



TRANSPORTATION ENHANCEMENTS

Part of the Federal Resource Guide Series for Arts Organizations

SNAPSHOT

Resource Guide 3
2006—2nd Edition

Legislation:

TEA-21 expired and was replaced by the 2005 *Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users* (SAFETEA-LU). 23 U.S.C. 101(a)(35), 133(b)(8), 133(d)(2), and 133(e).

Type of Assistance:

Federal funding for projects and enhancements relating to surface transportation, administered by state departments of transportation.

Who May Apply:

The transportation enhancements (TE) program offers federal funding for eligible activities administered through state transportation departments. Most states require applications to come through state or local government agencies; some states allow nonprofit organizations to apply.

Activities Funded:

Eligible projects must fall under at least one of the 12 authorized TE activities and relate to surface transportation.

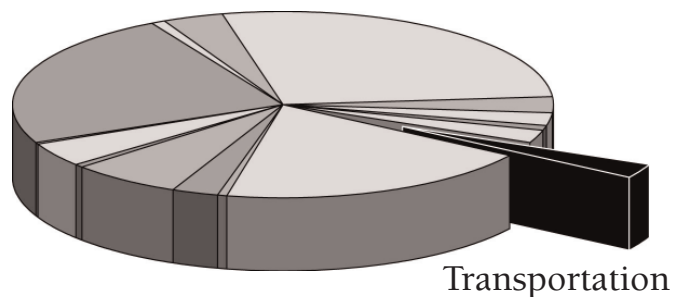
FY 2005 Transportation Enhancement Expenditure:

\$803 million.

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FY 2006 Federal Budget





BACKGROUND

Since Congress enacted transportation enhancements in 1991 as part of the *Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act* (ISTEA), more than \$6 billion have been invested around the country in facilities and trails for walking and bicycling, historic preservation, land acquisition, landscaping and scenic beautification, rails-to-trails, environmental mitigation, and transportation museums. Many of these transportation projects include significant arts components—ranging from public art to construction of new performing arts facilities, rehabilitation of office space, and even provision of live-work space. Each of these projects was part of a broader transportation project.

Many of these transportation projects include significant arts components.

In 1998, Congress reauthorized the enhancements program in the *Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century* (TEA-21), making \$620 million in annual funds available through 2003 to state transportation agencies for 12 types of transportation-related projects. TEA-21 expired on September 30, 2003, and was reauthorized on August 10, 2005, by the *Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users* (SAFETEA-LU), which provides at least \$686 million per year for 2005 through 2009. Regardless of the evolving acronyms, the transportation enhancements (TE) program has remained essentially the same since its start in 1991.

Interstates and highways connect us physically, but heritage and culture connect us as a people. The TE program is a crucial part of maintaining both of these connections in a meaningful way. Integrating arts and artists into the American landscape both increases access to our nation's talents and brings added economic and cultural value to every American's quality of life. The TE program provides a unique opportunity for state and local departments of transportation to work in partnership with state and local arts agencies and humanities councils to design and build community projects eligible for TE support.

EXPLANATION OF TRANSPORTATION ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM

The TE program is administered by each state's department of transportation (DOT). Although each state administers the program differently, typically a state will announce an application schedule, to which any organization may submit proposals. In many states, organizations must be "sponsored" by the local municipality or governmental body that has jurisdiction over the project location. In many states, a review committee then evaluates the proposal and makes funding determinations. In some states the proposals are grouped by priority, or by geography.

Some states use TE funds for specific programs on a yearly basis—for example, Mississippi operates an "Urban Youth Corps" program that allows municipalities to employ youth ages 16–25 for part-time summer work on small TE projects.

EXPLANATION OF TRANSPORTATION ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM (CONT.)

In general, projects receive a maximum 80 percent federal share and minimum 20 percent nonfederal share. However, states with large federal land holdings receive more than an 80 percent federal share on a sliding scale. Provisions of the transportation legislation allow the ratios to vary on a project-by-project basis, provided that for a given fiscal year the program as a whole reflects the state's nonfederal share.

Each state DOT establishes its own guidelines and requirements for providing the nonfederal share of project costs. States require local sponsors to provide a share of project costs.

Below is more information about the activities through which the TE program can benefit local arts projects.

Eligible Activities

To be eligible for TE funds, a project must fall into one of the following 12 TE activities and relate to surface transportation. Each of the descriptions below are illustrative and not meant to serve as guidance for project eligibility:

1. Pedestrian and bicycle facilities: New or reconstructed sidewalks, walkways, or curb ramps; wide paved shoulders for nonmotorized use, bike lane striping, bike parking, and bus racks; construction or major rehabilitation of off-road shared use paths (nonmotorized transportation trails); trailside and trailhead facilities for shared use paths; bridges and underpasses for pedestrians and bicyclists and for trails.
2. Pedestrian and bicycle safety and educational activities: Campaigns promoting safety awareness; safety training activities and classes; training materials.
3. Scenic easements and scenic or historic sites (including historic battlefields): Acquisition of scenic land easements, vistas, and landscapes; acquisition of buildings in historic districts or historic properties, including historic battlefields.
4. Scenic or historic highway programs including tourist and welcome centers: Construction of turnouts, overlooks, and viewing areas; construction of visitor and welcome centers; designation signs and markers.
5. Landscaping and scenic beautification: Landscaping; street furniture; lighting; public art; and gateways along highways, streets, historic highways, trails, and waterfronts. Landscaping recommendation: see FHWA's Roadside Vegetation Management website, www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/vegmgt/index.htm.
6. Historic preservation: Preservation of buildings and facades in historic districts; restoration of historic buildings for transportation-related purposes; access improvements to historic sites.

A project must fall into one of the following 12 TE activities and relate to surface transportation.



EXPLANATION OF TRANSPORTATION ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM (CONT.)

7. Rehabilitation and operation of historic transportation buildings, structures, or facilities (including historic railroad facilities and canals): Restoration of historic railroad depots, bus stations, ferry terminals and piers, and lighthouses; rehabilitation of rail trestles, tunnels, and bridges; restoration of historic canals, canal towpaths, and historic canal bridges.
8. Conversion of abandoned railway corridors to trails: Acquisition of railroad rights-of-way; planning, design, and construction of multiuse trails and rail-with-trail projects.
9. Inventory, control, and removal of outdoor advertising: Billboard inventories and removal of illegal and nonconforming billboards. Inventory control may include, but is not limited to, data collection, acquisition and maintenance of digital aerial photography, video logging, scanning and imaging of data, developing and maintaining an inventory and control database, and hiring of outside legal counsel.
10. Archaeological planning and research: Research, preservation planning, and interpretation of archaeological artifacts; curation for artifacts related to surface transportation and artifacts recovered from locations within or along surface transportation corridors.
11. Environmental mitigation: (i) to address water pollution due to highway runoff; or (ii) reduce vehicle-caused wildlife mortality while maintaining habitat connectivity to address existing highway runoff soil erosion controls, detention and sediment basins, and river clean-ups. Wildlife underpasses or other measures to reduce vehicle caused wildlife mortality and/or to maintain wildlife habitat connectivity.
12. Establishment of transportation museums: Construction of new transportation museums; additions to existing museums for a transportation section; conversion of railroad stations or historic properties to museums with transportation themes.

The National Transportation Enhancement Clearinghouse provides information on all 50 states.

How to Learn About the TE Program in Your State

The Federal Highway Administration (within the U.S. Department of Transportation) and the Rails-to-Trails Conservancy together sponsor an information service called the National Transportation Enhancement Clearinghouse (NTEC). The NTEC provides information on all 50 states and the District of Columbia and their TE programs. The website (see Additional Resources) has organized profiles from each state, including TE contact information.

For more information, visit: www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/te/teas.htm.

DETAILED GRANT EXAMPLES

Hundreds of local organizations have received transportation enhancement funds for projects ranging from bike trails to building cultural centers. As you will see, projects can range from \$1,000 to more than \$200,000. Below is a listing of examples of various local arts projects that have received transportation enhancement funds from their community.

Examples of arts-related enhancement projects include:

1. **Artist residencies** that enable artists to apply their skills to transforming streetscapes, bridges, sound walls, trails, interchanges, and other transportation features into community landmarks.
 - *Colorado's America the Beautiful Trail* engaged teams of visual artists, poets, trail representatives, and local residents to develop art benches that incorporated visual and literary elements illustrating the history and culture of this 76-mile trail.

2. **Public art experts**, sponsored by as many as 200 local arts agencies and 24 state arts agencies, who advise project engineers and designers developing artist-focused projects and revitalizations.
 - *West Memphis Revitalization, AR*, commissioned artists, landscapers, and electricians to restore the main street facilities, providing greenery, public art space, and increased public access.

3. **Landscaping and Scenic Beautification** in which communities use TE funds to enhance and restore the unique character and beauty of the travel corridors connecting them.
 - *Cultural Corridor Project, NM*, used nearly \$1 million in TE funds to enhance and celebrate the communities along historic Route 66, "The Mother Road" (I-40), and El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro (I-25). Artists built unique and popular structures along these routes.
 - *Phoenix's Sunnyslope Canal, AZ*, was part of the original irrigation system built by the Hohokam Indians in 100 B.C. This canal location was restored into a landmark of neighborhood activity and pride by designing elements that were reminiscent of the earlier canals.



DETAILED GRANT EXAMPLES (CONT.)

4. **Cultural information** that is made available at visitor and welcome centers, including trail markers indicating historic and cultural offerings. Making such information available often increases the amount of tourist dollars spent in local communities.
 - *Missouri-Yellowstone River Confluence Center, ND*, allows visitors the magnificent view Lewis and Clark enjoyed in the 1800s and provides transportation artifacts and interpretation.
 - *San Francisco's Waterfront, CA*, was a part of the Historic and Interpretive Signage Project. This municipal partnership produced a visual and written record of local history and functions as a trail marker for one of San Francisco's most popular pedestrian routes.

5. **Downtown redevelopment** that allows the restoration of an anchor facility to renew the local economy. TE funds allow for building purchase and renovation.
 - *Talladega's Ritz Theater, AL*, was refurbished and restored into the leading "Art Deco" themed theater it once was. It is now a focal point of downtown Talladega.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

The Federal Highway Administration (within the U.S. Department of Transportation) and the Rails-to-Trails Conservancy together sponsor an information service called the National Transportation Enhancement Clearinghouse (NTEC). The NTEC provides information on all 50 states and the District of Columbia and their TE programs. The website has organized profiles from each state, including TE contact information.

National Transportation Enhancements Clearinghouse
www.enhancements.org/index.asp

Federal Highway Administration
www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/te/index.htm

Arts and Transportation: Connecting People and Culture, National Assembly of State Arts Agencies
www.nasaa-arts.org/publications/arts_transportation.shtml

Federal Transit Administration, Historic, Archeological, and Cultural Resources
www.fta.dot.gov/transit_data_info/reports_publications/publications/environment/4805_5142_ENG_HTML.htm

“Arts in Transit Report,” Federal Transit Administration
www.fta.dot.gov/transit_data_info/reports_publications/reports/2260_ENG_HTML.htm#1

On the Road Again (book and exhibit), Center for Craft, Creativity & Design
www.craftcreativitydesign.org/pdf/BookInfo.pdf

Monograph “ISTEA: An Arts and Transportation Partnership,” Americans for the Arts
<http://pubs.artsusa.org/library/ARTS013/html/1.html#>

Related Grant Program

Federal Highway Administration: National Scenic Byways Program
www.bywaysonline.org/grants/



QUESTIONS

For more information about the *Federal Resource Guide Series for Nonprofit Arts Organizations*, please contact Director of Federal Affairs, Narric Rome, at nrome@artsusa.org.

RESOURCE SERIES

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ABOUT AMERICANS FOR THE ARTS

Americans for the Arts is the nation's leading nonprofit organization for advancing the arts in America. With more than 45 years of service, it is dedicated to representing and serving local communities and creating opportunities for every American to participate in and appreciate all forms of the arts. With offices in Washington, DC, and New York City, and more than 5,000 organizational and individual members across the country, Americans for the Arts is focused on three primary goals: 1) to foster an environment in which the arts can thrive and contribute to the creation of more livable communities; 2) to generate more public- and private-sector resources for the arts and arts education; and 3) to build individual appreciation of the value of the arts.

In 2004, Americans for the Arts launched **Americans for the Arts Action Fund**, a 501(c)(4) nonprofit organization, to serve as its political advocacy arm and a national voice for the arts. With more than 20,000 citizen members and 70,000 online activists, the Arts Action Fund is significantly expanding arts advocacy outreach in America to help make certain that arts-friendly public policies are adopted at the federal, state, and local levels.

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