

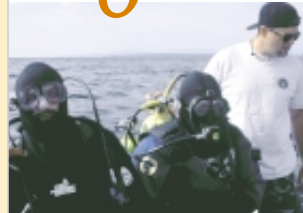
# Communities Benefit!



The Social and Economic  
Benefits of **Transportation Enhancements**



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# Introduction

## The Social and Economic Benefits of Transportation Enhancements

Communities across the nation know the benefits of investing in the creation or renovation of public places. Historic train depots, bicycle and pedestrian trails, roadway landscaping, transportation museums, and scenic easements are examples of public spaces that contribute to the concept of community. Through two transportation Acts, the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) of 1991 and the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21) in 1998, Congress has made a \$6.4 billion funding source called Transportation Enhancements (TE) available to the states for these types of investments. TE funds can help people create transportation-related resources that provide a host of benefits to their area.

The 12 activities eligible for TE funds, as defined in the law (see page 24 for more detail), span a broad spectrum of potential projects, opening new possibilities for every locality based on what they decide will be of greatest benefit and what fills the greatest need. Each project is developed to serve the specific purpose of the TE activity, such as facilitating safe travel by building bicycle paths or rehabilitating a historic railroad station for use by today's train passengers. But the benefits of TE projects go beyond what is actually created.



Communities with TE projects often have experienced economic growth as a result of a TE project, and social benefits such as healthier lifestyles, spaces to encounter neighbors, and renewed civic pride.

These significant benefits may often be difficult to quantify but are obvious to those who experience them. Such is the case of the ten communities highlighted in this booklet. Some have documented economic revitalization, from higher tax revenues to increased private investment to the creation of new jobs. Others have seen something harder to capture but nonetheless present: the experience of a more livable, enjoyable community. Being able to travel and exercise on a trail,

walk down a tree-lined, brick paved sidewalk, or learn more about transportation history are all activities that provide valuable social benefits.

This booklet is designed to give you a sample of the many projects and benefits that can be derived through Transportation Enhancements activities. While not all of the 12 TE activities are represented in this booklet, each activity does provide exciting opportunities for beneficial projects. For the communities represented in this booklet, the benefits of their TE project already exist. Just imagine what Transportation Enhancements funds might be able to do for your community.



# Union Station Rehabilitation

MERIDIAN, MISSISSIPPI

In the early 1990s, the city of Meridian, MS decided to turn their old railroad station into a catalyst for community revitalization. The existing Union Station on Front Street still had Amtrak service and was the gateway to downtown Meridian, but the station had seen better days, as had the surrounding commercial district. Meridian managed to look beyond what existed and envisioned what could be: a new, multi-modal transportation center and revitalized commercial core.

Luckily for Meridian, ISTEA had just made Transportation Enhancements (TE) funds available for this type of project. Meridian received the first TE award for rehabilitation of a historic transportation facility in the state of Mississippi. Amtrak also contributed funds and the city raised over a million dollars for the project. This was no small project; overall construction cost was \$7 million. Meridian knew this investment was necessary to create the transportation center they wanted and needed.

The original structure was built in 1906 and featured a central tower and east and west wings, but at the time

the project began, only the east wing, which housed Amtrak's operations, still stood. Meridian rebuilt the central station tower and restored the east wing to house different transportation facilities, meeting rooms, and private office space. Now, Amtrak, Greyhound, and the local Meridian Transit system all operate from this station. People can take taxis from the station to the airport or a trolley through downtown Meridian. The restored Railway Express Agency building on the site will house a railroad museum for Union Station travelers to visit as well. Today, Union Station is an attractive point of arrival or departure for travelers.

The new Union Station has spurred **\$10 million** in private investment in the depot district.

Meridian understood that a public building with multiple uses would be a catalyst for more downtown revitalization. The new Union Station has spurred \$10 million in private investment in the depot district. This includes new office space, retail shops, a computer training center, restaurants, a public records storage building, apartment buildings, and up-scale condominiums. Nearby, the Grand Opera House of Mississippi is being restored, and an arts education center in conjunction with Mississippi State University is under development. Mayor John Robert Smith is enthusiastic about the development Union Station spurred: "We believed that the project would spark private sector confidence and investment, but the results have already exceeded our most optimistic expectations."

The Union Station project also revitalized community life and pride

in the depot district. Residents use the meeting rooms as space for wedding receptions, birthday and retirement parties, and class reunions.

"We also believed the people of our community would make good use of Union Station but had no idea it would be so heartily embraced. It's now the most used public facility in the community," said Mayor Smith.

The city of Meridian invested in its past in order to create an investment in its future. Union Station is an excellent example of the benefits of TE projects, including improved, multi-modal transportation facilities and an economically and socially revitalized downtown district. These benefits are worth every penny.



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# Lake Champlain Survey

LAKE CHAMPLAIN, VERMONT

Imagine finding an artifact from the Revolutionary War, intact yet... under water. The Lake Champlain Maritime Museum (LCMM) has found numerous underwater artifacts through its Lake Survey Project, an eight-year sonar survey of the bottom of Lake Champlain. The project began in 1996 to document previously unknown shipwrecks threatened by the spread of zebra mussels, and to learn more about the lake's geophysical properties. By locating and preserving transportation artifacts, the Lake Survey Project is contributing valuable knowledge to our understanding of this mighty lake's role in American history.

In 1998, the Vermont Agency of Transportation supported LCMM's 1998 Lake Survey season with \$50,000 in Transportation Enhancements (TE) funds for archaeological planning and research, which LCMM matched at 100 percent. The TE funds allowed LCMM to pay for rental of the research vessel, navigation specialists, and dive masters. The 1998 Lake Survey season yielded important work in the three fields of the Lake Survey Project: surveying and mapping, archaeological documentation, and public interpretation.

The 1998 survey and mapping effort used side-scan sonar to map the bottom of the lake, and found several shipwrecks, including a late 19th century canal boat that

still holds its cargo of coal and artifacts from the crew. The archaeological documentation portion of the 1998 season documented two significant shipwrecks identified during previous Lake Survey seasons. The archaeological team measured, photographed, and video-documented the site, and raised a sample artifact.

The public interpretation portion of the project brought the Lake Survey's findings to life. During the winter of 1998-1999, LCMM displayed an exhibit at the Navy Museum in Washington, D.C. LCMM also conducted outreach to schools in the Lake Champlain region, and opened two new scuba-accessible underwater preserve sites. For those who prefer to stay dry, the museum opened a new Virtual Diver exhibit to experience the shipwrecks via a touchscreen computer.

Exhibits about the Lake Survey Project provide both local residents

The Lake Survey Project resulted in opening additional new underwater preserves in Lake Champlain, and fostered the development of a management plan to protect these **unique archaeological sites** for future generations of visitors.



and tourists with access to an underwater adventure in history. The Lake Survey Project is having a positive economic impact by stimulating the growth of cultural tourism in the area. New discoveries—such as Benedict Arnold's Revolutionary War gunboat *Spitfire* that sank in 1776—have brought divers, history buffs, boat-builders, and vacationers to the Lake Champlain region. Between 1996 when the Lake Survey began and 1999, annual attendance at LCMM grew from 17,604 to 23,959. The Lake Survey Project resulted in opening additional new underwater preserves in Lake Champlain, and fostered the development of a management plan to protect these unique archaeological sites for future generations of visitors.

TE funds helped bring Lake Champlain's hidden transportation history to the surface, and in the process contributed to a valuable education and preservation project. The Lake Survey Project is an ongoing project that will continue to research, promote, and protect maritime transportation artifacts—a benefit to the Lake Champlain region and the nation.



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# The National Oregon/California Trail Center



## MONTPELIER, IDAHO

**D**uring the mid-19th century, hundreds of thousands of settlers traveled west on the Oregon/California Trail in search of a better life. Along the way, many of them stopped at the Clover Creek Encampment in the southeastern corner of Idaho, a site that today is the small town of Montpelier.

Modern-day Montpelier continued to be a place where travelers would pass on their way to Salt Lake City, UT, Jackson Hole, WY, or Yellowstone National Park. Yet, not much existed in Montpelier to entice people to stop. Primed by the Annual Oregon Trail project and pursued by some local citizens, the idea for a permanent center depicting the Oregon/California Trail was born!

Together with the town of Montpelier, the Bear Lake Regional Commission (BLRC) applied for and received \$1.2 million in Transportation Enhancements (TE) funds

to build the National Oregon/California Trail Center as a scenic or historic highway program TE activity. The Center, which opened its doors in 1999, is located at the intersection of Highway 89, the road that connects all the National Parks in the western U.S., and highway 30, the Bear Lake-Caribou Scenic Byway and route of the Oregon Trail.

Visitors to the Center are guided through the various stages of traveling the Trail by costumed actors, fostering an experiential lesson in history. People continue learning about the trail at the Center's trail art gallery, or at the independent

Rails and Trails Museum. The Center thus brings the history of the area alive, providing not just a roadside attraction but a real educational experience. "People are surprised that a town this small could have such a high quality educational facility," said Maureen Dunn, Center's Gift Shop Manager.

Montpelier's greater community also takes advantage of the opportunities afforded by the Center. Students from schools in Idaho, Utah, and Wyoming visit the Center and use its new computer lab to aide their studies of westward expansion. The Center's Allinger Community Theatre was built in the style of an 1860s theatre, and is used for films and presentations about the trail. The theatre is also available to the community for events, meetings, theatrical productions, and concerts.

The BLRC says the Center is doing what it was intended to do: stimulate economic development. A new hotel was built across the street from the Center, and another hotel in town renamed itself the Clover Creek Inn and was entirely refurbished. "These hotels would never have been built or refurbished if it hadn't been for the Center," said Allen Harrison, Director of the BLRC and President of the Trail Center Board. The Center's location is so attractive that it is able to rent office space to local,

state, and federal governmental offices. Local businesses are also benefiting economically from the Center. For example, the Rails and Trails Museum moved from its previous location in downtown Montpelier to the Center and is thriving as a result. During the first year, 15,000 people visited the Center, a number expected to grow over time, especially as amenities sparked by the Center continue to be implemented.

As more and more travelers are drawn out of their cars and into the National Oregon/California Trail Center, Montpelier will continue to benefit from the investment of TE funds into this facility. History appears to be repeating itself as the Oregon/California Trail once again fosters a better future for those, like the people of Montpelier, who are willing to take the journey.



**The Center brings the history of the area alive, providing not just a roadside attraction but a real educational experience.**

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# Heritage Rail Trail

## YORK COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA

The people of York County, PA, are reaping the benefits of their work to build a 21-mile historic rail-with-trail known as the Heritage Rail Trail. The trail and the adjacent railroad tracks run through 11 municipalities, across bridges and through Howard Tunnel, the oldest continuously operational railroad tunnel in the United States. Three times per week a dinner train rolls down the tracks next to people on the trail. This idyllic space and vital community resource exists thanks in part to \$1,056,800 in Transportation Enhancements (TE) funds.

Since its completion in August 1999, the Heritage Rail Trail has become a social and recreational space for York County residents. Locals have established routine exercise programs which improve their health and create a sense of community with other trail users. Senior citizens enjoy the opportunity to recreate safely and the social opportunity to meet their neighbors. Families also take advantage of using the Heritage Rail Trail for weekend outings, since both children and parents pulling trams can maneuver bicycles on the 10-foot wide, level path.

The Heritage Rail Trail is connected to the 20-mile long Maryland Northern Central Rail Trail (NCR), providing training opportunities for long distance athletes, and space for community organizations to hold major events. March of Dimes "Walk-a-thons," American Lung Association and York Cancer Center "Bike-a-thons," and American Volkssport Association "March for Parks" have been held on the Heritage Rail Trail. Each of these events increases public awareness of health issues while popularizing the trail.

The trail also provides economic benefits to the community. A survey of Heritage Rail Trail users conducted in 1999 by Carl R. Knoch, President of Interactive Marketing Solutions, quantified these benefits. Of the 480

## Locals have established routine exercise programs which improve their health and create a sense of community with other trail users.

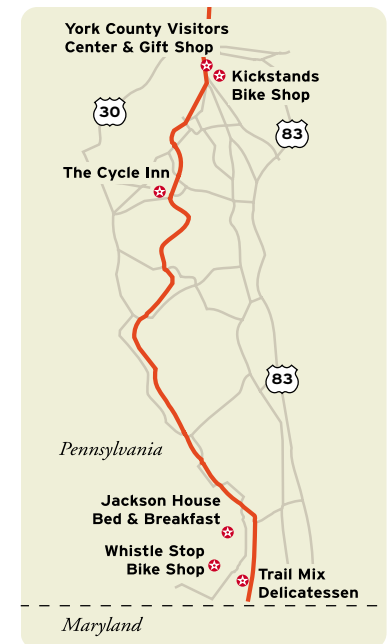
users surveyed, 65 percent of the sample responded that their use of the trail had influenced a purchase(s) within the past year with the average purchase(s) totaling \$337.14. The majority of these purchases were bicycles and bicycle supplies. Sixty percent of the sample responded that their recent visit to the trail had resulted in an average food purchase of \$6.74 per person per visit. This information, when considered in conjunction with the 365,720 annual users recorded in 1999 by the adjacent NCR Trail, indicates the tremendous economic impact this trail is expected to have on York County.

The impact has already been good for businesses. New businesses have opened along the trail since the start of construction in 1993, including two bed and breakfasts, two bicycle shops, a delicatessen, and a gift shop. Existing businesses along the trail report increased sales, extended hours, and newly hired staff. As trail use climbs, so does the demand for lodging, food, and athletic gear. Based on the 1999 Trail Survey results, the York County Parks Department believes economic

growth related to use of the trail will continue.

Since the opening of the first section of the Heritage Rail Trail in 1996, a sense of community has developed around the trail. It has become a place to meet friends and a place to reconnect to oneself at a slower pace. The trail is also an economic benefit to York County and will continue to draw people to the region. TE funds helped make this trail and its important social and economic benefits to the York community possible.

### Six new businesses along the Heritage Rail Trail



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# Holly Springs Historic Depot



## HOLLY SPRINGS, GEORGIA

A turn-of-the-century railroad depot is now serving a second life as a community center for the city of Holly Springs, GA. This city of approximately 5,000 people has a long railroad history, and the depot has served the community in many ways over the last century. Passenger and freight trains stopped at the depot until 1959, and then the city used the depot as its City Hall from the 1970s to the early 1990s. As time took its toll on the depot, its rehabilitation became an opportunity for preserving and protecting Holly Springs itself.

For years, Holly Springs, located 30 miles north of Atlanta, watched development occur in neighboring cities. Residents realized that development was inevitable in their city, and decided to preserve the community's identity and past while they still could. Holly Springs identified the depot as a historic preservation project which would act as a catalyst for a larger historic district. The town applied for and received \$128,235 in Transportation Enhancements (TE) funds for this renovation, and, in 2000, the restored Holly Springs

Railroad Depot opened its doors as the Ben Barnes Hall.

The depot renovation was a community effort. The depot's namesake, Ben Barnes, is a city council member who led the project and worked to insure that the renovations stayed true to the structure's original design. Others contributed time, money, and materials, eventually saving the city about \$20,000 in total construction costs. The city even arranged for its preliminary engineering expenses to be counted toward the local match of the project, which reduced the overall amount of money the city had to raise.

The work involved has proven worthwhile for Holly Springs. The



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an identity and a place of new beginning.**

depot's renovation spurred a survey by University of Georgia students who identified 40 sites in the town with historical value and significance. All of these sites will be included in the newly designated historic district, which the city plans to make as pedestrian and people-friendly as possible. The city's Historic Preservation Board is also working to put the depot on the National Register of Historic Places. "We truly see the Holly Springs Railroad Depot as a catalyst for historic preservation and restoration throughout the entire city," said City Manager Karyn Pirrello.

The real benefit of this project is what it gives to the community: an identity and a place of new beginning. Never before has Holly Springs had a community meeting place, but it is obvious that one is needed since the depot is booked every week for gatherings. Members

of local groups hold meetings in the new community center, and many other social events, from dances and weddings to arts and crafts fairs and concerts. Even Fourth of July celebrations take place at the renovated depot. The city is also creating a park across the street from the depot to further improve the area.

While other towns lose their historic resources and identity to rampant development, Holly Springs preserved an important historic structure and spurred community preservation in the process. TE funds contributed to this small town's efforts to honor its past and create opportunities for an enjoyable future.

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# River Heritage Museum

PADUCAH, KENTUCKY

**T**he town of Paducah, KY, is a historic river town located on the banks of the Ohio River. Like many cities along this great river, Paducah owes much of its early development to steam and diesel powered vessels. It is therefore only appropriate that one of the oldest buildings in downtown Paducah be turned into a river transportation and science museum. The River Heritage Museum will use a \$300,000 Transportation Enhancements (TE) award to help construct this important historical, social, and economic resource for the city of Paducah.

The River Heritage Museum was selected for a TE award in 1999, and construction will begin in the summer of 2000. Funded work includes renovation of the historic 1845 waterfront structure which will house the

museum, the construction of a theatre and elevator for disabled- person access, and architectural and design fees. This museum is one of the few projects nominated and selected under the new TEA-21 TE activity, establishment of transportation museums. While the museum's TE-funded projects are not yet complete, the social and economic benefits of this project are already clear.

The museum will feature exhibits on all aspects of rivers, from ecology and wildlife to historic and modern river transportation modes. The primary exhibit focus will be the

**The Kentucky Cabinet for Economic Development estimates that over five years, the River Heritage Museum's visitors will bring \$20.1 million to the Paducah area.**

nation's development of its waterways and their importance to the American economy.

The River Heritage Museum will have immense community impact in Paducah. Inside the museum, people will learn about rivers and river transportation by looking at showcased artifacts and hands-on, technologically advanced exhibits. Next door, visitors will continue to learn at the adjacent Seamen's Church Institute's Center for Maritime Education, where they can watch towboat pilots learn how to maneuver in river waters using a real towboat simulator.

All of these attractions are sure to draw visitors to the museum; in fact,

the River Heritage Museum is expected to receive 60,000 visitors annually. These travelers will be able to reach the museum via the nearby Interstate highway, or by using river transportation itself aboard the Mississippi and Delta Queen excursion river boats. This tourist boost to the economy is noteworthy as well. The Kentucky Cabinet for Economic Development estimates that over five years, the River Heritage Museum's visitors will bring \$20.1 million to the Paducah area.

All told, this TE transportation museum project is expected to benefit the city of Paducah not only by celebrating the important contributions of river transportation to the city and the nation, but also by serving as an economic and cultural boost to this Kentucky river town.



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# Richmond Canal Walk



## RICHMOND, VIRGINIA

In the early 1990s, visionaries in Richmond, VA, realized that the abandoned James River and Kanawah and Haxall canals could be the route to both environmental protection and economic revitalization for downtown Richmond. The city of Richmond and the Richmond Riverfront Development Corporation (RRDC) combined the restoration of these historic canals with the installation of a new sewer system underneath. The result is the creation of a water park known as the Canal Walk that is attracting both people and businesses downtown.

The city received a two-phase Transportation Enhancements (TE) award totaling \$1.7 million for the historic preservation of one 950-foot section of the canal. Richmond contributed \$4.8 million to this section's restoration. These combined funds were used to install the canal's floor, walls, and edges, and the walkway the length of the funded section. This portion of the

canal project is considered a key link between the historic City Dock and Turning Basin and the rest of the canal. The entire canal restoration and associated sewer project was completed in 1999.

The Canal Walk travels 1.25 miles through downtown, a virtual tour in American and transportation history. Visitors can stroll past a former Confederate armory known as Tredegar Iron Works, or go inside to visit the Richmond Civil War Visitors' Center. The Canal Walk also takes people past the unusual intersection of three elevated railroad lines called Triple Cross, and near I-95, the modern highway artery along the east coast. Tour boats and history-based walking tours offer

visitors guided perspectives of the canal. Festivals, concerts, and public events are also held at the canal. In the future, there will be over 50 planned stops along the Canal Walk to mark historic buildings, locations of important events, and even an outdoor art gallery. All of these features make the Canal Walk a place for the community to enjoy.

The city believes the canal project will be good for Richmond's economic future, too. The development in the canal area will foster a mixed-use character since it will include retail, office space, residences, and restaurants. The canal area has 25 acres of developable land and 3.3 million square feet of developable building space. Some of the existing buildings are being subject to adoptive reuse to preserve their historic value. Private develop-



ment investments are projected to be worth \$400-\$450 million over the next 12 to 15 years. The city anticipates that the investment in the canal project will generate 6,000 new or retained jobs, \$60 million in additional tourism revenue over the initial 10-year period, and \$9 to \$10 million annually in new tax revenues, in addition to the civic pride in revitalization of the downtown riverfront.

The restored canals provide places and spaces for people and businesses to thrive. With the help of TE funds, these historic transportation facilities are fostering a better future for the city of Richmond.

**The city anticipates that the investment in the canal project will generate 6,000 new or retained jobs and \$60 million in additional tourism revenue.**



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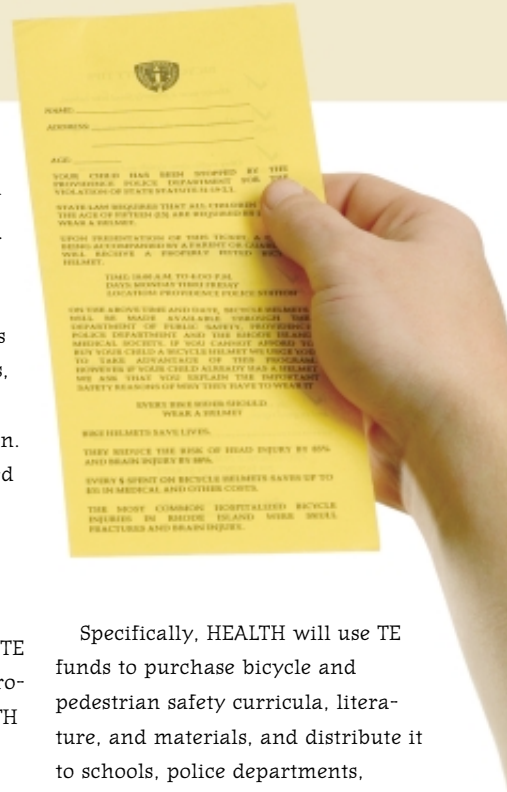
# Rhode Island Bike and Pedestrian Injury Prevention Program

STATEWIDE, RHODE ISLAND

The safety of people, especially children, traveling by foot or bicycle is an issue for every community. Some states have bicycle helmet laws on the books, as well as pedestrian roadway crossing laws. Educating the public about the laws and about safety measures is an important step in actually reducing related injuries, and also serves to promote the use of walking and bicycling as a safe transportation and recreation option.

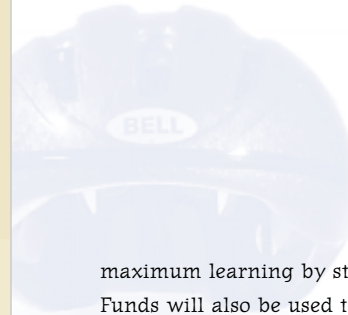
Transportation Enhancements (TE) funds can be used to help take action to promote bicycle and pedestrian safety for all age levels through the new TEA-21 TE activity, bicycle and pedestrian safety and education activities. The Rhode Island Department of Health (HEALTH) applied for and received \$48,000 in Federal TE funds for a three-year bicycle and pedestrian safety program targeted at children ages 14 and younger. HEALTH is providing a match of \$12,000.

This new project, which will be implemented from 2000 to 2003, is designed to provide education and information about bicycle and pedestrian safety, develop statewide initiatives to increase public knowledge of bicycle and pedestrian laws, and to support community-based efforts to promote bicycle and pedestrian safety.



Specifically, HEALTH will use TE funds to purchase bicycle and pedestrian safety curricula, literature, and materials, and distribute it to schools, police departments, community groups, day care centers, social service organizations, and individuals. HEALTH Resource Center Injury Prevention staff are trained to assist these groups in the best use of the materials and information for

The benefit of safety education is incalculable, since it could mean the cost of **saving a life.**



maximum learning by students. Funds will also be used to create flyers to educate children about Rhode Island's bicycle helmet law and to purchase t-shirts for local police departments to distribute to and encourage kids who are wearing helmets while riding their bicycles.

Every community will be informed of the resources available to them, and will be invited to participate, as will every police department in the state. HEALTH estimates that over 80 percent of Rhode Island's cities and towns will participate in this TE-funded bicycle and pedestrian safety project.

Bicycle and pedestrian injury and death not only takes a toll on individuals, families, and communities, but is also a costly health issue. In

the U.S. alone, the annual cost of traffic-related bicyclist death and injury for children ages 14 and under is more than \$3.4 billion, and for pedestrians in this same group it is more than \$7.6 billion. The benefit of safety education is incalculable, since it could mean the cost of saving a life. By educating children about the need to wear bicycle helmets and the importance of bicycle safety, as well as teaching the public about bicycle and pedestrian laws, HEALTH is using education as a means to improve the safety of an important transportation and recreation mode for children and adults. Safer streets mean safer people, which is a benefit to every community.



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# Douglas Streetscape

## DOUGLAS, GEORGIA

**D**ouglas, GA, population 12,000, once had a downtown that people would avoid, and storefronts sat empty. The Downtown Development Authority recognized the need to change this situation, and paid for a study of Douglas and a plan for downtown which recommended streetscape improvements as a top priority for revitalizing the area. In 1994, the city received \$850,000 in Transportation Enhancements (TE) funds and provided a local match of \$321,317, making possible the implementation of the city's vision of a rejuvenated, people and store-friendly area. Since completion of Douglas' streetscape project in 1995, the downtown's economy and atmosphere have improved dramatically.

The one-year streetscape project involved transforming each corner at six intersections in Douglas' historic downtown district. The city added brick designs to the sidewalks, benches, pedestrian lighting, landscaping, and trash receptacles. Douglas built a gazebo at a corner intersection as a community gathering spot, and installed a brick archway with "City of Douglas" inscribed on it at a main downtown intersection. The city also installed crosswalks, brick work, and landscaping near the courthouse and civic centers, areas of high pedestrian activity in Douglas.

The streetscape project was central to Douglas' ability to breathe life back into its downtown both socially and

economically. The streetscape created a unified atmosphere for the downtown area, and inspired property owners to improve their storefronts. Today, there are almost no vacancies in the downtown storefronts; what were once voids in the downtown area are now viable economic resources. Once abandoned properties now house corporate offices, retail shops, and restaurants, and older buildings, such as the courthouse, theatre, and banks, have also been renovated or built anew.

According to a Downtown Tax Base Study completed for the Main Street Program in July 1998, taxes collected on real values from 1995 to 1997 increased, and the vacancy rate for the downtown district dropped from 10 percent to 3 percent. The Main Street Program is a national historic preservation and economic revitalization program adopted and run locally. Jackie Wilson, Director

Today, there are almost no vacancies in the downtown storefronts; what were once voids in the downtown area are now **viable economic resources.**



of the Community Development Department at the City of Douglas, noted that prospective businesses have credited the streetscape project and resultant revitalization of the city with being an incentive to locate in Douglas.

A number of organizations are working to promote and support the growth that has occurred in Douglas so far. The City of Douglas Main Street Program and the University of Georgia's Business Outreach Services Program assisted in the development of Douglas as a regional shopping

destination. A non-profit organization formed to promote façade improvements, and in the fall of 2000, a marketing recruitment effort will work to fill any future vacancies in the downtown area.

Douglas' streetscape beautification project is a great example of benefits that can result from taking advantage of TE funds. By simply improving the visual characteristics of the places where people interact, work, and live, Douglas inspired an entire revitalization movement that will benefit the citizens and region for years to come.

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## West Virginia Independence Hall

WHEELING, WEST VIRGINIA

The river town of Wheeling, WV thrived as an intermodal transportation hub in the 19th century. By the 1850s, the National Road and the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad (B&O) were connected to the Ohio River in Wheeling. The movement of commercial goods on the Ohio River, and the intermodal transportation connections existing in Wheeling made Wheeling an ideal location for a Federal port-of-delivery. A customs house, now known as West Virginia Independence Hall, was built in 1859. This building was a vital transportation facility, providing the link in the transport of goods from Ohio River vessels to further land transport on the National Road and the B&O.

Independence Hall also played an important role in Civil War history. Wheeling is the birthplace of the state of West Virginia. The constitutional debates surrounding statehood were held in Independence Hall, which also housed a post office and courthouse. In 1861, the Restored (Union) Government of Virginia was created

and operated in Independence Hall until 1863, when West Virginia officially became a state and the Capitol offices moved. While this customs house once served a primary role in Wheeling's transportation system and as the place of pivotal change, today it serves the Wheeling community as a museum and as a gathering place for special events. Transportation Enhancements (TE) funds contributed to the renovation of this historic building and the creation of a significant social resource.

This building, which is now a National Historic Landmark on the National Register of Historic places,

West Virginia's Governor, Cecil H. Underwood, noted that "Independence Hall certainly adds to the **cultural and economic health** of the community."

still stands today because of two TE awards for historic preservation, the first in 1992 for \$169,600 and the second in 1995 for \$168,000. These funds and a local match of \$84,400 paid for repairs and improvements to the roof, structure, and interiors, modifying the elevator and bathrooms to meet ADA accessibility standards, and landscaping. The changes to Independence Hall have even been praised by West Virginia's Governor, Cecil H. Underwood, who noted that "Independence Hall certainly adds to the cultural and economic health of the community."

Both the local residents and visitors to Wheeling benefit from the restoration of Independence Hall. The museum features special exhibitions on West Virginia's history, as well as interpretive tours that explain the different roles the building played as a customs house and center of statehood. Every year on June 20, Wheeling celebrates "West Virginia Day," the state's birthday, at Independence Hall. Additionally,

it is the site of community gatherings for holidays, such as Haunted Hall on Halloween, and parties around the winter holidays.

Professional and community business is also conducted in Independence Hall. Groups such as the National Road Alliance and the Wheeling Historical Society hold meetings and events there. West Virginia's Supreme Court has held working sessions in the restored third floor courtroom, and the Governor has convened cabinet meetings and held awards ceremonies at Independence Hall. In April 2000, Wheeling's mayoral candidates conducted a public debate in the building.

The diverse use of this important public building is a testimony to the community benefits derived from the investment of TE funds into its restoration. Independence Hall is thus a resource for learning about yesterday while also enhancing the experience of life in Wheeling today.



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# Transportation Enhancements Basics

Transportation Enhancements (TE) are 12 different community focused activities defined in TEA-21. The 12 activities are:

1. **Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities**
2. **Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety and Education Activities**
3. **Acquisition of Scenic or Historic Easements and Sites**
4. **Scenic or Historic Highway Programs, Including Tourist and Welcome Centers**
5. **Landscaping and Scenic Beautification**
6. **Historic Preservation**
7. **Rehabilitation and Operation of Historic Transportation Buildings, Structures, or Facilities**
8. **Preservation of Abandoned Railway Corridors**
9. **Control and Removal of Outdoor Advertising**
10. **Archaeological Planning and Research**
11. **Mitigation of Highway Runoff and Provision of Wildlife Connectivity**
12. **Establishment of Transportation Museums**

The basic Federal eligibility requirements for TE projects are that they be one of the 12 defined activities, and be related to surface transportation. States can have additional eligibility requirements. Each state must set aside ten percent of its Surface Transportation Program funds for use on TE activities. Transportation Enhancements are Federal-aid reimbursement activities; TE is not a grant program. In most cases, the Federal government pays 80% of the project cost, and the project sponsor is responsible for the remaining 20%, also called the matching funds. States can take advantage of

Congressionally-approved innovative financing measures that make the financing process more flexible. If you are interested in applying for TE funds, you should learn the specifics of how TE is managed in your state and contact your state Department of Transportation. For more information, contact the National Transportation Enhancements Clearinghouse.

## For More Transportation Enhancements Resources



### **National Transportation Enhancements Clearinghouse (NTEC)**

c/o Rails-to-Trails Conservancy  
1100 – 17th Street, NW, 10th Floor  
Washington, DC 20036  
[www.enhancements.org](http://www.enhancements.org)  
[ntec@transact.org](mailto:ntec@transact.org)  
888-388-NTEC



### **U.S. Department of Transportation Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)**

Office of Human Environment  
400 – 7th Street, SW, HEPH-10  
Washington, DC 20590  
[www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment](http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment)  
(202) 366-0106

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