

The Social and Economic Benefits
of **Transportation Enhancements**



Communities Benefit!



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Introduction



The social and economic benefits of Transportation Enhancements

Communities Benefit! showcases 10 outstanding projects that demonstrate the power of the Transportation Enhancements (TE) program to catalyze positive change and economic rebirth in local communities.

The TE program was created in 1991 when Congress responded to America's desire to get more than just "asphalt and steel" out of federal transportation investments. Since then, the federal government has provided more than \$6 billion dollars to fund 12 different types of non-traditional transportation projects, outlined on the back page of this booklet.

Each of the more than 19,000 TE projects completed or underway across the country contributes to local communities and enhances the transportation experience. Projects range from the creation of new sidewalks and bike trails; to wildflower planting and landscaping along highways and streets; to the preservation of historical transportation buildings such as lighthouses and train stations.

The possible benefits of TE projects are many: economic, social, environmental, health, and transportation-related. The renovation of a historical train station, for example, can spark a downtown redevelopment initiative and attract millions of dollars in private investments. A new bicycle and pedestrian bridge gives community members the chance to stay active and healthy as they get around town. New benches along a main street can help people get to know one another.

Communities Benefit! celebrates the achievements of the TE program. Featured projects range from a low-cost effort to improve a beach in Maine, to construction of a multi-million dollar rail-trail in downtown Indianapolis, Indiana. No matter how large or small, each project in this booklet has enriched the local community in profound and lasting ways.



ArtWalk

ROCHESTER, NEW YORK



THE EXTRAORDINARY STORY of the ArtWalk ends with a flaming piano and a street sweeper ballet. But it starts off sounding a bit ordinary. In 1998, the city of Rochester, New York, proposed widening University Avenue to better accommodate traffic flowing to the suburbs. Neighborhood residents were invited to comment on the plans, and they had a lot to say.

Residents were concerned the widening would increase vehicle speeds and endanger pedestrians in the neighborhood. They discussed how to create a safe and attractive environment on University Avenue, and the idea for an art trail emerged. It would run for several blocks, connecting renowned arts institutions in the neighborhood, including the Memorial Art Gallery, the School of the Arts, and the International Museum of Photography.

The only thing missing from the vision was the extra money needed to make it a reality. Before long, the community applied for and received a \$238,000 Transportation Enhancements (TE) award that in combination with private donations and city funds made ArtWalk come alive.

The first step was to improve the pedestrian environment along University Avenue with brick crosswalks, widened sidewalks, corner curb bump-outs, and a new median. Parts of the street were also narrowed to slow traffic.

The next step was to add the art. The newly-founded organization, "ArtWalk of Rochester," took the lead in organizing open competitions for artwork. Hundreds of local artists and creative residents submitted original designs for



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The ArtWalk opening celebration drew a crowd of 1,500 complete with several dance troupes and a ballet performed by street sweepers.

artistic embellishments of the street. They created whimsical benches and imprints to be stamped into the concrete sidewalks. Streetlamps were covered in mosaic and art displays and sculptures were installed.

Then it was time to celebrate. The ArtWalk opening celebration drew a crowd of 1,500 complete with several dance troupes and a ballet performed by street sweeper machines. Since then, many more events have been held along ArtWalk, such as the annual “ArtWalk Alive,” attended by thousands of visitors from Rochester and beyond.

During one unique event, a temporary art exhibition involving a decaying piano was set on fire by the city mayor. Mayors around the country, in fact, were so impressed by ArtWalk they recognized it with the Conference of Mayor’s Urban Livability Award in 2003.

ArtWalk’s outdoor exhibits have brought a surge of foot traffic into the community, leading several businesses

along University Avenue to redecorate their storefronts. Writers and Books, a local bookstore, installed a sculpture of a book-shaped front fence and gates. Its owner Joseph Flaherty noted, “rather than seeing the arts as a frill, people now see the vital role they can play in spurring economic development.”

Representative Louise Slaughter, co-chair of the Congressional Arts Caucus, couldn’t agree more. She wrote of ArtWalk, “This innovative TE project demonstrates how public placement of art positively impacts the local economy.”

ArtWalk’s benefits are more than monetary, however. In a series of questionnaires compiled by the Bruner Foundation, many residents mentioned the role ArtWalk has played in increasing their sense of community and civic pride. Kevin Stam, a local businessman, wrote, “ArtWalk has created a place we are proud of. People that lived near each other for years now know their neighbors names.”



Safe Routes to School Program

MARIN COUNTY, CALIFORNIA



MARIN COUNTY'S GENTLE WEATHER and sparkling views of the San Francisco Bay make it one of the most sought-after residential areas in the country. For the same reasons, it is also a wonderful place to take a walk. And because of Marin's nationally-known Safe Routes to School program, more and more kids and parents in the county are finding opportunities to enjoy the beauty of their community on foot or bicycle.

The Marin County Bicycle Coalition (MCBC) started the Safe Routes to School program (SRTS) in 2000 as a small pilot project in just a few schools, using \$50,000 in funds from National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. After the first year, the county of Marin took over administration of the program, contracting much of the project work to the MCBC and two consulting firms: Nelson Nygaard Associates and Parisi and Associates.

Over the next several years, and with the help of a \$310,000 Transportation Enhancements award, the program ballooned. By 2004, 33 schools representing more than 13,000 students—well over a third of all school-age children in the county—were participating in the Safe Routes program.

The program has three elements: education, engineering, and encouragement. Classroom lessons teach kids how to walk safely around their neighborhood, and about the environmental and health benefits of walking. A traffic engineer helps schools improve pedestrian safety through

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In the first year of the program, walking and biking trips to participating schools increased by 57 percent.

short-term measures such as crossing-guards, and long-term infrastructure improvements. Special events and contests keep kids interested in walking.

In the first year of the SRTS program, walking and biking trips to participating schools increased by 57 percent. Every year since, more kids bike and walk to school as “chauffeured” single-student trips continue to drop. In 2004, single-student trips dropped by 13 percent among participating schools. This translates into more than 3,500 one-way trips saved every day, and an annual savings of nearly 2 million vehicle miles.

These successes mean parents save time in their day and kids get exercise on the way to school. Regular exercise is more important than ever in a time when the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention warns that one in four children is obese or overweight.

The program also helps clean the air. The Marin County Traffic Management Agency estimates that 21 percent of morning traffic comes from parents driving kids to school. When fewer cars line up in front of schools, kids breathe cleaner air. For this reason, the American Lung Association recognized the SRTS program with a “Clean Air Champion” award.

In 2004, Marin County voters approved a new sales tax to fund the SRTS program. “The Transportation Enhancements award we received early on enabled us to get off the ground,” noted Wendi Kallins of the Marin Bicycle Coalition. “Now the program has earned a sustainable source of funding.” Bolstered by the outpouring of community support, the Safe Routes to School program will continue to bring good health and clean air to Marin County kids far into the future.



Seminole Overpass

SEMINOLE COUNTY, FLORIDA



SEMINOLE COUNTY RESIDENTS are committed to trails. In 2000, local voters approved a new tax that raised \$20 million to develop their extensive trail network.

There was only one problem: the growing network of trails was split in half by Interstate 4, a major north-south thoroughfare that accommodates more than 100,000 vehicles a day between Sanford, in the heart of Seminole County, and Orlando.

Bicyclists and pedestrians trying to cross the busy highway had to use overpasses designed for vehicles. Trail users on the Rinehart Trail east of I-4 and the Wekiva Trail west of I-4 had few convenient or safe options for accessing trails on the opposite side of the interstate. Most significantly, residential areas on one side of I-4 had no safe pedestrian access to the shops and offices in the new Heathrow International Business Center across the highway.

The solution: build a bicycle and pedestrian bridge over I-4. Seminole County officials wanted more than just any bridge, though; they wanted a dramatic landmark. Using a \$2.5 million Transportation

Enhancements (TE) award from the Florida Department of Transportation, in combination with local funds and support from businesses at the Heathrow center, they created a bridge that is both utilitarian and beautiful.

The hybrid “cable-stayed suspension” design is reminiscent of San Francisco’s Golden Gate Bridge, but includes 90-foot columns that keep the bridge from swaying laterally. The graceful steel structure, which complements the modern design of the adjacent

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Since completion of the overpass, trail usage in the Seminole County trail system has increased more than 20 percent to 10,000 trips per month.

Heathrow center, so impressed Florida's chapter of the American Public Works Association they recognized the bridge with a "2004 Environmental Project of the Year" award.

The new overpass has impressed trail users, too. Since completion of the overpass, trail usage in the Seminole County trail system has increased more than 20 percent to 10,000 trips per month. And in greater Orlando, which has been consistently ranked as the most dangerous metropolitan area in the nation for pedestrians, having a safe route over the highway is very important.

New trail users attracted by the Seminole overpass are expected to bring their pocketbooks with them. A study of the West Orange Trail in neighboring Orange

County showed that trail users, 30 percent of whom came from outside the county, spent an average of \$12.79 per day, per person, along the trail. Seminole County officials expect users on their trail network to make similar expenditures, and expect property values to rise along the trails. Daryl McLain, a Seminole county commissioner, noted property values along new trails have already shown increases. Five local homeowners associations have demonstrated their support by raising half a million dollars for trail improvements.

Now that TE funds have helped unite the two halves of Seminole County's trail network, residents can reap the full benefit of the trails they've invested in over so many years.



Mill Ruins Park

MINNEAPOLIS, MINNESOTA



THE CITY OF MINNEAPOLIS has long held the nickname “The Mill City.” Until the recent creation of the Mill Ruins Park, visitors to the city might not have understood the origin of this epithet. Little of the once-thriving West Side Milling District was visible except a “Gold Medal Flour” sign above empty grain elevators and rubble.

In the heyday of the industry, as many as 20 mills inhabited the West Side Milling District. Water rushed down from St. Anthony Falls on the Mississippi River into an intricate system of canals that powered the mills. The milling industry brought prosperity to Minneapolis and to the corporations that owned the mills. Some of these, like Washburn, Crosby, and Company, precursor of General Mills, went on to become industrial giants.

When the industry declined in the 1920s, many mills were abandoned, razed, or buried under gravel later dumped by a local company. Fortunately, by the mid-1970s, the city of Minneapolis began to recognize the historical value and economic potential of the central riverfront

area encompassing the West Side Milling district. Over two decades, the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board invested \$55 million to create a “green necklace” of parkland along the central riverfront, catalyzing \$1.2 billion to date in private investment in the area.

Mill Ruins Park is the historic heart of the redeveloped district. It sits along the west bank of the Mississippi near the majestic St. Anthony Falls, the Stone Arch pedestrian and bicycle bridge, and the world-class “Mill City Museum,” a newly completed facility built inside the shell of a National

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“ Mill Ruins Park is an outstanding example of how TE funding has catalyzed redevelopment of industrial areas,” said Richard Moe, president of the National Trust for Historic Preservation. *“Today, it is both the heart and the memory of a great city.”*



Historic Landmark, the Washburn mill known as the “home of Betty Crocker.”

Construction of the park began in 2000, when workers and archaeologists removed more than 125,000 cubic yards of partially contaminated rubble burying many of the historical ruins of the milling complex. Water from the Mississippi was returned to one of the newly excavated canals.

Once the ruins were uncovered, workers developed the park infrastructure using more than \$3 million in Transportation Enhancements funds. They created a system of pedestrian paths complemented by interpretive signs, benches, lighting, and landscaping that allow visitors to learn about the city’s past as they stroll through the park.

Many visitors do come. The central riverfront parks, including the Mill Ruins Park, received more than 720,000 annual visits at last count in 2003. Visitors come to understand Minneapolis’ industrial past, or simply to pass through a beautiful spot on the way to work. Trails within the park form crucial connections within the city’s extensive urban trail network, a

transportation asset that has helped make Minneapolis a top city for bicycle commuting.

“Mill Ruins Park is an outstanding example of how TE funding has catalyzed redevelopment of industrial areas, interpreted transportation assets as they relate to the nineteenth century origins of the city, and created a community recreational asset for all to enjoy,” said Richard Moe, president of the National Trust for Historic Preservation. “Today, it is both the heart and memory of a great city.”



Lincoln Highway Highway Roadside Museum

SOUTHERN PENNSYLVANIA



NEAR BEDFORD, PENNSYLVANIA, a two-story high coffee pot sits by the side of the road. A few miles later, travelers fill their tanks at an art-deco gas station. These landmarks are part of the unique experience of driving on US Route 30 in southeastern Pennsylvania, a road once known as the Lincoln Highway.

The original Lincoln Highway sprang from the efforts of early drivers dissatisfied with the poor quality of the nation's first roads. They persuaded the federal government to create a system of improved roads that by 1925 allowed drivers to travel comfortably from Times Square in New York all the way to San Francisco.

Where it passed through Pennsylvania, the Lincoln Highway stimulated economic growth in the small towns lining the way. Many roadside establishments lured travelers off of the road with creative architecture, such as the coffee pot diner, an ice cream parlor painted to resemble a scoop of ice cream, and a ship shaped hotel.

Business brought in by the Lincoln Highway helped these small towns flourish during the early part of the 20th century. But when the high-speed Pennsylvania Turnpike was completed in the 1940s, the Lincoln Highway gradually lost its significance, though most of the road itself survived as U.S. Route 30.

In 1996 Pennsylvania's then-governor Tom Ridge recognized the historic importance of the former Lincoln Highway by designating a six-county Lincoln Highway Heritage Corridor. Soon after, a nonprofit organization also called the Lincoln Highway Heritage Corridor (LHHC) began work to commemorate the old road and attract new business to the towns on and around Route 30.



Nearly 100 articles on the museum have been featured in publications such as *USA Today*, *The London Times*, *The New York Times*, and *The Toronto Star*.

In order to plan for the roadside museum, the LHC held meetings in the towns along the 200-mile stretch of road, recording oral histories of the highway's early days, and helping each community envision the Lincoln Highway of the future.

Using a \$350,000 Transportation Enhancements (TE) award, along with planning funds from Pennsylvania's Heritage Parks Program, the LHC installed more than 100 roadside exhibits along the "200-Mile Lincoln Highway Roadside Museum." Many of these exhibits are waysides where drivers can observe and read about historical sites along the highway while listening to oral histories recorded by community members. Other exhibits include colorful murals depicting life on the Lincoln Highway, bright vintage gas pumps painted by local artists, wall plaques, and several life-size vintage photos encouraging travelers to "picture yourself on the Lincoln Highway."

The newly completed Lincoln Highway Roadside Museum has generated a great deal of interest. Nearly 100 articles on the museum have been featured in national and international publications such as *USA Today*, *The New York Times*, *The London Times*, *The Toronto Star*, as well as local newspapers and television stations.

This media attention has attracted new visitors and new business to a region rarely in the spotlight. Business owners near exhibits report an increase in foot

traffic, and hits on the Web site of the LHC have increased fivefold since the exhibits were completed. Marketing survey postcards reveal about a third of exhibit visitors are from out-of-state. These visitors will soon be able to discover more about the Lincoln Highway through a welcome center funded with a second TE award.

"If we want economic development along historic routes, we had better give travelers a reason to ride them," wrote Olga Herbert, director of the LHC. "The Lincoln Highway Museum has done just that!"

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Runoff Control Project

WATERBORO, MAINE



RESIDENTS OF WATERBORO, MAINE, enjoy the benefits of the Transportation Enhancements (TE) program while lounging by the water at Little Ossipee Pond. Beneath the feet of kids at play and sun-soaked adults, a subsurface filtration system keeps the lake water pure and clear.

Before the system was put in place, an unsightly drainage pipe emptied polluted runoff from nearby Route 5 directly into the public swimming area. The Maine Department of Transportation and the town of Waterboro solved the problem with the help of \$65,000 in TE funds. They created a drainage system that pipes the highway runoff into a gravel filtration area covered over with beach sand. Now the town has a brand new beach and clear water to swim in.

The cleaned-up beachfront is attracting a multitude of visitors. Michael DeAngelis, Waterboro's Recreation Director remarked, "On warm weekdays, after school is out for the summer, the beach sees upwards of 100 visitors per day. On weekends that number may triple."

Waterboro's success story is one of many in Maine since the creation of the Surface Water Quality Improvement Program or SWQPP (pronounced "squipp"). The Maine Department of Transportation created the program in 1998 in response to concern about the impacts of roads on the state's water resources, especially the 6,000 freshwater lakes and ponds present throughout the state.

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Rainwater runoff washes over road surfaces and transports pollutants into Maine's lakes, causing degradation in the water quality. The health of the lakes suffers as a consequence, and so does Maine's economy. Maine's lakes earn the state more than \$1.2 billion each year, and support 50,000 jobs. These revenues come primarily from recreation on the lakes, and from property taxes in valuable lakefront areas. Polluted lake water is unattractive to tourists and residents, and can cause revenue from the lakes to decline.

A 1996 study from the Maine Agricultural and Forestry Experiment station

showed that, in some areas, a reduction in the clarity of the water by as little as one meter could result in the loss of 5 percent total property value for the town. In a state where more than 60 percent of municipal revenues come from property taxes, water quality decline in Maine's lakes has serious consequences.

The runoff control project in Waterboro, along with hundreds of other similar projects funded through SWQPP, is an investment in the ecological health of Maine's lakes and in the strength of the state's economy. In Waterboro, the results of this investment are *clearly visible*.

The runoff control project in Waterboro is an investment in the ecological health of Maine's lakes and in the strength of the state's economy. In Waterboro, the results of this investment are *clearly visible*.



Southern Museum of Civil War & Locomotive History

KENNESAW, GEORGIA



THE CIVIL WAR MUSEUM in Kennesaw, Georgia, was once just a small building in a small town. Built in 1972, it existed primarily to house “the General,” a steam locomotive made famous during the Civil War.

In 1998 the city of Kennesaw decided the General deserved a better home. They used a \$800,000 Transportation Enhancements (TE) award and \$6 million more in public and private donations to rehabilitate the old museum, expand it from 3,800 square feet to more than 40,000 square feet, and create world-class exhibits.

When the new Southern Museum of Civil War and Locomotive History opened in 2003, it was an instant success. In its first year of operations, it attracted more than 50,000 visitors, far more than the 20,000 visitors who came to the old museum the year before it closed.

One of three permanent exhibits at the new museum tells the story of the Great Locomotive Chase, an event in which Union spies hijacked the General and were chased all the way to Chattanooga, Tennessee, by its crew. Another exhibit, entitled “Lifelines of the Civil War,” demonstrates how the railroad shaped the course of the war by controlling the movement of troops and supplies. In the final exhibit, “Glover Machine Works,” visitors experience a fully reproduced turn-of-the-century locomotive factory. Many more traveling and temporary exhibits come to the museum through the prestigious Smithsonian Affiliations Program.

The Southern Museum will soon build a Railroad Education Center to complement existing exhibits. The Education Center will be funded with an additional \$400,000 in TE funds and \$1.1 million

When the new museum opened it was an instant success. In its first year of operations, it attracted more than 50,000 visitors, far more than the 20,000 visitors who came to the old museum the year before it closed.

already raised by the community. It will feature hands-on learning exhibits focusing on railroad history, and will house some of the most significant railroad archives in the United States. Museum staff anticipate the center will benefit as many as 25,000 students and 50,000 adults annually, attracting even more visitors to the museum.

The surge in visitors already experienced by the Southern Museum has substantially impacted the local economy. In its first year, the new museum brought in an estimated \$12 million in revenues to the community. A number of new businesses, including three restaurants, an ice cream shop and a gift shop have sprung up within 200 yards of the museum.

Riding on the wave of investment sparked by the receipt of TE funds, the city of Kennesaw obtained grants to spruce up the downtown with new sidewalks, lights, and landscaping. In the words of Jeff Drobney, the museum's Executive Director, "the new museum has been the driving force in the economic revitalization of our downtown."

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Monon Rail-Trail

INDIANAPOLIS, INDIANA



IN THE HEYDAY of rail travel, trains on the Monon rail line arrived in Indianapolis carrying passengers on their way to and from Louisville, Kentucky, and Chicago. Thanks to the Transportation Enhancements (TE) program, the Monon Trail continues to carry “passengers”—nearly 1.2 million visitors per year—who ride the path of the old rail line on foot, bicycle, and skates.

Many of these non-motorized travelers use the Monon to run errands or get to work. The trail passes through Broad Ripple, Indianapolis’ most artsy neighborhood; the Indiana State Fairgrounds; and the gates of the Indiana School for the Blind. These and many more destinations lie along the Monon’s sixteen-mile length, which acts as the north-south spine of Indianapolis’ 65-mile trail network.

Some people use the Monon just to get sun, air, and exercise. A survey conducted in 2001 by Indiana

University’s Eppley Institute showed trail users view the trail as an important part of their active lifestyle. Eighty-two percent of users reported that they walk, run, cycle, or skate more because they have trail access. The recreational opportunities afforded by the Monon won it national recognition in 2002 when it was designated a “National Recreation Trail” by the federal government.



Each of the 9,000 homes within one-half mile of the Monon Trail enjoy an estimated sales premium of \$13,059.

With such a wide array of destinations and recreational opportunities, the Monon Trail is one of the busiest in the nation. All the activity on the trail generates business for adjacent shops and restaurants. Indy Greenways, the Indianapolis Parks Department responsible for the Monon, has counted more than 20 new businesses that have located along the trail since 2001. Eight of these businesses, such as the Monon Snack Shack and the Monon Coffee Co., are named after the trail.

Homeowners living near the Monon also reap economic benefits from their proximity to the trail. According to a 2003 study conducted by the Center for Urban Policy and the Environment at Indiana University, each of the 9,000 homes within one-half mile of the Monon trail enjoy an estimated sales premium of \$13,059, amounting to a \$116 million increase in property values associated with the presence of the Monon Trail.



That is a substantial return on an initial investment of \$3.5 million in TE funds and \$4.5 million in matching funds used to construct the trail over the last decade. “There was a time we believed greenways were for recreation,” remarked Ray R. Irvin, administrator of Indy Greenways. “They are now recognized as an engine for economic development.”

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Salisbury Station Revitalization

SALISBURY, NORTH CAROLINA



“ONE-TO-TWENTY.” Joe Morris, a city planner in Salisbury, North Carolina, smiles when he mentions the ratio. It means that every dollar of public funds invested in Salisbury over the last two decades has leveraged \$20 dollars in private development. These numbers have meant the transformation of a blighted downtown into a thriving commercial center with nearly 100 percent occupancy.

Downtown is starting to look like it used to when Salisbury was a popular stopping-off point for travelers on the Norfolk & Southern Railroad. In the heyday of rail travel, 44 passenger trains arrived at Salisbury’s grand station each day. The Mission-style building, designed by noted architect Frank P. Milburn, was a bustling center of activity and commerce in the small town. From the station it was a short stroll over to the Montgomery Ward department store on an elevated walkway called “Easy Street.”

A little more than half a century later, the downtown started to go quiet. Automobile travelers bypassed the city on highways, and only a few passengers arrived by train. Buildings were vacated, Easy Street was blocked by a warehouse, and the station was ignored. In the early 1980s, the Norfolk & Southern Railroad decided to demolish the building.

The Historic Salisbury Foundation, a local community group, appealed to then-Governor James B. Hunt to provide seed money to purchase the station. Hunt allocated \$25,000 to launch a successful campaign to buy the station property. Within a few short years the Historic Salisbury Foundation raised an additional \$2.2 million in private funds to stabilize and renovate the building.

The city of Salisbury and the Historic Salisbury Foundation completed the effort to save the station by securing \$900,000 in Transportation Enhancements (TE) funds to adaptively re-use the station's restaurant and baggage areas as office space. By 1998, the restoration of the station was complete. During that year, ridership increased at the Salisbury station from 17,299 to 24,147 passengers, largely due to the improved facilities.

With the station restored to its former beauty, community investment began spreading to the surrounding area. The city built two attractively landscaped parking lots and a new public park nearby. An old industrial baking facility and historical buildings including the Carolina Beverage Company warehouse and the Mendenhall Motor Company Building, were purchased and rehabilitated for residential and commercial use.

In 1998, the Farmers & Merchants Bank, a locally owned financial institution, bought nearly half a city block of wonderful old buildings slated for demolition. With an investment approaching \$8 million, the F&M Financial Center renovated the buildings into premium office space. The bank donated one historical building to the Waterworks Visual Arts Center, which created a new gallery in the space using \$2.2 million in private funds.

Riding on this wave of investment, the city secured an additional TE award of \$600,000 for streetscape improvements in

the area including brick sidewalks, decorative lighting, and landscaping. Now passengers and visitors enjoy the walk from the station into town on a newly restored "Easy Street."

A study commissioned by the North Carolina Department of Transportation in 2004 captured the magnitude of Salisbury's economic comeback. The study showed that the \$6 million in TE funds and other public funds used to rehabilitate the depot will translate into \$23 million in wages to North Carolina residents over a 20-year period. Over the same period, Salisbury may see the arrival of a new high-speed rail service. Salisbury's historic downtown is on its way to becoming the prosperous destination it once was.

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"Every dollar of public funds invested in Salisbury over the last decade has leveraged 20 dollars in private development".

Resort Bluffs Acquisition

EMMET COUNTY, MICHIGAN



TUCKED AWAY in northwest Michigan, the town of Petoskey has long been known as a resort town, attracting and inspiring countless visitors over the years with its natural beauty. Drivers coming into town experience that beauty along US Route 31 as it skirts the Little Traverse Bay of Lake Michigan.

Abundant lake views are a major asset to Petoskey's 6,500 permanent residents and to the larger community of Emmet County. Tourism is the main industry in Petoskey, which swells with visitors during peak months, more than doubling in size.

Many of the tourists who visit Petoskey purchase a piece of its beauty for themselves. Expensive new homes and gated communities crop up along the lake each year, often blocking out views from the road, causing erosion on fragile bluffs, and restricting public access to the water. These problems were captured in the 1999 Emmet County Comprehensive Recreation Plan Survey, which found an overwhelming majority of local residents were concerned about the intensity of private lakeshore development and lack of access to the shoreline.

One of these valuable lakefront areas is the Resort Bluffs property, located just 600 feet outside Petoskey's city limits. More than five million motorists drive past this area on Route 31 each year. For those headed into Petoskey's Victorian downtown, the Resort Bluffs makes a dazzling first impression.

The Resort Bluffs also contains a resource not visible from the road: a mile-long dirt path along an abandoned railroad corridor. The short path is one of the few remain-

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More than five million motorists drive past the Resort Bluffs property each year.

ing undeveloped links in the Little Traverse Wheelway, a 26-mile bicycle and pedestrian trail that skirts Little Traverse Bay, connecting Petoskey with other resort towns.

To protect the area from development, Emmet County organized an effort to acquire the Resort Bluffs. In early 2004, they purchased the land using \$828,456 in Transportation Enhancements (TE) funds and more than \$1.5 million in matching funds provided by the Michigan Departments of Transportation, Natural Resources, and Environmental Quality.

With the Resort Bluffs safe, the community can focus on completing the Little Traverse Wheelway through the property so users can access Petoskey and other

towns nearby. The Northern Lakes Economic Alliance, a regional community and economic development organization, estimates the Resort Bluffs acquisition and the new trail extension will bring \$1.6 million in economic activity to the area from increased sales of food, lodging, and equipment.

Thanks to TE funds, Emmet County residents are assured of enjoying the economic and aesthetic benefits of the Resort Bluffs for years to come. "Acquiring the property took over two years," wrote Emmet County planner Max Putters, "but resulted in the protection of spectacular views and open space in an area of increasing urbanization."



Transportation Enhancements BASICS

The Transportation Enhancements (TE) program consists of 12 activities defined in law. These are:

- 1. Provision of Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities**
- 2. Provision of Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety and Education Activities**
- 3. Acquisition of Scenic Easements and Scenic or Historic Sites**
- 4. Scenic or Historic Highway Programs, Including Tourist and Welcome Centers**
- 5. Landscaping and Scenic Beautification**
- 6. Historic Preservation**
- 7. Rehabilitation and Operation of Historic Transportation Buildings, Structures, or Facilities**
- 8. Preservation of Abandoned Railway Corridors**
- 9. Control and Removal of Outdoor Advertising**
- 10. Archaeological Planning and Research**
- 11. Environmental Mitigation of Highway Runoff and Provision of Wildlife Habitat Connectivity**
- 12. Establishment of Transportation Museums**

If you are interested in starting a TE project in your community, keep the following tips in mind:

- * To be eligible for TE funds, a project must be one of the 12 defined activities and relate to surface transportation. States may have additional eligibility requirements.
- * Recipients of TE funds do not receive a grant; instead, they are reimbursed for project expenses as they occur.
- * Typically, the federal government pays 80 percent of project costs, and the project sponsor is responsible for the remaining 20 percent.
- * The TE program is administered through state departments of transportation.

The National Transportation Enhancements Clearinghouse (NTEC) can help you understand the basics of the TE program and how it works in your state, and tell you whom to contact to start the application process.

For more **Transportation** Enhancements **Resources**



**National Transportation
Enhancements Clearinghouse (NTEC)**

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