November 10, 2003, marked the 100th anniversary of the public vote that brought the citizens of the Fairbanks, Alaska, together to officially incorporate their city. The historic event was celebrated with all of the fanfare expected of such an occasion. And thanks to the hard work and dedication of local citizens and government officials, Fairbanks was afforded the opportunity to celebrate much more—the revitalization of the city’s riverfront at the very spot where the city was founded.

Fairbanks was settled on the banks of the Chena River, following the Klondike goldrush years of the 1890s. In the early years, riverways were the primary means of transportation in and out of Alaska’s wild interior, and the Chena River served as the center of commerce and daily activities for the residents of Fairbanks. Residents used the river not only for transportation, but for recreation as well. Ice rinks were set up on the river for skating, hockey, and curling tournaments. Fishing was also a favored activity. As in many communities, the arrival of the railroad and more modern methods of transportation shifted the community’s economic focus away from the river, and Fairbanks’ riverfront became neglected.

During the 1980s and 1990s people began to recognize that the Chena River was really the “Crown Jewel” of the Fairbanks downtown area and that the riverfront needed restoration. With a vision to celebrate the rich heritage of Fairbanks and Alaska’s 50 years of statehood while bringing economic development back to the riverfront, the City Council formed a nonprofit organization, Festival Fairbanks in 1980. Since that time Festival Fairbanks, community groups, and concerned citizens have worked together with city, borough, and State officials to develop and implement revitalization plans.

In the late 1990s the city sought to establish a land trust to purchase undeveloped riverfront property and preserve a greenbelt in the downtown area. The Fairbanks Northstar Borough received Land and Water Conservation Fund money to purchase undeveloped riverfront property in the downtown area.

Revitalization plans also included a multi-use bikeway and promenade, a pedestrian bridge, river overlooks, landscaping, and decorative furnishings. Funding for these efforts have come from a variety of sources, including Federal Transportation Enhancements funds. The Alaska DOT has spent roughly $620,000 in Transportation Enhancement funds to construct pathways along the banks of the river. The DOT (continued on page 6)
TE Questions & Answers From TE Seminar

The last edition of Connections (Vol. 6, No.4) provided a sampling of topics addressed by FHWA staff during a question and answer discussion at the TE Professionals Seminar on June 26, 2003. Since that time, revisions have been made to three of the responses relating to Statewide Administrative Costs, Equipment Purchases, and Military Museums. The questions and answers follow with revisions indicated in bold text. For more information on these and other questions, please contact your State TE Coordinator, your FHWA Division Office TE contact, or NTEC. The remainder of the questions and contact info can be found at www.enhancements.org. You can also call or email NTEC at 888-388-6832 or ntec@transact.org.

Q: Can TE funds be used for TE program administration? Can TE funds be used for consultants? Can TE funds be used for educational/training/outreach activities (i.e., training local sponsors on project/funding requirements)?

A: TE funds cannot be used for TE program administration, for consultants to help administer the State’s program, or to conduct general TE training. Consultants may be hired to help administer the State’s TE program using State funds.

A State may charge indirect costs to TE projects if it has an approved indirect cost rate.

A State may be reimbursed for direct costs incurred on individual TE projects (including management and administration of the specific TE project). A State may not combine management and administrative costs for more than one or all TE projects as a statewide TE program administration project.

Q: Are Military Transportation Museums eligible?

The Transportation Enhancement (TE) Guidance for Transportation Museums states: “TE funds are not to be used to preserve aircraft or create an airport or air museum. Objects or structures related to aviation are not normally eligible for TE funds.” TE Q&A #24 states: 24. Can TE funds be used to restore military transport vehicles/vessels or create military museums?

TE funds may not be used in connection with active military vehicles/vessels, or those owned, maintained or otherwise controlled by the military with limited access to the general public. TE funds are intended to be used for the enhancement of transportation and transportation related activities for the general public. TE activities must be those listed in law, open to the general public, and responsibly maintained directly or in partnership with a public entity (specific Federal funds may be used to match Federal-aid highway funds).

Therefore:

- The TE guidance does not allow TE funds for aviation museums.
- The TE guidance does not allow TE funds for active military vehicles or vessels.
- The TE guidance does not allow TE funds for military museums that are not open to the public.
- HOWEVER: There is nothing in the TE guidance to prohibit eligibility for a museum of military surface transportation if the museum objects are not in active military service and if the museum is open to the general public.

The Guidance gives the following specifications for a transportation museum:

Transportation Museums established using TE funds must meet the following definition of a museum. The facility must; (1) be a legally organized not-for-profit institution or part of a not-for-profit institution or government-entity; (2) be essentially educational in nature; (3) have a formally stated mission; (4) have one full-time paid professional staff member who has museum knowledge and experience and is delegated authority and allocated financial resources sufficient to operate the museum effectively; (5) present regularly scheduled programs and exhibits that use and interpret objects for the public according to accepted standards; (6) have a formal and appropriate program of documentation, care, and use of collections and/or tangible objects; and (7) have a formal and appropriate program of presentations and maintenance of exhibits.

Therefore:

- A State may use TE funds for a museum on military surface transportation.
- A military surface transportation museum may be located on or off a military base, provided it is open and easily accessible to the general public.
- A military surface transportation museum may be operated by a legally organized not-for-profit entity or institution, or by a government entity, including the military.
- Vehicles or other exhibits must not be in active military service.

TE funds are limited to the relative portion of the building, exhibit space, or exhibits related to surface transportation. For example, if a museum dedicates one fourth of its space to surface transportation, then TE funds may cover one fourth of the building construction costs. TE funds may be used for displays of military transport vehicles, or the military’s role in road building. TE funds may not be used for displays of dress uniforms, living conditions, firearms, aircraft, or other items not related to surface transportation.

Q: Can the purchase of equipment (tractors, laboratory equipment, vehicle for travel around State, etc.) used for TE projects be funded with TE? For example, a State is in the process of establishing a Statewide Wildflower Program with Enhancement monies and will ultimately need equipment for the program.

A: TE funds may be used to purchase or lease equipment to accomplish an activity eligible for TE funding if the equipment is necessary for performance of the TE funded project, and provided the equipment is retained for use for TE eligible activities. Equipment used for activities not eligible for TE funding is not eligible. For example, the State may purchase a seed spreader for a State TE wildflower...
landscaping program (equipment used for a TE eligible activity). However, a State may not use TE funds to purchase a car for travel around the State to inspect TE projects (since TE program administration costs are not eligible). Before purchasing equipment, the State should evaluate whether or not using rental equipment or using a contractor would be more cost effective. Acquisition of equipment (i.e., useful life of 1 year or more and an initial acquisition cost of $5,000 or more) is a capital expense that requires prior approval of the FHWA, unless such prior approval is waived by the division office.

Equipment to Undertake a TE Project: A State may purchase or lease equipment needed to construct a TE project or to undertake a TE project. The provisions for equipment are found in 49 CFR 18.32. Purchased equipment must be retained for use in constructing or undertaking other TE eligible activities. After the equipment has served its useful life, the State may dispose of the equipment according to 49 CFR 18.32(b).

Equipment to Maintain a TE Project: In general, FHWA does not pay for routine maintenance, but FHWA may pay for preventative maintenance (23 U.S.C. 116). The TE Guidance states:

Maintenance and Operations

TE funds are generally not to be used for the operation and/or long term maintenance of eligible TE activities. The exception to this provision is the TE activity category defined in legislation as Rehabilitation and operation of historic transportation buildings, structures, or facilities (including historic railroad facilities and canals). A State may choose to participate in the operations of such facilities. Consistent with Section 101 of Title 23, the term operating costs is defined to mean all reasonable costs for the facility to function. These costs may include administrative costs, costs of utilities and rent, and other costs associated with the continuous operations of the facility. The determination of what constitutes reasonable costs should be by agreement between the State and the FHWA division office.

Under the provision of 23 U.S.C. 116, a State must maintain a project constructed with Federal-aid funds. Because of this provision, we encourage States to develop a plan of maintenance or an agreement for TE eligible activities. Strategies for the upkeep and maintenance of the public investment should be considered at the time of the TE proposal.

TE funds may be used to purchase or lease equipment for preventative maintenance. TE funds cannot be used for routine maintenance, therefore purchase or lease of equipment for routine maintenance is not eligible, with the exception of “rehabilitation and operation of historic transportation buildings, structures, or facilities”. For example:
1. TE funds may be used to purchase or lease equipment to prevent slope erosion along highways as part of an overall TE project for mitigation due to highway runoff. TE funds may not be used to purchase or lease a lawn mower or a truck to move lawn mowers.
2. TE funds may be used for maintenance equipment for a historic railroad terminal, but not for a new scenic byway welcome center.

The Administration proposed its Safe, Accountable, Flexible, and Efficient Transportation Equity Act (SAFETEA) of 2003 in May 2003. SAFETEA would allow States to assume the Federal responsibilities and liability for TE projects. The Senate Environment and Public Works Committee and the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee also are developing proposals. The House T&I Committee has introduced HR 3550, Transportation Equity Act: Legacy for Users, which proposes a total of $375 billion over six years, compared to $247 billion proposed in SAFETEA. Under the House proposal, the average annual authorization for the Surface Transportation Program would be $7.5 billion, compared to $5.5 billion in SAFETEA. Both SAFETEA and the House proposals continue the 10 percent minimum for transportation enhancement activities. The House proposal does not include the provision proposed in SAFETEA that would allow a State to assume responsibility and liability for Transportation Enhancements, Recreational Trails, and Transportation and Community and System Preservation Programs.

How should State TE Programs proceed? States should continue their FY 2004 TE programs as normally as possible. There are two likely scenarios for the Federal surface transportation program after February 29: either a multiyear reauthorization, or another extension to continue additional or complete funding for FY 2004. If there is another extension, TE funding likely will remain close to FY 2003 levels. If there is a multiyear reauthorization with the funding levels proposed in SAFETEA, then FY 2004 TE funding would be about 90 percent of the FY 2003 levels. If a multiyear reauthorization has higher funding, then TE would rise accordingly. We are not aware of any likely proposals to eliminate TE.

Therefore, States should continue to solicit, rate, rank, and select TE projects. States may obligate TE funds as well; obligation authority is available now. States receive their obligation authority for the Federal-aid highway program as a whole; there is no specific cap on the availability of TE funds (other than the overall obligation limitation and the current February 29th deadline). Even if a State cannot meet the February 29th deadline, the State should still get projects ready in anticipation of a full year of funding in FY 2004 after February 29th.

Of course, States need to balance TE priorities with the rest of their transportation priorities. STEA allows States to transfer funds among the various Federal-aid categories. However, STEA also requires States to restore funding after enactment of a multiyear reauthorization.
accomplish the transition between the roadway and the trail

Designing Trail Termini

The Brookings Institute released a policy brief entitled Improving Metropolitan Decision Making in Transportation: Greater Funding and Devolution for Greater Accountability. The report examines the evolution of metropolitan transportation decisionmaking and the role of metropolitan areas under TEA-21. It argues that Federal transportation law needs to expand funding sources and decision making to allow metropolitan areas to fulfill the promises of previous reform efforts and to maintain a transportation system that works for 21st century metropolitan America. The brief can be downloaded at www.brookings.org/dybdocrroot/es/urban/publications/200310_Puentes.pdf.

The Highway Safety Research Center produced a report, Designing Trail Termini, that discusses how to safely and efficiently accomplish the transition between the roadway and the trail network. The report provides numerous case studies of successful trail termini. The report also discusses how the trail terminus is an excellent location for educational signage relating to bicycle and pedestrian safety. For a copy of the report visit www.hsic.unc.edu/publications/publications.

The U.S. EPA released a new study, Travel and Environmental Implications of School Siting. The study examines the relationship between school locations, the built environment around schools, how kids get to school, and the impact on air emissions of those travel choices. Read the report: www.epa.gov/smartgrowth/school_travel.htm.

The Smithsonian Institution’s Museum of American History opened the doors on a new transportation hall that takes visitors on a historical journey shaped by America’s transportation choices. The exhibit, “America on the Move,” uses multimedia technology and historical artifacts to create period settings around times and places where transportation changed American lives and landscapes. The 26,000-square-foot hall includes 300 objects dating from 1876 including a 1950s Chicago Transit Authority mass transit car, the 260-ton, 90-foot-long “1401” locomotive, the first car driven across the United States (a 1903 Winton), and an actual piece of Route 66. Can’t make it to DC? Visit the exhibit’s Web site for a virtual experience www.americanhistory.si.edu/onthemove/index.html.

**Warren, Rhode Island**

Main Street in Warren, Rhode Island, has just had a makeover. Sidewalks have been repaved or laid in brick, period street lamps installed, and new benches positioned outside Town Hall. The project was completed late this summer, with renovations totaling $1.3 million, including $300,000 in TE funds. The renovations are part of a long-range town improvement plan to clean and refurbish Warren’s beaches, bridges and sidewalks. [Providence Journal-Bulletin 8/26/03]

**Anne Arundel County, Maryland**

A major link in Anne Arundel County’s local network of trails was just completed. The new 1-mile section of bike trail will connect the 5.6-mile TVB&A Trail to the proposed South Shore Trail. Construction of the trail, as well as installation of new sidewalks on Odenton Road were part of a project financed with $1.5 million in aid from the Transportation Enhancements program and the State’s Neighborhood Conservation Program. [Baltimore Sun, 8/22/03]

**Indianapolis, Indiana**

Indianapolis residents can now walk, run or bike for up to 30 continuous miles on the local Monon Trail. The final 3.5-mile section of trail that ends in Downtown Indianapolis completes the construction of the trail that began in 1995. Much of the trail’s total cost of $5.5 million came from Transportation Enhancements Funds. Indianapolis’ mayor, Bart Peterson, plans to build several more trails in the city. [Indianapolis Star, 10/16/03]

**Doylestown, Pennsylvania**

The town of Doylestown, Pennsylvania, has nearly completed a project to construct a new shared-use path connecting the Delaware Valley College to the historic downtown area of Doylestown. Currently, the two locations are separated by a highly trafficked four-lane highway. The new path will have special bicycle and pedestrian equipment and safety features such as bike racks and pedestrian push-buttons. The project was funded with a $400,000 TE award from the Pennsylvania DOT, and is expected to be completed by the end of 2003.

**Champion, Ohio**

Trail enthusiasts celebrated the opening of the Trumbull County Western Reserve Greenway Trail, a 8.4-mile path through wooded areas of Bristol and Champion, Ohio. The trail is part of the 100-mile Great Ohio Lake to River Greenway, which will one day extend from Lake Erie to the Ohio River. The Ohio DOT provided $1.077 million in TE funds to make the Greenway possible. [Tribune Chronicle, 11/11/03]

The Transportation Research Board published the latest of its scholarly series, the “Transportation Research Record,” entitled Pedestrians and Bicycles 2003 (TRR 1828). Among the research papers is a study of traffic speeds in rural areas with high pedestrian traffic, an analysis of North Carolina’s guidelines for school walk zones, and an examination of pedestrian safety with raised median and redesigned intersections. This issue also covers the safety of intersections for cyclists and preferred commuter bicycle routes. To order a copy of the report visit www.TRB.org.

**TE IN THE NEWS**

The Smithsonian Displays America on the Move

The Smithsonian Institution’s Museum of American History opened the doors on a new transportation hall that takes visitors on a historical journey shaped by America’s transportation choices. The exhibit, “America on the Move,” uses multimedia technology and historical artifacts to create period settings around times and places where transportation changed American lives and landscapes. The 26,000-square-foot hall includes 300 objects dating from 1876 including a 1950s Chicago Transit Authority mass transit car, the 260-ton, 90-foot-long “1401” locomotive, the first car driven across the United States (a 1903 Winton), and an actual piece of Route 66. Can’t make it to DC? Visit the exhibit’s Web site for a virtual experience www.americanhistory.si.edu/onthemove/index.html.
The City of Eau Claire, Wisconsin, received happy news this past summer when the city’s newly restored Soo Line “S” Bridge was presented the Historical Restoration/Preservation Project of the Year Award by the American Public Works Association. With the assistance of $304,000 in Transportation Enhancements funding from the Wisconsin Department of Transportation, the city completed the historic bridge restoration for a total of $409,545.

The 442-foot long bridge crossing the Eau Claire River was constructed for the Soo Line Railroad in 1910. The bridge is shaped in the form of the letter “S”, thus the name, the “S” Bridge. Because the bridge was an essential link in the bicycle and pedestrian system, the city acquired the bridge from the Wisconsin Department of Transportation to prevent its removal.

The City of Eau Claire’s trail system is centered off the Chippewa River Trail and provides pedestrian and bicycle access to many area neighborhoods, the downtown, the public library, a regional arts center, and City Hall. The river crossing is an integral part of the nonmotorized transportation system.

An engineering inspection revealed that several repairs were needed in order to preserve the structure for pedestrian and bicycle use. Because the “S” Bridge was identified as having the potential to be listed on the National Register of Historic Places, the City worked with consultants, the State Historical Society, and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation to develop a design that would enhance the bridge’s unique character and blend with the existing structure.

Repairs to the bridge included replacing the ties and installing a new deck and railing, no small feat for the “S” shaped structure that required the contractor to fabricate the materials on-site at various cutting angles. New concrete was also added to the piers. The pier work was conducted from the deck of the bridge, to avoid disturbing the bed of the Eau Claire River.

Since the bridge opened to the public, many people have enjoyed dramatic views of the Eau Claire River (once reserved for freight trains) while they use the enhanced trail system to go about their daily lives by means of nonmotorized transportation.

For further information on the Soo Line “S” Bridge, contact Brian Amundson, Director, City of Eau Claire, Department of Public Works, 715-839-4934.

WEB NEWS

The FHWA Office of Natural and Human Environment announces new, improved and easier to use Web sites for the Bicycle and Pedestrian Program and Recreational Trails Program. Check out www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/bikeped to find Federal transportation resources available for bicycle and pedestrian projects and details on Federal policy and design guidance for bicycle and pedestrian facilities. The site also provides contact information for State bike/ped coordinators. The new Recreational Trails Program site (www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/recreails) gives an overview of the program, including policy and funding guidelines, and provides contact information for State Recreational Trails Program administrators. On both of the sites, FHWA also provides helpful reports on trails and bicycle and pedestrian issues. Coming soon...an updated Transportation Enhancements site, too.

Status of Transportation Enhancement Funds FY 1992–FY 2003 Includes ISTEA and TEA-21 (data provided by FHWA-FMIS)

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Goodluck Bethaney, Welcome Ryan!
The National Transportation Enhancements Clearinghouse warmly welcomes Ryan Greene-Roesel as the new Program Associate. Ryan will be assuming the responsibilities of Bethaney Bacher who has moved on to the world of Scenic Byways at FHWA Headquarters. Ryan is available to field customer calls, provide technical assistance, fill orders, and serve as NTEC’s Web master.
also used Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) and Transportation and Community and System Preservation (TCSP) funds to connect both banks of the river by constructing a pedestrian and bicycle bridge. Additional Transportation Enhancement funds (approximately $1 million) have been programmed for further upgrades and extensions to the Chena River Pathway.

Throughout the revitalization process, the cooperative efforts of numerous players tapping into a variety of funding sources has led to the creation of a facility to be enjoyed by the entire community. Festival Fairbanks acted as a facilitator, bringing the public and private sectors together to discuss options and possibilities. They gathered letters of endorsement from local businesses, business leaders, the City of Fairbanks, the Fairbanks North Star Borough, and private landholders. The group was also instrumental in raising funds through corporate and private donations including grants from local foundations.

To learn more about Alaska DOT projects in Fairbanks, contact Margaret Carpenter at 907-451-2388. For further information on Festival Fairbanks and the revitalization efforts, contact Michelle Calvillo, Executive Director, at 907-456-1984.

Connections is a quarterly publication of the National Transportation Enhancements Clearinghouse sponsored by the Federal Highway Administration. Submission of articles as well as letters and other comments are welcome.

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