



TRANSPORTATION
ENHANCEMENTS

FACT
SHEET

7
ACTIVITY

Historic Transportation Buildings

The federal Transportation Enhancements (TE) program funds 12 different types of transportation-related activities. Through activity 7, known in law as “Rehabilitation and operation of Historic Transportation Buildings, Structures or Facilities,” communities preserve historic assets so that future generations understand and appreciate America’s transportation past. Refurbished facilities attract tourists and, in some cases, provide active transportation services. Since the TE program began in 1992, approximately 12 percent of available TE funds have been programmed for this activity.

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 eligible costs may include:

- Restoration of railroad depots, bus stations, ferry terminals and piers, and lighthouses;
- Rehabilitation of rail trestles, tunnels, and bridges;
- Restoration of historic canals, including towpaths, locks, and bridges;
- Financing of facility operating costs such as utilities, rent, and administrative costs.

Examples of Successful Projects

Rainbow Arch Bridge, Colorado. The Rainbow Arch Bridge in Fort Morgan is the only bridge of its kind in the state and one of the longest of its kind in the country. The remarkable bridge design includes graceful arches that stretch 1,100 feet over the South Platte River. A \$595,000 TE award saved the aging bridge from collapse in the early 1990s. Today, it serves as an entrance to Colorado’s Scenic and Historic Byways system. Contact: Fort Morgan Heritage Foundation, 970-867-7928.



The Rainbow Arch bridge

Sedalia “Katy” Depot, Missouri. The Missouri-Kansas-Texas railroad, also known as the MKT or “Katy” railroad, built the octagon-shaped Sedalia Depot in 1896. More than a hundred years later, the city of Sedalia received a \$676,354 TE award to restore the depot to its original beauty. Today, the building houses offices and a railroad heritage museum and serves as the official welcome center for visitors to the Katy Trail, a rail-trail built on the MKT corridor. Contact: Sedalia Chamber of Commerce, 660-826-2222.

Tybee Island Lighthouse, Georgia. The Tybee Island Lighthouse, originally built in 1773, is the oldest lighthouse in Georgia. This historic treasure continues to serve as a navigation aid, guiding commercial and pleasure mariners and marking the entrance to the Savannah River. The city of Tybee Island and the local historical society renovated the lighthouse with the help of a \$250,000 TE award. Contact: Tybee Island Historical Society, 912-786-5801.



The Tybee Island Lighthouse

Visit 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 for a full copy of the FHWA TE Guidance. Keep in mind the following when considering a project in this category:

- TE funds may not be used for the sole purpose of replicating a historic transportation facility.
- 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 the 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 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 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 or 202-588-6000
- Advisory Council on Historic Preservation: www.achp.gov or 202-606-8503
- Reconnecting America, Center for Transit-Oriented Development: www.reconnectingamerica.org/html/tod/revit_resources.htm or 510-393-9102
- American Public Transportation Association: www.apta.com or 202-496-4321
- To get in touch with your state historic preservation offices: 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 for TE manager contact information.

National Transportation Enhancements Clearinghouse

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