

Transportation Enhancement Program

A primer for the greater Pima County area

The Transportation Enhancement Program helps communities fund projects that go above and beyond typical transportation projects to enhance the experience of the traveling public.

When fuel is purchased in the United States, a federal tax of \$0.18 cents a gallon is paid into the Federal Highway Trust Fund. These funds are distributed back to the states by earmarking specific amounts to specific projects, dedicating funds to transportation-related programs and through formula - based apportionments. The amount of funds that go to the states, projects and programs is established through an act of Congress, every five or so years, through the reauthorization of the Surface Transportation Act. Every reauthorization bill has a unique name, since they each change the process and procedures slightly and often change the focus. The last three reauthorizations have been:

- Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) - 1991
- Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21) - 1998
- Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU) – 2005

What are Transportation Enhancements?

First established by the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) in 1991 and continued in subsequent reauthorization bills, Transportation Enhancement (TE) activities are federally funded, community-based projects that expand travel choices and enhance the transportation experience by improving the cultural, historic, aesthetic and environmental aspects of our transportation infrastructure.



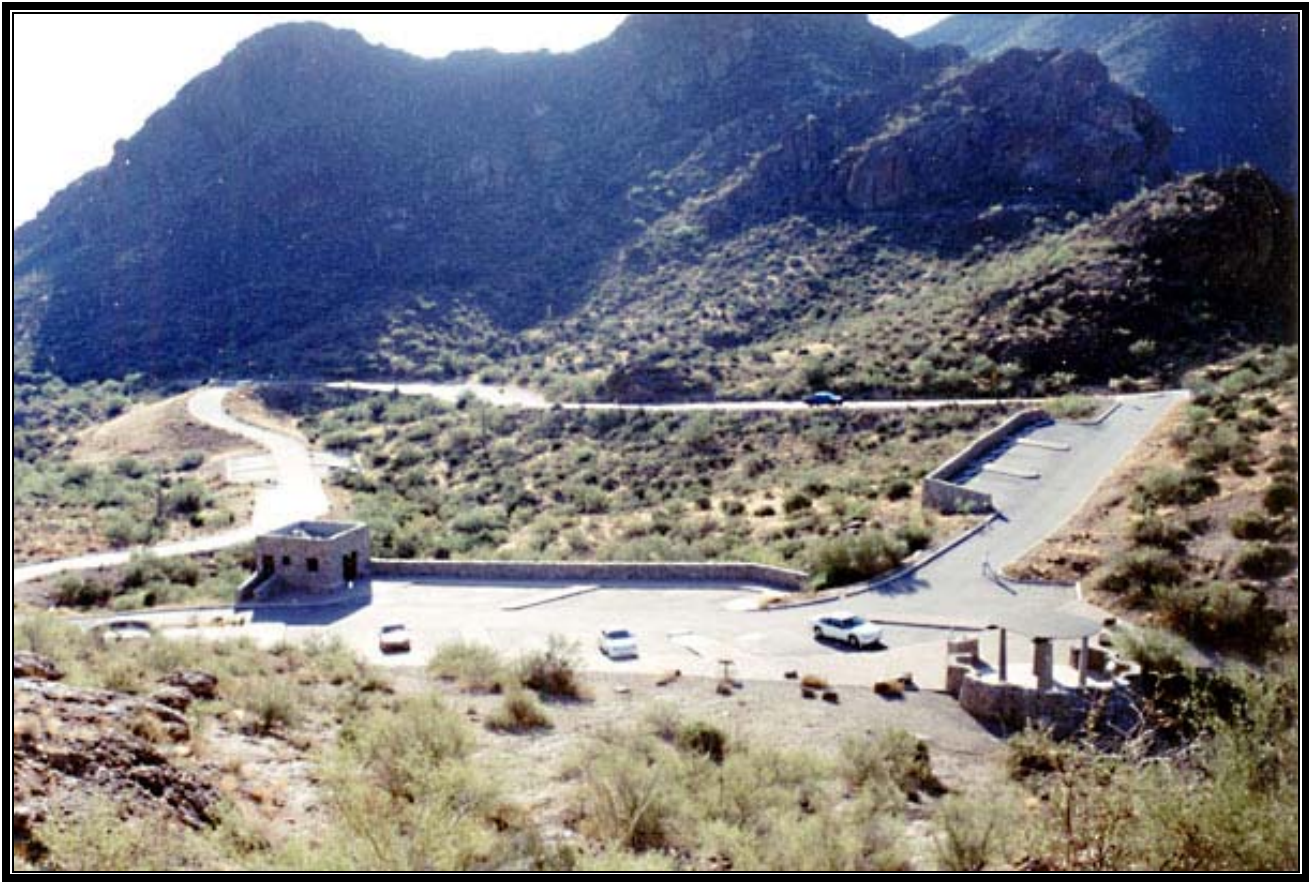
I-10 Gateway

Projects are eligible for TE funding under several different categories. There are 12 categories authorized nationally; however, within the state of

Arizona, Activity 3, acquisition of scenic or historic easements and sites, is not eligible. The eligible activities are:

1. Provision of Facilities for Pedestrians and Bicycles
2. Provision of Safety and Educational Activities for Pedestrians and Bicyclists
3. Not eligible - Acquisition of Scenic or Historic Easements and 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 of Historic Transportation Buildings, Structures or Facilities (Including Historic Railroad Facilities and Bridges)
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

To find out more about eligible project categories visit the ADOT Web site at http://www.azdot.gov/highways/SWProjMgmt/enhancement/12_categories.asp or the Federal Transportation Enhancement Web site at http://www.enhancements.org/12_activities.asp



Gates Pass Scenic Outlook

One of the best ways to describe Transportation Enhancements is to provide some examples of Transportation Enhancement projects that have been completed in southern Arizona. They have provided funds for:

- The establishment of the Southern Arizona Transportation Museum located in the historic depot in downtown Tucson.
- Gates Pass Scenic Overlook (top of page)



- Mountain Ave. Bicycle and Pedestrian Enhancements (pictured above)
- The murals on the sound walls along I-10 frontage road in the Barrio Anita neighborhood. TE funds didn't pay for the sound walls themselves, but covered making the sound walls more aesthetically pleasing to the neighborhood and the traveling public. (Pictured opposite page)



- Part of the Snake Bridge and Basket Bridge (pictured above) just east of downtown Tucson. TE funds didn't pay the entire cost of the bridges but TE funds did provide the additional funds needed to make them look like a snake and a basket, making both projects far more aesthetically pleasing to the traveling public.



Barrio Anita murals

What is the Transportation Enhancement Application Process?

The Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT) administers the Transportation Enhancement program in Arizona. ADOT has a competitive application process by which the available funding is programmed. ADOT partners with the regional transportation planning organizations from around the state and each area has its own application process. Each region is limited on how many applications they may submit; total of the funding requested in the applications submitted may be no more than what is available statewide. In Pima County the TE application process is administered by Pima Association of Governments (PAG).

The TE process is very competitive. Submitting a project application is no guarantee of funding. In 2008, one third of the project applications received statewide received funding (38 local applications and 24 state applications were received statewide and only 13 local projects and 8 state projects were recommended for funding).

The TE program has been popular in the PAG region, so much so that the PAG process starts before the state process with the distribution and review of a pre-application form. The pre-application is a one-page form that outlines the proposed project and the need that the project is addressing. The pre-application helps the local jurisdictions identify potential projects. The pre-application process also helps determine

project eligibility and provides applicants with feedback on their projects.

After the potential projects are reviewed for eligibility in the pre-application process, the local jurisdictions must determine which project(s) they will sponsor. Each application **MUST** have a jurisdictional sponsor. The sponsor must be the City, Town or County where the project is located. The sponsor is the public entity that will build the project, provide the matching funds and maintain the project improvements in perpetuity for the public good. Local governments may not have the resources (staff and/or funding for the project match) to sponsor all application requests that they receive.

If the proposed project is determined eligible through the pre-application process and the local government has agreed to sponsor the project, the applicant works with the sponsor to complete a draft of the ADOT project application. Completed draft applications are returned to PAG where they are reviewed and ranked. This review is done by PAG's Transportation Enhancement Task Force (TETF). The TETF is made up of community volunteers who represent different transportation stakeholder groups. The make up of the TETF is similar to the make up of ADOT's Transportation Enhancement Review Committee (TERC) that makes the actual funding

recommendations to the Arizona State Transportation Board. Groups represented on the TETF include:

- Historical Advisory Commission
- American Society of Civil Engineers
- American Society of Planners
- Pima County Dept. of Environmental Quality
- Commission on Disability Issues
- Neighborhood Associations
- Paratransit Task Force
- Tucson-Pima County Bicycle Advisory Committee
- American Society of Landscape Architects
- ADOT, Tucson District Office
- Citizens Transportation Advisory Committee
- Professional Traffic Operations Engineer
- Trails Task Force
- Tucson-Pima Arts Council
- Metropolitan Tucson Convention and Visitors Bureau
- National Rail History Society
- PAG TERC Member

After the applications are reviewed and ranked, PAG may forward a limited number of applications to the state based on total funding available. Thus, those applications that received a high enough ranking move forward in the process. Those applications that move forward also receive comments/suggestions from the TETF on how to improve their final application.

Applications are revised and submitted again to PAG for consideration by the ADOT TERC. The TERC meets in early October and develops their project recommendations. Those recommendations are forwarded to the Arizona State Transportation Board (ASTB) for their review/action. The ASTB votes on the project awards at their November or December meeting.

Transportation Enhancement Fast Facts

- Projects must be eligible under 1 or more of the 11 eligible categories available in Arizona.
- Projects must be related to surface transportation.
- Projects must be sponsored by the jurisdiction in which it is located.
- Sponsoring jurisdiction must provide a minimum of 5.7% hard cash match of the total project cost, as well as provide for other ineligible project costs and commit to covering project cost overruns.
- "Local" projects, those lying outside of ADOT right-of way, have a federal funding limit of \$500,000.
- "State" projects, those lying at least 75% within ADOT right-of-way, have a federal funding limit of \$1,000,000.
- TE projects should go out for construction bid within 3 years of the notice to proceed.

PAG Region TE Schedule*

March	Advertise release of the pre-application
April	Deadline for completed pre-application forms, review by TETF
April	Notification of eligibility
April	ADOT releases application on its Web site http://www.azdot.gov/highways/SWProjMgmt/enhancement/index.asp
April	Application workshop hosted by PAG
June	Application deadline.
June	Review and ranking by PAG TETF
Aug.	PAG and ADOT deadline for applications
Oct.	ADOT TERC meeting
Nov/Dec.	ASTB award
January	ADOT mails Notice to Proceed for successful project applicants.

* Subject to change; please see the PAG Web site for specific information at www.pagnet.org

