

State of Hawaii
Department of Transportation
Highways Division

**Transportation Enhancement Program
Policy and Process**

Background

The Transportation Enhancement (TE) Program was established with the authorization of the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991 (ISTEA) and continued with subsequent Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21) and the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU) reauthorizations. The Transportation Enhancement Program broadened federal transportation policy to encourage the pursuit of cultural, aesthetic and environmental aspects of the surface transportation system.

Federal assistance is provided for this enhancement initiative through the U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Highways Administration's (FHWA) Surface Transportation Program (STP). This STP funding requires that 10% of the program's funding apportionment be specifically directed to Transportation Enhancement activities.

Although 10% of the STP funds must be set aside for Transportation Enhancement, funds are not required to be spent each fiscal year. Transportation Enhancement funds are, therefore, set aside in a separate account accumulating until obligated.

There is approximately \$3.7 million per year in federal funds set aside for Transportation Enhancement efforts statewide. HDOT will accept applications for projects proposed to be funded with TE funds as needed to be included in its four-year Transportation Enhancement Program.

The FHWA grantee for the State's STP program, and subordinate TE Program, is the State of Hawaii, Department of Transportation (HDOT). As the FHWA grantee, HDOT follows a coordinated, comprehensive and continuing process to ensure that the TE Program meets FHWA requirements.

For information on the U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Highways Administration Transportation Enhancement Program visit their website at <http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/te/guidance.htm>

Eligibility

Transportation enhancement "activities" that meet the objectives of the Transportation Enhancement Program were defined in ISTEA and supplemented in TEA-21 and SAFTEA-LU. In addition to falling within one or more defined activity category, activities must also have a direct relationship to the State's surface transportation system to meet eligibility requirements.

Capital improvement projects for which Transportation Enhancement funds are used must be maintained for the service life of the federal funding investment. Also, to ensure proper use of funds toward defined TE activity categories, Transportation Enhancement funds cannot be used for roadway features, environmental mitigation measures, or routine maintenance.

The twelve activity categories that meet the objectives of the Transportation Enhancement program are as follows:

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

Funding

TE projects are eligible for federal assistance up to 80% of the project cost. The remaining 20% "match" for the project cost must be provided locally by the State Department of Transportation (HDOT); a HDOT approved City, County, or State Department (Approved Government Department); or an agency sponsored by HDOT or an Approved Government Department (Sponsored Agency).

HDOT or the Approved Government Department must assure that the proposed project has the required local match available prior to federal obligation.

Project Oversight

TE Projects must meet all applicable federal (FHWA), State, and County requirements regarding project oversight. Project oversight is to ensure that the TE Project complies with the requirements of FHWA and State programs. Project oversight areas include but are not limited to management; financial; social, economic, and environmental impacts; record keeping; reporting; invoicing; procurement; contracting; civil rights; and project development, implementation, and maintenance.

Due to these requirements the FHWA grantee, HDOT, requires each TE Project receive Project Oversight by HDOT or an HDOT approved City, County, or State Department (Approved Government Department). HDOT or an Approved Government Department must assure Project Oversight will be conducted on the TE Project before it is placed on the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program. Assurance Certification of Project Oversight, however, is not required at the time the TE Project application is submitted to the Regional TE Coordinating Agency. See TE Project Oversight Assurance Certification.

Project Work

In addition to Project Oversight, the TE Project's development, implementation, and maintenance phases must be performed by an agency/organization that is willing and able to perform this work in accordance to FHWA, State and County requirements and practices. This TE Project Work maybe performed by either HDOT; an Approved Government Agency; or an Agency/Organization sponsored by HDOT or Approved Government Agency (Sponsored Agency). The Sponsored Agency performing the Project Work must sign an Assurance Certification Agreement with the sponsoring agency, either HDOT or an Approved Government Agency. The Agreement is to ensure that the TE Project is completed and maintained in accordance to FHWA and State requirements. This executed Agreement must be submitted to HDOT before the TE Project will be placed on the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP).

Application Procedure

To provide greater regional input and an enhanced cooperative, comprehensive, and continuing process, the application and review process is divided into four localized regions. The Regional TE Coordinating Agency for each of these four regions is identified below:

Applicants must submit a completed TE Project Proposal Form with attachments (see TE Project Proposal Form) to the appropriate Regional TE Coordinating Agency. The project proposals **must** meet Eligibility, Funding, and Management requirements.

The Regional TE Coordinating Agencies are:

- City and County of Honolulu - Oahu Metropolitan Planning Organization
- County of Hawaii - HDOT, Highways Division, Hawaii District Office
- County of Maui - HDOT, Highways Division, Maui District Office
- County of Kauai - HDOT, Highways Division, Kauai District Office

Process

1. Projects may apply for inclusion to the Transportation Enhancement Plan at any time by filling out the required application forms and certifications. HDOT also disseminates any revisions and/or updates of federal and/or state requirements.
2. Each Regional TE Coordinating Agency can convene an ad hoc Regional TE Committee to provide guidance on TE projects and the overall Regional TE program.
3. HDOT consults with the Regional TE Coordinating Agencies and their respective Regional TE Evaluation Committees on program policies, direction, and intent as well as on past TE Program performance. Other issues discussed, reviewed, and/or updated through this coordinated and comprehensive process include project eligibility and evaluation, program authority, roles and responsibilities, project development, project implementation, and project maintenance.
4. Project applications are reviewed for compliance with project eligibility requirements. Eligibility requirements include, but are not limited to, the proposed project falling within one or more Transportation Enhancement (TE) activity category, having a direct relationship to the State's surface transportation system, meeting funding requirements (20% local match), and fulfilling project management requirements. Compliance with project eligibility requirements is also review by HDOT and by FHWA.
5. Projects that meet all eligibility requirements will be listed in a financially constrained regional list of eligible proposed transportation enhancement projects. [Project eligibility is good for three \(3\) years from the date of the eligibility confirmation letter.](#)
6. The regional lists of eligible proposed transportation enhancement projects are then used by HDOT to determine what projects should and can be funded with Transportation Enhancement funds in the four (4)-year Statewide Transportation Enhancement Plan. This Statewide Transportation Enhancement Plan shall consider statewide transportation

enhancement needs and shall be financially constrained for consideration into the respective Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP - Statewide) and/or Transportation Improvement Program (TIP - Oahu) of the four-year federal budget.

7. The Director of HDOT must approve the overall Statewide Transportation Enhancement Program list. At the discretion of the Director of HDOT, projects within the Statewide Transportation Enhancement Plan may be re-prioritized in the best interest of the State.
8. Prior to a TE Project's consideration for the federal budget (inclusion to the TIP and/or STIP), the project must meet both Funding and Management requirements. Management requirements include Project Oversight by either HDOT or an Approved Government Department and Project Work performed by HDOT, an Approved Government Department, or Sponsored Agency. See TE Project Oversight Assurance Certification.
9. After the STIP/TIP is approved, the proposed TE Project may be obligated for TE federal funds. After the federal obligation is completed, the organization managing the project shall be notified to begin work to complete the TE Project. Work shall be conducted in a manner to ensure the timely and efficient completion of the proposed TE project.