



TRANSPORTATION  
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ACTIVITY

# Historic Preservation

The federal Transportation Enhancements (TE) program funds 12 different types of transportation-related activities. Through the “Historic preservation” activity, communities rehabilitate and restore buildings significant to the history of transportation in America. These rehabilitated structures help to educate the public and to give communities a unique sense of character that attracts tourists and generates a vibrant economic life. Since the TE program began in 1992, approximately 5 percent of available TE funds have been programmed for historic preservation 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:

- Preservation of buildings and facades in historic districts;
- Restoration and reuse of historic buildings and structures with a strong relationship to transportation history;
- Restoration and reuse of historic buildings for transportation related purposes;
- Interpretive displays at historic sites;
- Creation of surface transportation history archives;
- Access improvements to historic sites and buildings

## Examples of Successful Projects

*Buckland Station Restoration, Nevada.* In 1860 and 1861 riders on the Pony Express, a high-speed mail delivery service between Missouri and California, made stops in Fort Churchill, Nevada. They rested at Buckland Station, the ranch home of Samuel S. Buckland, operator of the Overland Stage Company. In the 1990s, Nevada State Parks rehabilitated Buckland Station with the help of \$1.3 million in TE funds. Contact: Planning Division, Nevada State Parks, 775-687-4384.



Buckland Station

*Historic Façade Rehabilitation, South Dakota.* After decades of struggle with downtown blight, Rapid City began an economic turnaround with the help of \$147,000 in TE funds. The Rapid City Historic Preservation Commission worked with downtown businesses to refurbish two façades, enhancing the historic character of Rapid city and the pedestrian environment. Contact: Rapid City Historic Preservation Commission, 605-394-4120.



The General Morgan Inn on Morgan Square

*Morgan Square Revitalization, Tennessee.* Situated around Morgan Square in Greeneville, three elegant railroad hotels stand as a testament to the city’s railroading past. Main Street Greeneville used a \$3 million TE award to refurbish the square and hotels and revitalize the economic life of Greeneville, 423-639-7102.

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

## 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. Visit [www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/TE](http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/TE) for a full copy of the FHWA TE Guidance. Keep in mind the following when considering a historic preservation project:

- TE funds may not be used for the sole purpose of replicating a historic building.
- Sponsors should clearly explain the project's relationship to surface transportation in the proposal.
- Private sponsors should have a public co-sponsor to insure the continued responsibility on the part of the public agency for the project. Sponsors should plan for the future use and maintenance of the property in their proposal.
- A legal document developed in conjunction with the state DOT and FHWA division office should capture the protection of property rights for the use of a facility for a specific time period. The document should identify the responsible entity for managing, operating, and maintaining the facility, as well as outline conditions and terms for changes in these terms and/or sale or lease of the property (including possible payback of TE funds). The period of public access to the property should be commensurate with the expenditure of TE funds.
- Project sponsors should coordinate with appropriate historic agencies (e.g. State Historic Preservation Offices) to help assure that protective language is included in any agreement before the project is authorized for funding.
- If part of a facility is to be leased for a fee, federal funds should be used only for the portion of the facility that will be open to the public.

## 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 Trust for Historic Preservation: [www.nthp.org](http://www.nthp.org) or 202-588-6000
- Historic Roads: [www.historicroads.org](http://www.historicroads.org)
- Advisory Council on Historic Preservation: [www.achp.gov](http://www.achp.gov) or 202-606-8503
- State historic preservation offices: [http://grants.cr.nps.gov/Shpos/SHPO\\_Search.cfm](http://grants.cr.nps.gov/Shpos/SHPO_Search.cfm)

## 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.