's activities and accomplishments in 2015, summarizes other U.S. DOT health-related accomplishments, and documents its progress toward the recommendations laid out in the 2014 Annual Report. The report also offers recommendations based on the Working Group's self-assessment.

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CONTENTS

1. Introduction.....	1
2. Working Group Overview	1
3. 2015 Working Group Accomplishments	1
4. Other Health in Transportation Accomplishments in 2015	5
5. Progress Toward Achieving 2015 Recommendations.....	8
6. Findings and Recommendations for the Future of the Working Group	11

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1. INTRODUCTION

The U.S. Department of Transportation's (DOT) Health in Transportation Working Group examines and promotes the Department's existing policies and programs and their impacts on health-related issues such as air quality, active transportation, environmental review, noise, safety, livable communities, and access to health-related facilities. This report provides an overview of the Working Group's activities and accomplishments in 2015, summarizes other U.S. DOT health-related accomplishments, and documents its progress toward the recommendations laid out in the 2014 Annual Report. The report also offers recommendations based on the Working Group's self-assessment.

2. WORKING GROUP OVERVIEW

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) established the Health in Transportation Working Group in early 2012 in response to growing interest in the intersection of health and transportation within the agency. The Working Group initially included representatives from various FHWA Offices, including: Chief Counsel, Federal Lands Highway, Human Environment, Natural Environment, Planning, Project Development and Environmental Review, Resource Center Environment and Planning Technical Service Teams, Safety, and Transportation Policy Studies. Since then, the Working Group has expanded its membership to include representatives of other modal administrations, including the Federal Transit Administration (FTA), National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), and the Office of the Secretary of Transportation (OST).

The Working Group's purpose is to develop an agency-wide understanding of health in transportation, identify aspects of existing agency programs that relate to health, and address health-related concerns and communicate these concerns with management. The Working Group develops a work plan annually that lays out its activities for the year.

3. 2015 WORKING GROUP ACCOMPLISHMENTS

FRAMEWORK FOR BETTER INTEGRATING HEALTH INTO TRANSPORTATION CORRIDOR PLANNING

With oversight from the Working Group, FHWA produced a draft of the [Framework for Better Integrating Health into Transportation Corridor Planning](#), which is an action-oriented, flexible guide for considering health at each step in an agency's existing corridor planning process. The Working Group recruited five agencies to beta test the Framework, applying some or all of its components to one of their corridors. Each beta test agency provided feedback on the Framework, which will be documented in case studies. The feedback received from the beta test agencies will also inform the final Framework.

TRANSPORTATION AND HEALTH TOOL

The Working Group supported the Office of the Secretary, the Federal Highway Administration, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in the development of the [Transportation and Health Tool](#) (THT). The THT provides data on 14 transportation and health indicators relating to safety, active transportation, air quality, connectivity, and equity. Indicator data are available for States, Metropolitan Statistical Areas, and Urbanized Areas, and scores are provided for each indicator, allowing users to see how a jurisdiction compares to its peers in terms of public health performance. The tool also provides 25 evidence-based strategies that transportation practitioners can use to address health. The Tool was released to the public in October 2015 and has been publicized through several webinars and conference presentations.

COORDINATION WITH CDC

In 2014, DOT and CDC held a workshop in Washington, DC, to identify ways that the two agencies could work more closely together on transportation and health issues. That Workshop resulted in a series of next steps for the DOT and CDC to undertake together. In 2015, DOT and CDC implemented some of those next steps, including conducting a second CDC-DOT Workshop in Atlanta, GA. That workshop generated additional collaboration ideas and resulted in next steps, one of which was implemented: a webinar to teach CDC staff about the DOT transportation planning process.

CDC-DOT WORKSHOP

The Working Group held its second Workshop with CDC in Atlanta, GA, in March 2015. The purpose of the Workshop was to identify ways for the two agencies to coordinate existing efforts and identify new opportunities to work together on the connections between health and transportation. DOT presented an overview of the collaborative work done by CDC and DOT since the first Workshop. There were four breakout sessions, each of which led to several action items. The session topics were:

- Promoting Health and Safety in Active Transportation
- Ladders of Opportunity and Achieving Health Equity
- CDC-DOT Data Linkages
- Coordination among CDC and DOT Stakeholder Agencies

The Volpe Center developed a report that summarizes the discussions and outcomes of the Workshop.

TRANSPORTATION PLANNING PROCESS WEBINAR

One of the next steps identified during the 2015 CDC-DOT Workshop was to hold webinars for DOT and CDC to share information about each agencies' funding programs. To provide a basis for DOT funding programs, the FHWA Planning Office conducted a transportation planning process webinar for CDC staff on November 17. The webinar included an overview on how DOT Federal-aid funding is distributed to States and regions. The webinar also covered some

major grant programs such as TIGER. This information will help CDC staff understand at which points in the decisionmaking process they and their grantees may have opportunities to influence the transportation planning process.

TRB ENGAGEMENT THROUGH HEALTH AND TRANSPORTATION SUBCOMMITTEE

The [TRB Health and Transportation Subcommittee](#) hosted a workshop at the 2015 TRB Annual Meeting, which was called Tools to Support Health and Transportation Planning and Analysis. The workshop highlighted the [Framework for Better Integrating Health into Transportation Corridor Planning](#) and the [THT](#).

TRB's Technical Advisory Council approved a new [Task Force on Arterials and Public Health](#). The purpose of the Task Force is to develop a research agenda that will inform the planning, design and operation of arterials while considering health implications. By bringing together a group with diverse interests and tasking it with a single purpose, the Task Force will identify what type of research is most relevant and needed.

The focus of the [September-October 2015 edition of TR News](#) was on the links between public health and transportation, and the research that Federal and other agencies and entities are conducting on that topic. It also featured transportation agencies that are conducting studies and implementing projects and programs that aim to improve health. Several Working Group members wrote and reviewed articles for the issue.

SELF-ASSESSMENT

In 2015, the Working Group conducted a self-assessment to identify how it should change to adapt to the current health in transportation environment within and outside of DOT. The Volpe Center developed a survey of Working Group members to learn how members felt the Working Group has been functioning and to identify ways to meet the current and future needs of its members and DOT broadly.

The Volpe Center conducted eight telephone interviews of Working Group members and Office Directors to have more in-depth discussions about the agency's health in transportation needs and how the Working Group should address them. The Volpe Center analyzed the survey and interview results and identified two themes: "Action-Oriented or Information-Sharing?" and "Thinking Outside of the Headquarters Box."

The Working Group discussed the two themes during its December 2015 meeting. Also during that meeting, the Working Group presented the methodology and preliminary results of the Self-Assessment to the DOT leadership that were in attendance. To briefly summarize, Working Group members agreed that, while there was interest in producing content on health in transportation subtopics such as access to services, health decisionmaking tools, and non-motorized transportation, many members did not have additional time to commit to these activities. In addition, many felt that quarterly in-person meetings with more focused agendas would help the Working Group better pursue its purpose.

Based on the discussion during the December meeting and the results of the survey and interview findings, the Working Group agreed to a series of next steps. The Self-Assessment Report details the entire process; however the next steps are listed here:

Element	Next Steps
Working Group Structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Split the Working Group into two categories: active participants and interested parties. • Meet in-person on a quarterly basis for no more than three hours at a time. • Include a semi-annual Executive Session as part of the meetings to provide a general overview of Working Group activities for DOT leadership. This will also give leadership an opportunity to provide direction to the Working Group. • Between meetings, send internal updates via email to the active Working Group members. • Add one or two “co-lead” positions to share the work load of leading the group and to provide another perspective among the Working Group leadership. • Develop and maintain a SharePoint site to archive past Working Group documents (e.g., work plans, meeting notes, and annual reports) and to facilitate document reviews.
Topics and Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus more on its partner agencies, stakeholders, and field offices to share information about health in transportation with them and to engage them in related discussions. • Produce and/or provide input to products that promote health in transportation within DOT. • Develop health in transportation research ideas for DOT or other entities to address.
Outreach to Interested Parties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manage communications with interested parties using existing communication mechanisms to issue quarterly updates that provide information on updates from the Working Group, new health in transportation resources available, webinars, and available trainings. • Provide interested parties with opportunities to share ideas for case study and webinar topics to highlight health in transportation activities in the field.

HEALTH IN TRANSPORTATION WEBSITE

In 2015, the Working Group updated the [Health in Transportation website](#) to make it easier to navigate and maintain. In particular, the new website has a streamlined Resources page that includes additional relevant health in transportation links.

Typically the Working Group tracks visitation to the Health in Transportation website, a technical error eliminated this opportunity for 2015. The Working Group will resume tracking and reporting website visitation in 2016.

2015 WORK PLAN

The Working Group developed its 2015 Work Plan, which outlined its planned activities for the year. The activities were split into two categories: external activities that engage individuals and organizations outside the Working Group (including within and outside of DOT), and internal activities that will improve the function of the Working Group.

4. OTHER HEALTH IN TRANSPORTATION ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN 2015

In addition to the accomplishments in 2015 described in Section 3, many members had other health in transportation accomplishments within their roles outside of the Working Group. These accomplishments are listed below.

RESOURCES

- As part of the U.S. DOT's [Action Plan to Increase Walking and Biking and Reduce Pedestrian and Bicyclist Fatalities](#), FHWA, FTA, and NHTSA sponsored bicycle and pedestrian assessments in every state across the country. A [summary report](#) was released in October.
- FHWA Office of the Human Environment sponsored a webinar titled [Livability Principles at Highway Interchanges](#) on February 26.
- FHWA released the [Environmental Justice Reference Guide](#) in April.
- FHWA released the [Separated Bike Lane Planning and Design Guide](#) in May.
- FHWA released the [Bicycle and Pedestrian Funding, Design, and Environmental Review: Addressing Common Misconceptions](#) in August. The document addresses these common misconceptions and distinguishes between Federal standards and State and local practice. Where possible, links identify resources that provide more detail on the topic. This document focuses on three policy areas: funding, design, and environmental review.
- As part of FHWA Office of Safety's [Every Day Counts 3 \(EDC3\) Initiative](#), they are working toward the goal of institutionalizing [road diets](#) in 26 States by December 2016.
- FHWA and NHTSA supported the Roadway Safety Foundation in the December launch of the [Clearinghouse for Older Road User Safety \(ChORUS\)](#).
- FHWA Office of Human Environment released [Case Studies in Delivering Safe, Comfortable and Connected Pedestrian and Bicycle Networks](#) in December. This

document provides an overview of pedestrian and bicycle network principles and highlights project examples from communities across the country.

- The Urban Land Institute is conducting a [Healthy Corridors study](#). There are four test cities: Boise, Nashville, Houston, and Los Angeles.
- The [Safe States Alliance](#), an organization and professional association for injury and violence prevention professionals, is finishing a pedestrian injury surveillance report which will make recommendations to state departments of health on how to do pedestrian injury surveys.
- The University of Minnesota Accessibility Observatory is starting a [National Accessibility Evaluation Pooled Fund Study](#), which will implement a measurement of accessibility to jobs across the entire U.S. where each pooled-fund partner will have direct digital access to detailed accessibility datasets.
- The FHWA [Road Safety Audit \(RSA\) program](#) is working with cities participating in the [Mayors' Challenge for Safer People, Safer Streets](#) to complete transit safety audits in four cities in Florida, North Carolina, Arizona, and Oregon. This is an opportunity for cities to evaluate their transit systems, transit stops, and road safety near transit facilities.

FEDERAL FUNDING PROGRAMS

- The Safe States Alliance awarded grants to [Pedestrian Injury Prevention Action Teams](#) to support local interagency partnerships to promote pedestrian education and enforcement. Grantees include California, Kentucky, Oregon, and Rhode Island.
- The National Center for Mobility Management awarded [Grants for Innovative Mobility Solutions for Health Care Services](#) totaling \$400,000 to 16 communities to improve residents' access health care services. Program areas included transportation to follow-up care to avoid hospital readmission; dialysis transportation; transportation for primary care, preventive care, and health education; and transportation for behavioral health appointments.
- [National Aging and Disability Transportation Center](#) put out a request for proposals in February for projects that remove barriers to transportation services and expand mobility options for seniors and individuals with disabilities.

SOME RELATED CONFERENCES AND MEETINGS THAT MEMBERS PARTICIPATED IN

- [New Partners for Smart Growth Conference](#) January 29-31 in Baltimore, MD.
- [Mayor's Pedestrians Advisory Council](#) on February 5 in Chicago.
- The FHWA points-of-contact for the [Partnership for Sustainable Communities](#) met on February 25 to discuss livability activities and priorities.
- NHTSA participated in the [National Lifesavers Conference](#) in Chicago on March 15-17.
- The FHWA Office of Planning, Environment, and Realty shared information on its bicycle and pedestrian research efforts at the [National Bike Summit](#) on March 10-12.
- FTA held a summit to kick off the [Rides to Wellness](#) initiative on March 11 at U.S. DOT Headquarters. The goal of Rides to Wellness is to increase access to health care, improve health outcomes, and reduce health care costs.

- As part of the [Ladders of Opportunity](#) program, U.S. DOT hosted a [Connectivity Executive Roundtable](#) on April 27 to determine the best way to measure connectivity and integrate the measure into performance-based planning.
- [Moving Active Transportation to Higher Ground](#), Washington, DC on April 13-14.
- OST presented on accessibility to healthcare services and designing communities and roadways for older adults at [Aging in 2015: the Department of Health and Human Services and White House Conference on Aging](#) on July 13.
- TRB's [Committee on Transportation-Related Noise and Vibration \(ADC40\)](#) had a meeting with [NoiseCon](#) as a part of Inter-Noise on August 10-13, which focused on health. Participants gave presentations on what research and programs they were working on.
- FHWA presented about the Transportation and Health Tool to the American Public Health Association at their [Annual Meeting and Exposition](#), October 31-November 4 in Chicago.
- DOT presented on the Transportation and Health Tool and other health-related efforts at the National Walking Summit in Washington, DC on October 28-30.

COORDINATION WITH OTHER ORGANIZATIONS AND GROUPS

- FHWA worked with CDC to develop a draft of the [National Household Travel Survey](#) that includes new questions about bicycling and walking, access to transit, activity level, and health status.
- FHWA is conducting a feasibility study to determine if it is possible, given the interagency coordination required, to supplement the [CDC National Health Interview Survey \(NHIS\)](#) with transportation data from outside data sources. The proposal is to attach transportation variables to the survey results to provide a better transportation context. The feasibility study will pilot the idea in four States.
- [Mayors' Challenge for Safer People, Safer Streets](#), which kicked off in January, is an initiative in the Office of the Secretary of Transportation, through which Secretary Anthony Foxx challenged mayors and other elected city officials around the country to lead a call to action to improve bicyclist and pedestrian safety, and to form local action teams to advance safety and accessibility goals by taking action on one or more of seven challenge activities.
- Several Working Group members contributed to the [September-October 2015 edition of TR News](#), which featured health and transportation. This effort is described more fully on page 3.

5. PROGRESS TOWARD ACHIEVING 2015 RECOMMENDATIONS

This section lists the recommendations from the 2014 Annual Report, including a status update for each and a brief discussion on how the Working Group will move forward to satisfy each recommendation.

INFLUENCING ACTION AT TRANSPORTATION PLANNING AGENCIES

- **Recommendation #1:** Expand Communication with External Audiences
 - Status Update:
 - The Working Group updated the Health in Transportation website in 2015 and is developing case studies on successful partnerships between State DOTs and State Health Departments.
 - Moving Forward:
 - The Working Group will continue to update the website as new resources become available.
 - The Working Group will continue to develop the case studies already in-progress and seek out topics for future case studies.
 - The Volpe Center will provide additional support for outreach and marketing activities, submissions of materials to existing communication mechanisms, etc.
- **Recommendation #2:** Co-Sponsor U.S. DOT Activities that Relate to Health
 - Status Update:
 - Working Group members participated in many health-related activities throughout the year, such as sponsoring bicycle/pedestrian assessments in every State; releasing the Environmental Justice Reference Guide and the Separated Bike Lane Planning and Design Guide, launching the Clearinghouse for Older Road User Safety (ChORUS); and issuing to the Office of Management and Budget a draft of the National Household Travel Survey that includes new questions about bicycling and walking, access to transit, activity level, and health status (See Section 4 for more activities).
 - Moving Forward
 - Working Group members will continue to provide updates on their activities related to health and transportation. Members will look for opportunities to work across modes and offices on projects related to health.

INTERAGENCY COORDINATION AND PARTNERSHIPS

- **Recommendation #3:** Continue Coordination with CDC
 - Status Update:
 - The Working Group conducted a workshop with CDC in March 2015 in Atlanta. It also held a webinar on the transportation planning process for

the CDC's Built Environment Work Group and the HinT Working Group on November 17.

- Moving Forward:
 - The Working Group will continue to work with CDC on the action items identified during the March 2015 CDC-DOT Workshop.
 - The Working Group will conduct a second joint webinar on CDC and U.S. DOT funding programs that will help the agencies identify strategies for working together to use funds more effectively, as well as opportunities to leverage additional funding.
- **Recommendation #4:** Participate in External Health-Related Activities
 - Status Update:
 - Working Group members participated in several health-related meetings and conferences, including presenting on the Transportation and Health Tool at the Annual Meeting of the American Public Health Association; discussing accessibility to healthcare services and designing communities and roadways for older adults at Aging in 2015: the Department of Health and Human Services and White House Conference on Aging; and sharing information on FHWA's bicycle and pedestrian research efforts at the National Bike Summit (See Section 4 for more activities).
 - Moving Forward:
 - The Working Group will continue to look for opportunities to communicate the efforts made within the Working Group to improve practitioners' understanding of health in transportation and provide tools for better assessing the impacts associated with that relationship.
 - The Working Group will shift some of its focus from looking inward at what DOT Headquarters offices are doing regarding health in transportation toward looking outward to its partner agencies, stakeholders, and field offices to share information about health in transportation with them and to engage them in related discussions.

ENGAGING U.S. DOT STAKEHOLDERS

- **Recommendation #5:** Conduct Outreach to Transportation Professionals
 - Status Update:
 - The Working Group invited selected FHWA and FTA field staff to join the Working Group.
 - Moving Forward:
 - The Working Group will provide field staff and other interested parties with opportunities to engage on Working Group activities and provide them with regular updates on new resources related to health in transportation. These individuals will be on the Working Group's interested FHWA staff list.

- The Working Group will develop health in transportation research ideas for U.S. DOT or other entities to address.
- **Recommendation #6:** Consider Expanding Working Group Membership within U.S. DOT
 - Status Update:
 - The Working Group gained new members in 2015 from offices that were already represented, plus the aforementioned field staff members.
 - Moving Forward:
 - As a result of the Self-Assessment, the Working Group will split the group into two categories of members: active members and interested parties. Active members will attend meetings and participate in Working Group activities and will utilize the current email list for internal communication. Interested parties will receive quarterly updates from Volpe on health in transportation resources and Working Group activities via an existing communication mechanism.
- **Recommendation #7:** Engage Leadership in Working Group Activities
 - Status Update:
 - Shari Schaftlein (FHWA Director of the Office of Human Environment) attended the July in-person meeting. At the December in-person meeting, 10 leaders from offices represented by Working Group members attended the Executive Session to learn about the Working Group's 2015 activities and to engage them in the self-assessment discussion.
 - Moving Forward:
 - The Working Group will continue to invite leadership to in-person meetings and encourage those who have attended to tell others about it.
 - The semi-annual Executive Session will become an official part of in-person meetings, to provide leadership with a high-level summary of Working Group activities.
- **Recommendation #8:** Distribute the Annual Report and Work Plan
 - Status Update:
 - The Working Group published its 2014 Annual Report on the Health in Transportation website and distributed it and the 2015 Work Plan to leadership.
 - Moving Forward:
 - The Working Group will publish the 2015 Annual Report on the Health in Transportation website. The Working Group will also distribute the Annual Report and the 2016 Work Plan to DOT leadership. In addition, the Working Group will email the Annual Report to interested DOT staff.
 - The Working Group should develop and maintain a SharePoint site to archive past Working Group documents (e.g., work plans, meeting notes, and annual reports) and to facilitate document reviews. Volpe will host the site.

6. FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE FUTURE OF THE WORKING GROUP

This section lists the recommendations for 2016, which were derived from the results of the Self-Assessment. These recommendations will be laid out further in the 2016 Work Plan.

WORKING GROUP STRUCTURE AND ORGANIZATION

- **Recommendation #1:** Split Working Group membership into two categories: active participants and interested parties.
 - The first category will consist of the members who commit to being active participants in Working Group activities. These members will make up the Health in Transportation Working Group.
 - The second category will be a means for outreach to any interested parties, open to U.S. DOT employees and external affiliates/individuals.
 - The Working Group will use an existing means of one-way communication to receive updates from the Working Group.
- **Recommendation #2:** Reconfigure Working Group meetings to include more in-person time and streamline the process of communicating individual updates.
 - The Working Group will meet quarterly, all of which will be in-person meetings of about 3 hours.
 - Two of these meetings will include a 1-hour Executive Session to provide a general overview of the Working Group’s activities to members and to invite leadership to attend a short portion of the meeting to get an update and to provide direction to the Working Group.
 - Between meetings there will be updates provided through an email list about health-related activities going on within U.S. DOT, provided to the Volpe Center by Working Group members. The following topics are of considerable interest:
 - Access to Services
 - Reducing Health Disparities and Environmental Justice
 - Health Decisionmaking Tools (e.g., Health/Community Impact Assessments and NEPA process)
 - Livability
 - Non-motorized Transportation
 - Planning
- **Recommendation #3:** The Working Group will add one or two “co-lead” positions to share the work load of leading the group and to provide another perspective among the Working Group leadership.
 - Jason Broehm from OST offered to be co-lead in late 2015. There may be a third co-lead when FTA hires a new employee.
- **Recommendation #4:** The Working Group should develop and maintain a SharePoint site to archive past Working Group documents and facilitate document reviews.

- This site will contain past and current work plans, meeting notes, and annual reports, etc.
- The Volpe Center will host the site.

WORKING GROUP FUNCTION AND PURPOSE

- **Recommendation #5:** The Working Group will take a more active role in communicating within and outside of U.S. DOT about the available resources and needs associated with health and transportation.
 - Rather than looking inward at what DOT Headquarters offices are doing regarding health in transportation, the Working Group should strive to share information about health in transportation with partner agencies, stakeholders, and field offices and to engage them in related discussions.
 - The Working Group will produce and/or provide input to products that promote health in transportation within U.S. DOT.
 - The Working Group will develop health in transportation research ideas for U.S. DOT or other entities to address.

OUTREACH TO INTERESTED PARTIES

- **Recommendation #6:** The Working Group will manage communications with a group of interested parties to inform them of Working Group activities and
 - The Working Group will use existing mechanisms (e.g., Human Environment Digest, Livability Newsletter, and Health in Transportation website) to issue quarterly updates that provide information on updates from the Working Group, new health in transportation resources available, upcoming webinars, and available trainings.
 - The Working Group will provide interested parties with opportunities to provide ideas for case study and webinar topics to highlight health in transportation activities in the field.