



# Archaeological Planning and Research

The federal Transportation Enhancements (TE) program funds 12 different types of transportation-related activities. The “Archaeological planning and research” activity allows communities to explore the history of transportation in America with archaeological excavations and surveys. The activity also helps build local economies by attracting tourists interested in transportation history. Since the TE program began in 1992, less than 1 percent of available TE funds have been programmed for archaeological planning and research projects.

## Eligible Projects

Working within Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) guidelines, each state Department of Transportation (DOT) determines the eligibility of TE projects for funding. Examples of projects that may be considered eligible include:

- Research, preservation planning, and interpretation;
- Developing interpretive signs, exhibits, and guides;
- Preparation and cataloging of artifacts for exhibition;
- Inventories and surveys.

## Examples of Successful Projects

*Geographic Information System, New Mexico.* With the help of \$333,750 in TE funds, several state agencies developed a geographically referenced database of archeological sites and survey boundaries throughout New Mexico. The database aids in transportation planning and archeological research efforts, allowing cultural and historical resources to be taken into consideration early in the planning process. Contact: New Mexico Office of Cultural Affairs, Historic Preservation Division, 505-827-6320.

*Grand Isle Archaeological Exhibit, Vermont.* This permanent interpretive exhibit features information about prehistoric Champlain Basin Native American culture as well as the early settlement, commerce, transportation, and Basin maritime history of Gordon's Landing. The project involved archaeological excavations and the establishment of the exhibit. TE funds provided \$6,000 towards the project's \$9,500 total. Contact: Town of Grand Isle, 802-372-8830.

*Castle Hill Survey, Alaska.* Alaska State Parks received \$825,000 in TE funds to restore the Castle Hill monument overlooking the town of Sitka. Restoration work included archaeological investigations in the vicinity of the monument, an area that was a major trading center in the 1800s. Some 300,000 artifacts and fragments were uncovered including textiles, feathers, coins, tools, and copper jewelry. Contact: Alaska Office of History and Archaeology, 907-269-8721.

Visit [www.enhancements.org/examples.asp](http://www.enhancements.org/examples.asp) for additional project examples.



Castle Hill before the archaeological survey. (Photo: AK Office of History and Archaeology)



Archaeological work at Castle Hill. (Photo: AK Office of History and Archaeology)

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## Federal Guidance



Projects that use TE funds must qualify as one or more of the 12 designated activities and relate to surface transportation in order to meet basic federal eligibility requirements. Sponsors should clearly explain the project's relationship to surface transportation in the proposal. Artifacts prepared for exhibition must be related to surface transportation or be artifacts recovered from locations within or along surface transportation corridors. Visit [www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/TE](http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/TE) for a full copy of the FHWA TE Guidance. To access the FHWA Guidance on Historical Preservation and Archaeology, visit <http://environment.fhwa.dot.gov/guidebook/chapters/v2ch10.htm>

## Financing TE Projects



Most states require TE project sponsors to provide at least 20 percent of project costs, also referred to as “matching funds.” In many states, the value of donated property, materials, and services; the labor of state and local government employees; and the costs of preliminary engineering may count towards the matching requirement. Federal, non-DOT funds can often be used as matching funds. Check with your state TE manager whether these “innovative financing options” are available in your state. Additional funds for this activity may come from a variety of sources such as local and state governments, foundations, nonprofit organizations, businesses, or other federal programs. Visit [www.enhancements.org/fundingsources.asp](http://www.enhancements.org/fundingsources.asp) for links to specific grant programs.

## Related Resources



- FHWA Historic Preservation and Archaeology Program: <http://environment.fhwa.dot.gov/histpres/>
- National Association of State Archaeologists: [www.uiowa.edu/~osa/nasa/](http://www.uiowa.edu/~osa/nasa/)
- Advisory Council on Historic Preservation: [www.achp.gov](http://www.achp.gov) or 202-606-8503
- Archnet, a database of laws and papers related to archaeology: <http://archnet.asu.edu/>
- “Archeology and Historic Preservation,” National Trust for Historic Preservation: [www.nthp.org](http://www.nthp.org) or 202-588-6000
- Archeology and Ethnology Program, National Park Service: [www.cr.nps.gov/aad/](http://www.cr.nps.gov/aad/)

## To Get Started



Inquiries about the TE application process should be directed to the TE manger at your state DOT. Visit [www.enhancements.org/contacts.asp](http://www.enhancements.org/contacts.asp) for TE manager contact information.