



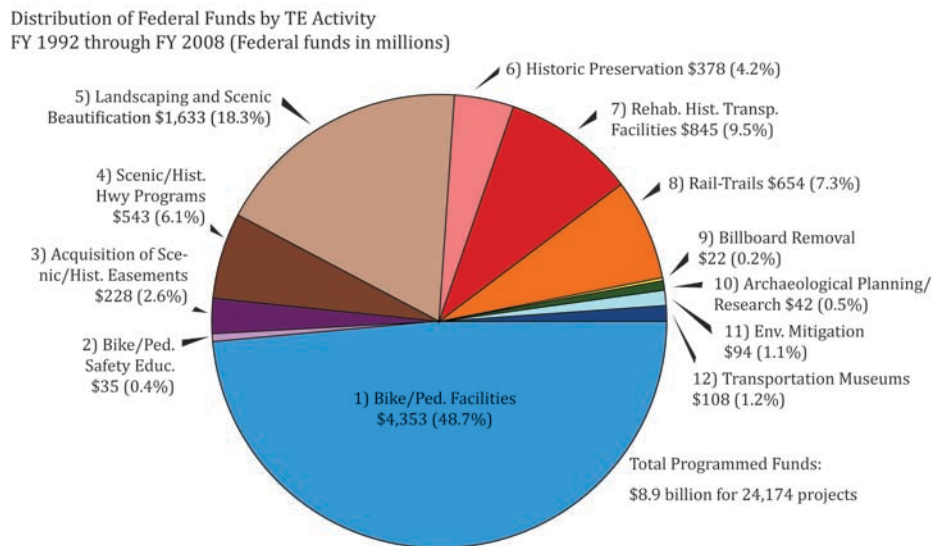
# TRANSPORTATION ENHANCEMENT MYTHS

*The Transportation Enhancement (TE) program is the largest source of federal funding for bicycling and walking infrastructure. However, it is also one of the most misunderstood. Here are some of the most commonly believed myths about the TE program.*

**Myth: Transportation Enhancement projects are not transportation.**

*Transportation Enhancement projects help millions of Americans travel safely and efficiently.*

Twelve percent of all trips in the United States are made by bicycling or walking. (FHWA, 2009 NHTS) While all TE projects improve our nation’s transportation system, the majority of TE projects are specifically bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure projects such as sidewalks and bicycle lanes and rail-trails. These projects complete our transportation system, providing secure and convenient routes for the millions of Americans that bike and walk every day, and decreasing the time every American spends in traffic by lowering the number of cars on our roadways.



Source: National Transportation Enhancements Clearinghouse / [www.enhancements.org](http://www.enhancements.org)

**Myth: Transportation Enhancement projects take money away from projects that can save lives.**

*Transportation Enhancements save lives every day.*

Pedestrians and bicyclists account for 13 percent of traffic fatalities nationwide, yet only one percent of federal safety funding is dedicated to prevent the 5,000 pedestrian and bicyclist fatalities that occur on our roadways every year. (RITA, 2010) Many of our existing roads do not include infrastructure for bicyclists and pedestrians making them unsafe. For instance, 41 percent of pedestrian fatalities take place where there are no crosswalks available. (Ernst and Shoup, 2009) The Transportation Enhancements program funds projects that fix these safety hazards, and, as the largest source of federal funding for bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure, helps keep millions of American pedestrians and bicyclists safe from traffic.

**Myth: The Transportation Enhancement program mandates states to spend funds on luxuries, such as transportation museums, not necessities.**

*In the 18-year history of the Transportation Enhancement program, only 1 percent of funding has gone to transportation museums. However, this is a choice that every state makes for itself.*

States have incredible flexibility within the TE program. Each State Department of Transportation can allocate its TE funding to a wide range of eligible activities, including transportation infrastructure, streetscaping, welcome centers, and transportation museums. All TE projects are locally driven and state-selected. Local organizations such as counties, cities, or municipal governing bodies propose projects that their community needs. They then work with State DOTs, who select the projects they think are best needed throughout the state.

**Myth: In these hard economic times, we cannot afford to spend money on TE and bicycle and pedestrian projects.**

*We can't afford not to! Allowing families to travel safely by walking or bicycling helps those who need it the most.*

The average American family spends 18 percent of their annual income on transportation. Investing in bicycling and walking provides transportation alternatives for families that are having trouble keeping two cars, and for the millions of households that do not own a vehicle at all. A 2008 AARP survey of its members showed that two-thirds of respondents were limiting their daily driving in order to save money, with 15 percent bicycling more. A majority of their members would bike, walk and use transit more if their neighborhoods were more accommodating. Building bicycling and walking facilities creates low cost, healthy transportation options for all Americans.

**Myth: There is no such thing as a shovel ready Transportation Enhancement project.**

*There are billions of dollars in shovel-ready TE projects across the country.*

The stimulus provided almost \$800 million in Transportation Enhancement funding, with the requirement that all of it be obligated within one year. By the halfway point, the states were ahead of schedule, obligating 60 percent of the funds. There are still more projects out there. The Transportation Enhancements program is far more popular than existing funds can accommodate. For example, the most recent call for TE proposals in Oklahoma yielded requests for roughly 3 times the available funds.

**Myth: Bicycling and walking is not a national issue, and should not be part of our national transportation plan.**

*Bicycling and walking are essential to our national transportation system and help us achieve many of our national goals.*

Increasing investment in bicycling and walking can offer cost-effective options to help mitigate the seemingly insurmountable problems of climate change, pollution and our dependence on oil. Furthermore, while bicycling and walking can help every family lower its transportation costs and stay healthy and active, it also serves those that do not bike or walk by lowering congestion.

***When America Bikes, America Benefits***