

Georgia's Transportation Enhancement (TE) Program

TE Project Eligibility

The Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991 (ISTEA) created the Transportation Enhancement (TE) Program. Ten percent of the funds within the Surface Transportation Program (STP) of the Federal-aid Highway Program are reserved for the TE Program. Subsequent Federal legislation has made minor changes in the TE Program and it remains a permanent part of the Federal aid Highway Program. Projects implemented under the TE Program must be one or more of the following activities:

1. Provision of facilities for pedestrians and bicycle
2. Provision of safety and educational activities for pedestrians and bicycles
3. Acquisition of scenic easements and scenic or historic sites including historic battle fields
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. Inventory, 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

A project to be funded by the TE Program must meet two basic conditions:

1. The proposed action must be one of the activities listed above, and
2. The proposed action must be related to the surface transportation system.

TE is a Reimbursement Program

A TE project must meet the requirements of the Federal-aid transportation program as if it were a typical highway project. This is a function of the TE Program's enabling legislation and Federal funding source. Prompt attention to each of the necessary steps will assure that each project is completed in a timely manner.

For funding purposes, all transportation projects are divided into three phases:

1. Preliminary Engineering (PE) - pre-construction work items such as planning studies, environmental documentation, design plans, right-of-way plans, and construction bid documents
2. Right-of-Way (ROW) – property acquisition
3. Construction (CST) – project implementation

Federal funds available under the TE Program will pay up to 80 percent of the total project cost. The Sponsor's local match must be at least 20 percent of the total project cost. The local match may be cash, in-kind services, or donated services, materials, or real property. The federal TE funding award may be used in any or all of the three project phases of preliminary engineering, right-of-way, and construction. Sponsors use their own funds to complete the preliminary engineering and right-of-way phases. The TE funds are used for construction.

Since the TE award amount may be less than the amount requested in the TE Application, it is possible that the Sponsor may modify some aspects of the originally proposed project. The amount of federal TE funds allocated to each project is fixed and will not be increased. The Sponsor is responsible for any costs in excess of the awarded TE amount needed to develop and complete the approved project.

Remember, this is not a grant. The federal TE funds are allocated as part of the Federal-aid highway program. Federal funds are made available to projects on a cost reimbursable basis, i.e., the Sponsor must incur the expense before Federal TE funds are paid to the Sponsor.