

CONNECTIONS

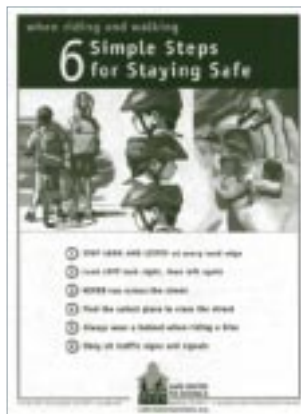
The NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION ENHANCEMENTS CLEARINGHOUSE Newsletter
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Safety and Education Enhancements

Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety and Education Activities is one of the 12 eligible categories for Transportation Enhancements funding. This activity was introduced with TEA-21 legislation in 1998 and encompasses less than one percent of the programmed projects in NTEC's database. While the number of projects in this category is relatively low, there are some exemplary projects that illustrate a commitment to community enhancement. Projects that fall into this category include non-construction safety-related activities. This issue will highlight several outstanding projects now underway.



Marin County Safe Routes to Schools

The need for improved alternatives to the automobile for transportation to schools is evident in many communities throughout the United States. The need is particularly clear in Marin County, California. Before the Safe Routes to Schools program it was estimated that 21 percent of morning traffic in the county was caused by parents driving children to schools. The Marin County Safe Routes to Schools program was developed to promote safe walking and biking to school through education that demonstrates how much fun these activities can be. The program combines

education, community organizing, and engineering improvements to promote individual health, safety, a cleaner environment, and stronger neighborhoods.

The program in Marin County is financed with \$310,000 in Transportation Enhancements funds, \$150,000 in Marin Community Foundation grants, and \$50,000 in California Department of Transportation Safety funds. The program is administered by the City of San Rafael and partners include: Nelson/Nygaard, a management consulting firm; the Marin County Bicycle Coalition, a nonprofit organization responsible for education activities; and Parisi Associates, a firm providing engineering and design services.

Working with a team of community volunteers, the Safe Routes to Schools program develops community projects that enhance the safety of biking and walking to school. The teams map the safest routes to schools and identify deficiencies in the network to be filled by bicycle and pedestrian improvements that benefit the entire community. The program also encourages public education and greater enforcement of traffic laws.

The program focuses on children in grades two through five in an effort to

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We're Pedaling Bikes

By Valerie Horton, Louisiana Department of Transportation

The Lafayette Pre-Teen Pedalers Program was accepted into the Louisiana Transportation Enhancement Program (LaTEP) in April 2000. Initially the project was sponsored by the Lafayette Parish School System with the goal of teaching bicycle safety to all fifth grade public school students. The parish received a \$142,616 Transportation Enhancements award to fund two years of a five-year program. Two instructors, certified by the League of American Bicyclists, would teach the bicycle safety

course. The funding was to be used for materials, handouts, equipment, and labor for the program. The 20 percent non-federal match was supplied by in-kind services that included labor by the physical

education teachers of the Lafayette Parish School System and supplies donated by the Lafayette Consolidated Government.

Over time, the operation of the program has evolved but the emphasis has remained on bicycle safety. A pilot program was started with one certified instructor working with 48 to 50 fifth graders for a 30-minute time period. The class size was found to be too large and the time period too brief. It was decided to move the target audience to the sixth grade level, with class sizes averaging 24 students, and the course was taught at each regularly scheduled physical education class. This change enabled one instructor to teach a longer 45-minute class and have individual time for each student.

Instruction includes both classroom course materials and on-bike practice. Parents and guardians are invited to participate to support students with a solid foundation of traffic awareness skills. The children learn all aspects of bicycle safety from the need for helmets to how to start and stop a bike.

An assessment of the program in January 2002 determined that one instructor could teach sixth graders annually and seventh graders biannually—ensuring that all Lafayette Parish students could be offered the course in either sixth or seventh grade. Because of adjustments to the program and the elimination of a second instructor, the program was roughly \$85,610 below the anticipated budget. Due to the effective use of the funds, the LaTEP approved modifying the original agreement to include funding for the full five years of the program.

The program is viewed as a success for Lafayette Parish and the LaTEP. While the Lafayette Pre-Teen Pedalers Program is the only one of its kind in Louisiana, it is anticipated that this program will be used as a model for similar programs throughout the state.

For further information, contact Valerie Horton, LaTEP, 225-379-1585.



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change commute habits for life. Lessons, competitions, and games are developed by a full-time educator assigned to the program and are designed to coordinate educational levels and the classroom curriculum appropriate to those grades. For example, a class that is studying maps and geography may map the amount of mileage they cover on bike and foot.

In addition to classroom activities, many special events and contests keep children interested in the Safe Routes to Schools program. Bike Rodeos, International Walk to School Day, and a Frequent Rider Miles contest provide opportunities to win prizes while teaching students to consider the impact their travel choices have on themselves and their world.

The program was initiated in the 2000–01 school year and served 1,600 students at nine schools. The program was well received and has expanded each year since its initiation. In the 2002–03 school year, 8,000 students in 20 schools are expected to participate.

Marin County's Safe Routes to Schools program is a proven model for reducing automobile travel to local schools. It is estimated that single passenger trips to schools have been reduced by more than 13 percent since the start of the program. This change in travel behavior has far-reaching benefits in the community, from reducing congestion and increasing safety, to promoting healthy lifestyles and a sustainable future.

For more information on the Safe Routes to Schools program in Marin County and for resources on how your community can start a similar program visit www.saferoutestoschools.org or call 415-488-4101.

The Arc Cycling Program Teaches Independence and Safety

Many individuals with developmental disabilities have historically lacked an independent mode of transportation. The Arc Cycling Program in Westland, Michigan, is striving to remedy this situation by providing an instructional program designed to develop safe cycling skills.

The Arc of Western Wayne County is a nonprofit organization committed to guaranteeing the opportunity to choose where to learn, live, work, and play for all people with developmental disabilities. The organization helps people access housing, education, family support, employment, transportation, and recreation through organized, innovative programs and support networks, such as the Arc Cycling Program.

The Arc Cycling Program provides intense individualized



instruction in the use of the bicycle as a mode of transportation. Individuals entering the program are given an initial assessment to determine their goals and abilities and develop their training programs. Participants then begin individual, one-hour training sessions twice a week in a safe, controlled, indoor environment. As skills progress, cyclists are transferred to a less controlled outdoor environment, then they hit the open road with their instructors for direct, community-based instruction. Instruction includes repetition, modeling, and support to assure that skills developed will be maintained.

A \$272,000 TE award is being used to support and expand the Arc Cycling Program. A portion of the TE funds is being used to refine the assessment tool used by instructors to determine the amount of supervision each participant requires and to tailor an instructional program to the abilities of each cyclist. This approach is vital for the safety and education of the participants.

The Arc Cycling Program sponsors periodic group rides and an annual ride where everyone in the community is invited to learn safe cycling skills and celebrate the sport of cycling. To members of a community, the benefits of safe cycling are many. For an individual facing the challenge of a disability, the benefits of cycling are tremendous. Through the Arc Cycling Program, Michigan is working towards being recognized as the international leader in nonmotorized transportation for individuals with disabilities.

For further information on this program, contact John Waterman, Director, Arc Cycling Program at 734-729-9100 or Mark Chaput, Michigan Department of Transportation, at 313-375-2401.

BEEP Philadelphia

In response to growing numbers of students biking to school, the Philadelphia School District, in partnership with the Bicycle Coalition of the Delaware Valley and the Philadelphia Department of Streets, is using \$424,000 in Transportation Enhancements funding for their Bicycle Education Enhancement Program (BEEP) at middle schools and high schools in the district.

The BEEP program consists of three components: (1) installing bike racks and distributing safety pamphlets, helmets, and locks; (2) developing an integrated bicycle education curriculum as part of the existing physical educa-



tion program; and (3) establishing a program providing mini-grants for after-school bicycle clubs.

BEEP is providing facilities, knowledge, training, and experience to allow Philadelphia school

children to choose bicycling as a means of transportation for their current and future commutes. Students are being educated about options available to bicyclists, such as integrating bike trips with transit, as they learn life-long skills for bicycling as a means of transportation.

Bicycling is an economically efficient mode of transportation, well suited to inner-city and lower-income travelers. The knowledge and skills developed through BEEP enable participants to bike safely to school and to part-time jobs that may have otherwise been unavailable. The health and fitness benefits of bicycling are an added bonus for everyone.

There are 150,000 students in the Philadelphia School District responsible for their own transportation to school. Bicycle travel provides students school transportation plus the mobility and freedom to explore communities and become involved in their neighborhoods. BEEP participants are gaining valuable skills for increasing personal safety, traffic safety, and bicycle maintenance that will enhance their experiences within the community.

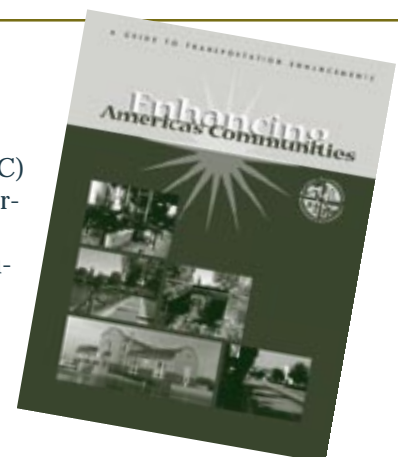
One of the BEEP mini-grant recipients, Elverson Middle School, started an after-school program. With additional fundraising the after-school program was able to provide bicycles, locks, and safety flags for every student involved. Students with the best school attendance records were invited to participate in the program. They traveled to a local bicycle shop where they learned to assemble their own bikes with the assistance of professional mechanics. Participants then planned their riding routes with their new bikes.

By investing TE funds in youth-oriented bicycle education programs, the Philadelphia School District is making a long-term investment in the future of the community and how its residents travel.

To learn more about BEEP, contact Marjorie Wuestner, School District of Philadelphia, 215-299-8906.

Enhancing America's Communities: A Guide to Transportation Enhancements

is the latest edition of the National Transportation Enhancements Clearinghouse's (NTEC) popular guidebook, which debuted in 1999. This 32-page-full-color guide features information on federal and state TE requirements, how to develop a project application, as well as 21 new case studies of TE projects that have successfully contributed to community revitalization. Projects include La Posada Hotel in Winslow, Arizona; the Mineral Belt Trail in Leadville, Colorado; the B&O Railroad Station in Oakland, Maryland; and the North Carolina Transportation Museum in Spencer, North Carolina. To order your free copy, email ntec@transact.org or call 1-888-388-6832.



Senate Holds 14th and Final Hearing on Reauthorization of TEA-21

Recent hearings held by the United States Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works (EPW) focusing on the Reauthorization of TEA-21 included:

- August 20, 2002. Full committee field hearing in Montpelier, VT. Hearing to examine the unique transportation needs of small town and rural America.
- September 9, 2002. Joint committee hearing. Freight and Intermodal Transportation Issues. Subcommittee on Surface Transportation and Merchant Marine and Subcommittee on Transportation, Infrastructure, and Nuclear Safety hearing on Freight and Intermodal Transportation.
- September 13, 2002. Full committee hearing. Project Delivery and Environmental Stewardship: Progress on Environmental Streamlining Under TEA-21.
- September 25, 2002. Joint committee hearing with Senate Finance Committee. TEA-21 Reauthorization: Innovative Financing—Beyond the Highway Trust Fund.
- September 30, 2002. Subcommittee on Transportation, Infrastructure, and Nuclear Safety hearing. TEA-21 Reauthorization: State of the Nation's Highway Infrastructure.

The September 30 hearing was the last in a series of 14 hearings and roundtables by the EPW held in preparation for the writing of the next surface transportation bill. The hearings addressed many important policy issues, including traffic congestion, planning, safety, operations, air quality, freight, and project delivery.

In his summary remarks Senator Jeffords (VT) commented, "Throughout the year this committee has sought out innovative ways to garner as much information as possible. We have held two joint committee hearings, two field hearings, and three roundtables in addition to ten full and subcommittee hearings. We have heard testimony from over one hundred witnesses over the course of this past year. These witnesses have hailed from thirty different states and have represented nearly sixty different organizations, state and federal agencies, and associations."

Senator Reid (NV) remarked, "These hearings have made one thing clear—that transportation is central to our economic growth, global competitiveness, and quality of life."

The final hearing focused on the state of America's highway infrastructure. The findings of two new studies on the status of America's highway system were presented. The Federal Highway Administration presented the findings of its 2002 Conditions and Performance report and the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) detailed their Bottom Line report. Both reports conclude that while

the condition of our transportation system has improved under TEA-21, its performance continues to worsen and that America is spending too little money to maintain the surface transportation system.

House Continues Hearings

The United States House of Representatives Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, Subcommittee on Highways and Transit, held its 14th hearing in a series of reauthorization hearings on TEA-21 on September 19, 2002. Testimony was heard from 14 major stakeholder organizations that have comprehensive reauthorization proposals, including representatives from business, state and local governments, the construction and trades industries, public transportation providers, and other transportation stakeholders.

Gordon Proctor, Director of the Ohio Department of Transportation, testified on behalf of AASHTO. Mr. Proctor presented AASHTO's top policy priorities for reauthorization: grow the program to improve security and safety, relieve congestion, and meet preservation and rural needs; finance the program at the funding levels needed; and improve Environmental Stewardship and Streamlining. AASHTO urged Congress to increase highway funding from \$34 billion in FY04 to at least \$41 billion by FY09, and transit funding from \$7.5 billion to at least \$10 billion.

Hank Dittmar, President of The Great American Station Foundation, appeared on behalf of the Surface Transportation Policy Project (STPP). Mr. Dittmar outlined the three key policy themes of STPP, a nationwide coalition comprised of hundreds of organizations devoted to improving the nation's transportation system: preserve TEA-21; increase performance and accountability measures; and increase choice and intermodalism.

In the 15th hearing held September 26, 2002, the Subcommittee on Highways and Transit heard testimony from representatives of the Federal Highway Administration, the Federal Transit Administration, and the General Accounting Office on the status of the nation's highway and transit system.

The October 8, 2002 hearing of the Highways and Transit Subcommittee (the 16th in the series on reauthorization) focused on H.R. 5455, the "Expediting Project Delivery to Improve Transportation and the Environment Act" (ExpDITE), introduced in the House last month by Committee Chairman Don Young (AK). Testimony was heard by both proponents and opponents of the bill as they discussed practical consequences of this legislation for both project delivery and the environment. Some witnesses testified to the need to streamline the review process, while others expressed concerns for protecting the integrity of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).

[Transcripts of Congressional testimonies are available online at www.senate.gov and www.house.gov.]

TE IN THE NEWS

Summerville, Georgia

TE funds are being used to refurbish a 1916-era railroad turntable for use by the Tennessee Valley Railroad in Summerville, Georgia. The turntable, no longer in use at its original location in Alabama, is being relocated to Summerville. Without the turntable, a diesel engine has been used to pull the train backwards for 50 miles to Chattanooga, Tennessee, to the beginning of its route. The restored turntable will turn the steam-powered train around in Summerville, decreasing travel times and cost. The Tennessee Valley Railroad is used for passenger excursion trains and freight deliveries between Chattanooga and Summerville. [*Chattanooga Times/Chattanooga Free Press* 8/5/02]

Clarksdale, Mississippi

The old Greyhound Bus Station in Clarksdale is being refurbished as a tourist information center and drop-off point for downtown bus tours thanks to \$995,000 in TE funding. Plans for the historic landmark include restrooms, landscaping, the installation of a fountain, parking, and possibly a snack bar. The project is expected to be completed in February 2003. [*The Clarksdale Press Register* 6/15/02]

Elizabeth City, North Carolina

This fall a \$400,000 TE award was used for the construction of brick sidewalks, period lighting, benches, and landscaping along three blocks of Water Street in Elizabeth City. These pedestrian improvements are part of a larger plan to make the riverfront streetscape safer and more appealing to citizens. [*The Virginian-Pilot* 6/4/02]

Jim Thorpe, Pennsylvania

The 1888 Old Mauch Chunk Train Station, also known as the former CNJ Passenger Station was awarded \$360,000 in TE funds to replace the roof, windows, and heating system. The station, listed on the National Register of Historic Places, is currently used as a visitor information center, bank, and offices for the county railroad and the Delaware and Lehigh National Heritage Corridor commissioner. [*The Morning Call* 6/21/02 and 8/22/02]

Tullahoma, Tennessee

Pedestrian travel on Tullahoma's west side is now easier and safer with the completion of the third phase of its greenway. A \$96,000 TE award from the Tennessee Department of Transportation funded the construction of a 1,900-foot segment, including the installation of a bridge over Rock Creek. In all, the 1.5-mile off-road trail links recreational areas, the senior citizens' center, and Tullahoma High School. [*The Tullahoma News* 10/24/02]

Magnolia, Texas

More than 100 people gathered for a centennial celebration and the dedication of historic markers at Magnolia's train depot last September. The original Victorian architectural details and color scheme of the 100-year-old train depot were restored with \$150,000 in TE funding. The local historical committee plans to convert the depot to a museum honoring local history. [*The Houston Chronicle* 9/26/02]

Save the Date!
Conference Calendar

January 2003

TRANSPORTATION RESEARCH BOARD
82ND ANNUAL MEETING
January 12–16, 2003 • Washington, D.C.
Web site: www.trb.org/annual.nsf

2ND ANNUAL NEW PARTNERS FOR SMART GROWTH:
BUILDING SAFE, HEALTHY, AND LIVABLE COMMUNITIES
January 30–February 1, 2003 • New Orleans, Louisiana
Web site: www.outreach.psu.edu/C&I/SmartGrowth/

March 2003

LEAGUE OF AMERICAN BICYCLISTS:
3RD NATIONAL BIKE SUMMIT
March 5–7, 2003 • Washington, D.C.
Web site: www.bikeleague.org

INSTITUTE OF TRANSPORTATION ENGINEERS:
TRANSPORTATION'S ROLE IN SUCCESSFUL COMMUNITIES
March 23–26, 2003 • Ft. Lauderdale, Florida
Web site: www.ite.org

AMERICAN PLANNING ASSOCIATION: NATIONAL PLANNING
CONFERENCE
March 29–April 2, 2003 • Denver, Colorado
Web site: www.planning.org/2003conference/index.htm

April 2003

6TH NATIONAL MITIGATION BANKING CONFERENCE
April 23–25, 2003 • San Diego, California
Web site: www.mitigationbankingconference.com

May 2003

WALKING21 IV: HEALTH, EQUITY & ENVIRONMENT
May 1–3, 2003 • Portland, Oregon
Web site: www.americawalks.org

June 2003

RAILS-TO-TRAILS CONSERVANCY: INTERNATIONAL TRAILS AND GREENWAYS
CONFERENCE — TRAILLINK 2003: DESIGNING FOR THE FUTURE
June 26–29, 2003 • Providence, Rhode Island
Web Site: www.railtrails.org/trailink2003/

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RESOURCES

Trails & Greenways: Advancing the Smart Growth

Agenda is a new 43-page report written by the Rails-to-Trails Conservancy. The report documents the benefits that green infrastructure brings to communities and regions, and the positive impacts trails and greenways have on advancing smart growth objectives. The report can be viewed online at www.enhancements.org/rtrcdocs/tgandsg.pdf.

The 2002 Summary of Safe Routes to School Programs in the United States

is a report published by Transportation Alternatives and the Surface Transportation Policy Project. It provides information on all of the Safe Routes programs active in the United States. The report can be viewed online at www.transact.org/PDFs/sr_2002.pdf.

Increasing Physical Activity Through Community Design:

A Guide for Public Health Practitioners is 48-page guide designed to provide an introduction to increasing physical activity through better community design for easier and safer bicycling and walking. The guide from the National Center for Bicycling and Walking presents an introduction to community design issues, and describes seven kinds of projects that can help create more bicycle-friendly and walkable communities. It also discusses how

such projects get funded, and presents an array of resources to help with implementation. The publication is currently available in electronic form only at www.bikewalk.org/PubHealth.htm.

Ride Smart: It's Time to Start Bicycle Safety Video

is a funky, fast-paced 8:55 minute video designed to teach children and young teenagers that wearing a bicycle helmet can protect them from serious injuries. The free video from the National Highway Safety Administration focuses on the importance of buying and wearing approved bicycle helmets, proper fit and a brief discussion on the rules of the road. To order a copy of the video, fax your request to 301-386-2194. Additional bike safety materials, including a **Safe Routes to School** toolkit, are available at www.nhtsa.dot.gov/people/injury/pedbimot/bike/index.html.

www.bicyclinginfo.org is a one-stop Web site for bicycle related resources, including community design tools, safety data, health and fitness benefits, trail funding, policy, as well as news and event information. The Pedestrian and Bicycle Information Center maintains the Web site with funding from the U.S. Department of Transportation and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Photo credits:

Page 2, *Pedaling Bikes*, Louisiana LaTEP; *Arc Cycling*, Michigan Department of Transportation; Page 3, *BEEP Philadelphia*, School District of Philadelphia.

Connections is a quarterly publication of the National Transportation Enhancements Clearinghouse sponsored by the Federal Highway Administration. Submission of articles as well as letters and other comments are welcome.

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Unless otherwise stated, the contents of this newsletter reflect the views of the authors who are responsible for the opinions, findings and conclusions presented herein. The contents do not necessarily reflect the views or policies of FHWA and USDOT.