



## Transportation Enhancement Officials Seminar July 25-27 2005

### Questions & Answers

**See:** [http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/te/qa\\_state0705.htm](http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/te/qa_state0705.htm)

**Question # 16 Q 16. TE Category #5: Public art as scenic beautification.** Are murals on walls of pedestrian underpasses and/or retaining walls are eligible for TE funding? What are the conditions or limitations? As I interpret our TE guidelines, this type of project *might* qualify under "landscaping or *other scenic beautification.*" I know that this might be considered somewhat of a "stretch", however, if it could be demonstrated that the murals would improve the aesthetics of the transportation facilities, then I'd suggest we'd have a beautification end result. If the locals could integrate safety and/or community pride messages within the art murals, then we'd have a double bonus benefit. *(Kathleen McNeill, Illinois DOT)*

**A 16.** As you note, *landscaping or other scenic beautification* is eligible. Many places already have funded murals on highway underpasses, sound walls, and other locations. The murals have been effective to reduce graffiti, and can be a wise investment of funds to reduce highway maintenance costs. Please make sure that murals are unlikely to distract highway drivers: we don't want drivers to suddenly slow down to view murals, and cause highway crashes.

**Question # 17 Q 17. TE Category #5: Artistic form liners.** Are items such as form liners for concrete on either bridges or sidewalks eligible? The form liners would be for an artistic concrete finish on either the sides of bridges or on sidewalks. The different concrete finishes could be exposed aggregate, colored concrete, or inlaid mosaic tiles. *(Kathleen McNeill, Illinois DOT)*

**A 17.** The extra cost for an enhanced design above the cost of a conventional design is eligible for TE funds. However, a context sensitive design solution probably would be eligible using conventional program construction funds if the project is on a Federal-aid system (arterial, urban collector, or rural major collector).

# Transportation Enhancement (TE) Program

Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century  
U.S. Code, Title 23 Sections 104b (3) and 133d (2)

## ***What is the Transportation Enhancement (TE) program?***

California receives about \$60 million per year. A local or State funding share is required in each reimbursed phase of work. The TE Program is a reimbursable capital-improvement program. Projects must comply with federal environmental requirements and other federal regulations, including those for considering disadvantaged business enterprises in consultant selection and for paying prevailing wages during construction.

## ***What makes a project eligible for Transportation Enhancement Funds?***

Transportation Enhancement activities must have a direct relationship – by function, proximity or impact – to the surface transportation system. Activities must be over and above normal projects, including mitigation.

This list is exclusive. Only these activities are eligible to be accounted for as Transportation Enhancement activities. They are:

1. Provision of facilities for pedestrians and bicycles.
2. Provision of safety and educational activities for pedestrians and bicyclists.
3. Acquisition of scenic easements and scenic or historic sites.
4. Scenic or historic highway programs (including the provision of tourist and welcome center facilities).
5. Landscaping and other scenic beautification.
6. Historic preservation.
7. Rehabilitation and operation of historic transportation buildings, structures or facilities (including historic railroad facilities and canals).
8. Preservation of abandoned railway corridors (including the conversion and use thereof for pedestrian or bicycle trails).
9. Control and removal of outdoor advertising.
10. Archaeological planning and research.
11. Environmental mitigation to address water pollution due to highway runoff or reduce vehicle-caused wildlife mortality while maintaining habitat connectivity
12. Establishment of transportation museums.

## ***How does the application process work?***

California's TE dollars are divided into two places:

- 1) Regional Transportation Planning Agencies select three quarters of the projects. These are programmed into the Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP) and become part of the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP).
- 2) The twelve Department districts select the remaining projects. These are programmed into the Interregional Transportation Improvement Program (ITIP) and also become part of the STIP. Projects must meet the criteria for statewide significance to be considered for the ITIP.