

MONOGRAPHS

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**ISTEA: AN ARTS AND
TRANSPORTATION PARTNERSHIP**

by Nina Ozlu, NALAA Vice President of Government Affairs and Development

*"The goal of ISTEA is to
integrate transportation
systems into communities to
enhance their livability."*

The National Assembly of Local Arts Agencies has been researching new resource opportunities for local arts agencies through a non-traditional partnership—transportation. Under the guidelines of the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991 (ISTEA), the Federal Highway Administration has opened up new opportunities for local government officials to participate in decisions regarding transportation programs, planning and enhancements. The goal of ISTEA is to integrate transportation systems into communities to enhance their livability. ISTEA funding programs, along with the expanded involvement of local officials in the planning and project selection process, give local governments a strong role in determining where and how to use large amounts of federal highway funding. Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) have become key players to develop, in cooperation with the state, long-range transportation plans and transportation improvement programs for metropolitan areas. (See page 16 for a list of MPOs.) And now, all proposed transportation projects are required to include enhancement provisions in their planning process. However, the interpretation and definition of enhancements has varied from state to state and from MPO to MPO.

The following information will provide you with a good overview of ISTEA funding as well as first-hand accounts from local and state arts agencies that have been successful in receiving ISTEA funding. The common factor among these partnerships is that arts representatives became actively involved in the advisory and governing commissions at the state and local transportation levels.

ISTEA: A NEW APPROACH TO TRANSPORTATION PLANNING

by Kelly K. Sinclair, National Trust for Historic Preservation. Printed with permission of Save Outdoor Sculpture!

Consider this situation...

The statue of America's most noted Civil War general rests at the site of his most triumphant victory. Erected in 1889 by his loyal followers, the statue has received no care and attention in more than 100 years. A conservator estimates \$28,000 is needed to restore the statue to its



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former greatness. Since the general's memorial is the centerpiece of your small wayside historic park commemorating the battle, the local city council has told you it is willing to spend \$6,000 toward restoration of the work. Is the situation hopeless?

Maybe not, thanks to a revolutionary new transportation law that seeks to protect the quality of the community as well as the route used by the traveler. The Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) signed into law December 1991, is the latest re-authorization of the highway bill—and more—much more. The \$151 billion law is the major piece of legislation that now governs America's transportation program. It is not a supplement to the highway bill, it is the highway bill, plus the transit bill and the safety, research and environmental transportation bills rolled into one package.

In previous years, Congress passed environmental legislation meant to provide for clean air, clean water and natural resource protection. Congress also passed legislation to construct highways and transit facilities, sometimes resulting in the very outcomes the environmental legislation sought to prevent. In areas where pollution is significant and prevention is a priority, increasing the number of automobiles in the area is frequently not a goal.

Too often, that is exactly what has happened. Through coordination efforts provided for by ISTEA, local elected officials and planning agencies can better determine transportation needs and priorities for their areas while taking into account air quality, land use, and quality of life improvements for their communities.

WHY DO I CARE?

In considering the bigger picture of what we want our communities to be like now and in the future, ISTEA provides you with an opportunity for greater influence over transportation decision-making in your area. But the benefits of ISTEA extend beyond road building. Various elements of this new law can offer protection and conservation of outdoor sculpture. Key provisions that can help you with your own challenges address enhancements, bridges, scenic byways and research.

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represents the nation's 3,800 local arts agencies in developing an essential place for the arts in America's communities. It helps member agencies with leadership and professional development, research, information and publications, public policy development and public awareness. To reach the

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ENHANCEMENTS

The enhancement provisions establish a 10 percent set-aside of the Surface Transportation Program (nearly \$3 billion over the six-year life of ISTEA) for 10 categories of enhancements. They are:

1. Provision of facilities for pedestrians and bicycles (e.g., paths, rest stops, pedestrian bridges).
2. Acquisition of scenic easements and scenic or historic sites (e.g., purchase of protective easements or outright purchase of an historic site or structure).
3. Scenic or highway programs (e.g., the Colonial Parkway between Jamestown and Yorktown, Va.).
4. Landscaping and other scenic beautification.
5. Historic preservation (protection and interpretation of an historically significant event, site, or structure).
6. Rehabilitation and operation of historic transportation buildings, structures or facilities (including historic railroad facilities and canals).
7. Preservation of abandoned railway corridors (including the conversion and use for pedestrian or bicycle trails).
8. Control and removal of outdoor advertising.
9. Archeological planning and research.
10. Mitigation of water pollution due to highway runoff.

Outdoor sculpture preservation might be eligible for funding under several categories of this provision. If the sculpture is historic, under this provision, you could restore it, protect it by easement or purchase it if necessary, as an eligible transportation enhancement.

The law provides for up to 80 percent of the funds needed by your project. But it requires you to link the proposed enhancement to transportation in one of three ways:

- **Function**—e.g., construction of a bike path would provide a direct transportation function
- **Proximity**—a project must be near a transportation corridor or within sight of the corridor



- Impact—e.g., re-grade land near an existing highway to create a pond or wetland to filter water runoff

Enhancements are to go above and beyond normal mitigation efforts and should not substitute for mitigation, which are those steps taken during highway construction to lessen environmental problems caused by the highway.

Scenic byways—and sculpture found along them—can also specifically benefit from ISTEA.

BRIDGES

The Bridge Replacement and Rehabilitation Program provides \$16.1 billion for rehabilitation and replacement of any bridge in any road in the country, even city and county streets and roads. Now eligible for funding are bridge painting, structural strengthening, and protective coating applications, strategies a conservator might recommend for a bridge sculpture threatened by pollution problems, vandalism or years of exposure.

In your efforts to retain and protect historic architecture associated with bridges, you might find this source of funding particularly useful in that bridge funds are applicable to any bridge, including small bridges on city or county roads. This is contrary to enhancement funding, where projects are only eligible if located near a road or corridor that has previously received federal funding.

SCENIC BYWAYS

Scenic byways—and sculpture found along them—can also specifically benefit from ISTEA. During the first three fiscal years of ISTEA (1992-1994), a separate category of funds within the Surface Transportation Program provides \$10 million in interim funding for your state if a scenic byway program is already in place. Another \$50 million will be available once a national byway program has been established. These byway funds are in addition to the enhancement funds already outlined.

The grant funds can pay for:

- planning and designing your byway programs;
- safety improvements on existing byways

- construction of pedestrian and bicycle areas along the byway
- protecting historic and cultural resources adjacent to byways; and
- developing and providing your tourist information.

The National Trust for Historic Preservation, Scenic America and the Rails-to-Trails Conservancy are represented on the national Scenic Byway Advisory Committee, which is developing guidelines for a national scenic byway program.

Remember that Civil War general's statue we mentioned? Now you have learned about the possible sources of funds to help pay for his restoration!

In a real-life example, Tennessee SOS! hopes to use its SOS! Incentive Award to leverage ISTEA funds to relocate and restore its own *Battle of Nashville*, circa 1927. The state's commissioner of transportation has been involved in early stages of discussion about securing matching funds for the incentive award that would support a planning phase culminating in a proposal for funding from the state's ISTEA allotment.

RESEARCH

The research provision of the law provides for research, development and application of new technologies in partnership with public and private organizations. Elements of this part of ISTEA provide \$108 million to fund a Strategic Highway Research Program, to expand technology transfers, and to fund increases for planning and guidance for a research and development agenda. You may want to talk with your state department of transportation to consider how applications of such research might benefit your outdoor sculpture. For example, research about air quality and acid precipitation, coatings, corrosion and stone erosion can be useful in developing treatment and maintenance strategies. Additional funds will support a Bureau of Transportation Statistics, a National Transit Institute and 15 university transportation centers.



If your project is within the boundaries of a metropolitan area, the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) will make critical decisions in whether projects receive funding from the state.

WHERE DO I COME IN?

Part of the “reinventing government” approach of ISTEA is the sharing of responsibility for transportation decisions at all levels—local, state and federal. Where transportation decisions had at times been made by relatively few people within some state transportation departments, ISTEA encourages public participation, public cooperation and DOT coordination with regional governments.

To advocate support for your project or proposal, take the following steps:

- obtain a condition assessment from a professional conservator of outdoor sculpture to identify project costs;
- determine what other support exists for your idea (public officials, citizens, organizations);
- work with or create an interest group to support your idea;
- involve as many people in outreach as possible;
- alert the media and seek public and private support;
- discuss your plan with local, state and federal elected officials; and
- enlist legislative support for critical decision-making points.

If your project is within the boundaries of a metropolitan area, the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) will make critical decisions in whether projects receive funding from the state. These offices should be your first point of contact. If you are in a rural area, you should contact the state department of transportation to learn what procedures are required by your state. (A list of MPOs and state transportation contacts for the enhancement program is provide below. These offices can give you initial direction and assistance.)

I NEED HELP!

The best place for you to turn is to your MPOs and your state’s department of transportation, which are most familiar with the law and the changed direction in transportation funding and implementation. However, not all state DOT’s have jumped on the ISTEA bandwagon to welcome public input and participation. Every

state has a Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Division Office in the state capital. Second opinions and additional information are available in these FHWA Division Offices, should you need assistance.

The government is not the only source of help for you. Various interest groups and organizations have been active in ISTEA, including:

The **National Trust for Historic Preservation**, 202-673-4000. The trust has been involved with ISTEA since its inception and has a network of regional offices aware of how state departments of transportation are implementing ISTEA. Call the trust to receive its free newsletter, *On the Move!*, which focuses on ISTEA implementation.

Preservation Action, 202-659-0915. This organization has actively lobbied on behalf of preservation initiatives (including preservation elements of ISTEA) and is also aware of how states are approaching ISTEA.

The **National Conference of State Historic Preservation Officers** (SHPR), 202-624-5466. This clearinghouse for SHPOs can provide you with state government preservation contacts who know what has been done in your state.

The **Surface Transportation Policy Project** (STPP), 202-939-3470. STPP serves a central coordinating organization formed to help pass legislation and is currently monitoring and assisting with its implementation. Excellent information on all transportation and environmental elements of ISTEA are available through STPP case studies (free) and a newsletter (free) as well as a transportation planning workbook (\$20.00).

The **Rails-to-Trials Conservancy**, 202-797-5420. This nonprofit organization seeks to convert abandoned railway corridors to hiking and biking trails and has completed a comprehensive survey of how the new law has been implemented on a state-by-state basis.

Scenic America, 202-833-4300. This group seeks to control the proliferation of billboards, primarily on scenic byways, and is especially interested in landscaping and other elements of ISTEA.

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Save Outdoor Sculpture! (SOS!), 800-422-4612. A joint project of the National Institute for the Conservation of Cultural Property and the National Museum of American Art, this organization seeks to survey and gather condition information about all publicly accessible outdoor sculpture in the United States. SOS! projects recently completed or now underway are well placed to leverage their grassroots activity and public visibility.

Each of these special interest groups is keen to obtain funds from ISTE A. Is your outdoor sculpture an historic one? Then your regional National Trust office can help. Be in touch with the group or groups that seem to best suit your situation. Remember, the wheels of democracy grind slowly. Be persistent and patient with the process; your time can provide you with great results.

MAKING A DIFFERENCE

You should form partnerships with local individuals, organizations and public officials. Representatives of national organizations can help provide information, direction and names of nearby contacts who might also offer support to sculpture advocates.

By increasing public awareness of a need that can now be met through the innovative funding of ISTE A, by involving others in the decision-making process, and by working cooperatively with state and federal transportation officials, the architectural arts community has a strong new partner to support, protect and provide for quality sculpture along transportation corridors. ■

SAN FRANCISCO ARTS COMMISSION

by Jill Manton

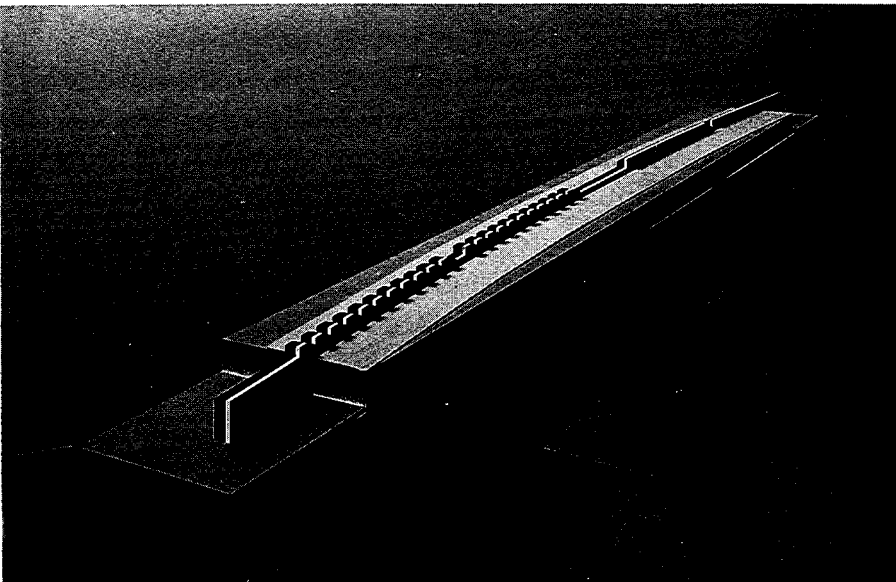
This past year the San Francisco Art Commission has had the good fortune to write three successful applications for ISTE A grants. In addition to the artistic merit of each public art project, the proposed initiatives were integrated elements of the larger transit improvement projects and represented an effective synthesis of art, urban design and infrastructure.

Projects like this can only develop where there is a willing and innovative departmental partnership between the local arts agency and the transit agency and/or other department designing and managing the project. Essential to such a partnership is a climate of openness so that the art project which develops can have a substantial impact on the larger transit project of which it is a part. This kind of partnership has proved invaluable to the San Francisco Art Commission in working on our ISTEA grant applications and in planning the implementation of the art project.

In the preparation of each grant application, we used a team approach to develop strategy by consensus, then separated or divided responsibilities and finally reviewed each other's work. Staff from each department brought unique resources to the application process which has resulted in the selection of three projects for funding.

- 1) The Promenade Ribbon Project was awarded \$360,000 by the California Transportation Commission in the first round of ISTEA grants. The design of the

Ribbon is included in the construction documents for the Waterfront Transportation Projects, a major new transit system along San Francisco's waterfront. The Ribbon is a linear sculpture, 2 1/2 miles long by 5 feet wide constructed of black concrete, bisected at its center by a band of solid glass block, illuminated below grade with a fiber optic cable. Where views or function dictate, the Ribbon rises in elevation vertically to become a bench, table or bollard, but the continuous line of the sculpture is never interrupted. The project designers are Vito Acconci, Stanley Saitowitz and Barbara Stauffacher Solomon.

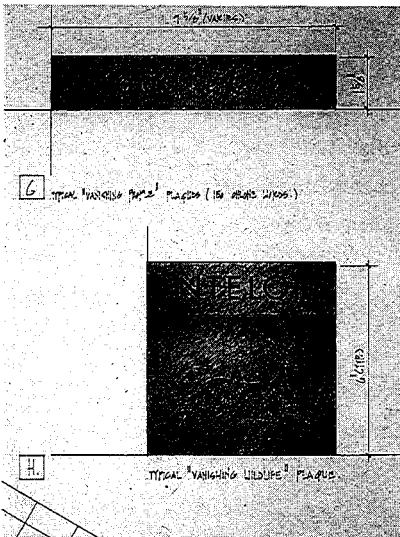


The San Francisco Art Commission was awarded a \$360,000 ISTEA grant for the Promenade Ribbon Project, a waterfront public art project that will be completed in Spring 1994. Pictured is the model for the Promenade Ribbon by artists Vito Acconci, Stanley Saitowitz and Barbara Stauffacher Solomon.

- 2) For the second round of ISTEA applications, a \$353,000 grant will be awarded for the 19th Avenue Boarding Islands Improvement Project, which features designs for innovative transit shelters and platform amenities for two elevated boarding islands designed by

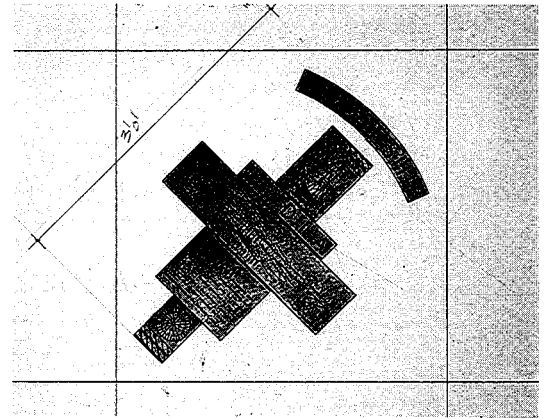
artists Leonard Hunter and Sheila Ghidini. The light rail boarding islands are adjacent to San Francisco State University off State Highway 1.

- 3) The Embarcadero Historic and Interpretive Signage Project is located along San Francisco's waterfront and integrated into the Waterfront Transportation Projects.



The San Francisco Art Commission was awarded a \$ 375,000 ISTEA grant for the Embarcadero Historic and Interpretive Signage Projects designed by the artist/historian team of Michael Manwaring and Nancy Leigh Olmsted. Construction to begin June, 1994, this project tells the history of the waterfront through interpretive signs and images that will be installed on transit platforms and walkways.

"Vanished People, Vanished Species" (left) is part of a series that depicts and preserves the 150 known words of the Ohlone Indian Language. "Ghost Ship Lydia" (right) marks the spot where the great whaling ship lies buried beneath the sidewalk.



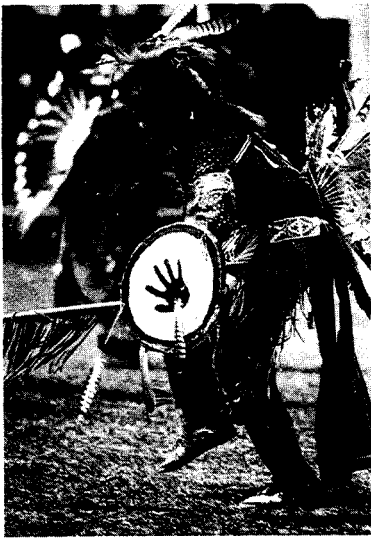
With the \$375,000 ISTEA grant award, artist Michael Manwaring and historian, Nancy Leigh Olmsted along with writers and poets tell the story of the waterfront in words and images which will be installed on transit platforms and at various points along the pedestrian walkways of the transit system.

For further information, please contact Jill Manton, San Francisco Art Commission, 25 Van Ness Avenue, Suite 240, San Francisco, CA. 415-252-2585. ■

SOUTH DAKOTA ARTS COUNCIL

by Shirley Sneve

The South Dakota Arts Council received a \$58,100 Department of Transportation Enhancement Project grant to develop a comprehensive resource assessment and transportation enhancement plan for the development of a cultural tourism route, the "Oyate Trail," from Vermillion to Hot Springs — Highway 50/18. Initial funding for the Oyate Trail came from the National Endowment for the Arts, through special funds available only to the eight states participating in the pilot project, the Presidential



Funded in part with a \$58,100 ISTE A planning grant, South Dakota's cultural tourism route through the Oyate Trail has significantly enhanced the attention drawn to the rich Dakota and Lakota Sioux Indian history that runs through the entire route from Vermillion to Hot Springs — Highway 50/18. Photo courtesy of South Dakota Department of Tourism.

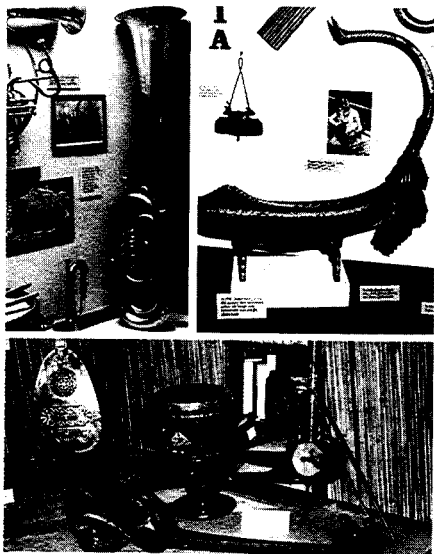
Initiative for Rural Development. The South Dakota Arts Council was one of five state arts agencies funded. The Arts Endowment funded the Oyate Trail project at \$12,800. It has been endorsed by the South Dakota Rural Development Council. A local commitment of participating organizations of \$4,100 completes the funding package.

By using a community-based planning process with the expertise of historic and cultural tourism consultants, plans will be developed in partnership with federal, state, local and tribal government, non-profit organizations and local business. In addition to employing tourism consultants, project funds will hire a local cultural tourism project director to work towards grass roots support, development and interaction.

The project took shape in May 1992, at a meeting of individuals representing state government, private business and the arts. This task force concluded that a comprehensive study including an inventory and development program is needed before the existing Oyate Trail arts, historical and cultural can be promoted. The group also plans to explore the official designation making the Oyate Trail a scenic and historic highway—a route for tourists and South Dakotans interested in the arts, culture and history of the region.

Because of the significance of Dakota and Lakota Sioux Indian history and culture through a significant part of the route, and its appeal to visitors, Oyate Trail, is the project's working title. OYATE (oh-YAH-tay), in the Dakota/Lakota language, means a people or nation. Ochanku (oh-CHANG-koo) means well traveled road. Therefore, Oyate Trail, or Oyate Ochanku means "a well traveled road of nations." The title also acknowledges the important historical and cultural contributions of European immigrants in communities along Highway 50/18.

Along the way, this route goes through Yankton, Dakota Territory's first capitol; Lake Andes on the Missouri River and home to the Yankton Sioux Tribe; Winner and the Rosebud Sioux Reservation; and Pine Ridge, headquarters of the Oglala Sioux Nation. The proposed 388 mile route, with its planned scenic, cultural and arts tour loops, has over a dozen established arts institutions that will offer off-the-Interstate travelers unique cultural opportunities. This beautiful and historic route to and from the Black



South Dakota's Shrine to Music Museum in Vermillion gives visitors a rare glimpse into the world's musical past. Pictured is a Burmese arched harp richly worked in gilt and mica. Photo courtesy of South Dakota Department of Tourism.

Hills involves 15 non-profit arts organizations, three Indian Reservations, and many traditional folk and contemporary artists along the way.

But more than an arts and cultural project, this is an economic development proposal for Highway 50/18 businesses and communities. Before the Oyate Trail can be promoted, its visitor resources must be developed adequately to handle tourists. History and the arts become catalysts for economic growth in this cultural tourism plan. Yankton, population 12,000, and Vermillion, population 10,000, are the largest communities on the Oyate Trail. The remaining two-dozen towns have populations of less than 5,000.

Increasing visitation to historical and cultural attractions along the route will assure the continued viability of many of these resources, increase opportunities for the continuation and expansion of participation in Native American traditional and contemporary arts and crafts, and encourage local participation in ethnic, Early American and contemporary arts, crafts and cultural endeavors.

For more information, please contact Shirley Sneve, South Dakota Arts Council, 230 S. Phillips Avenue, Suite 204, Sioux Falls, SD 57102. 605-339-6646. ■

TUCSON/PIMA ARTS COUNCIL

by David Johnson

The State of Arizona has been slow in developing guidelines for local communities and interest groups to make proposals to be funded as transportation enhancements under ISTEA. Moreover, the Arizona Department of Transportation has reserved to itself half of the ISTEA funding for enhancements that will be made available to the state. As a consequence, no ISTEA enhancement money has yet been awarded to implement locally initiated projects in Arizona.

Ironically, the state's tardiness in formulating a process for allocating ISTEA enhancement funds opened to public art advocates opportunities we were not sufficiently informed to seize earlier. Following the regionally organized conferences in 1993 on ISTEA and its enhancement program, we asked and succeeded in obtaining one of seven seats on the Arizona Transportation Enhancements Review Committee (TERC)

for a representative of the Arizona Commission on the Arts. Besides helping to formulate guidelines for the ISTEA enhancements funding process in Arizona, this committee will review and recommend proposals for funding.

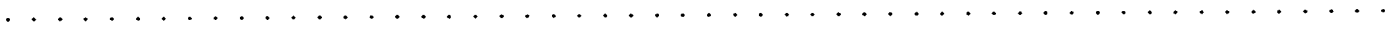
Following the regionally organized conferences in 1993 on ISTEA and its enhancement program, we asked and succeeded in obtaining one of seven seats on the Arizona Transportation Enhancements Review Committee (TERC) for a representative of the Arizona Commission on the Arts.

At the metropolitan planning level, we were able to get a representative from the Tucson/Pima Arts Council on the Transportation Enhancements Task Force of the Pima County Association of Governments. This task force developed guidelines locally for enhancement proposals, and then reviewed and ranked subsequent transmission to the Arizona TERC. As a result, the review structure was made much more receptive to public art proposals than would otherwise have been the case.

In the first application round, with little knowledge of transportation improvement projects being considered by local governmental jurisdictions or by the state, we developed three proposals without much collaboration with transportation planners: art for traffic control cabinets (\$55,000); art for bus stop shelters (\$192,000); and art for the roadway corridor from the Tucson airport to downtown (\$500,000).

In the first, we proposed to organize a competition for artists and community groups to beautify 25 graffiti-covered and obtrusive traffic control cabinets at geographically dispersed locations throughout metropolitan Tucson. In the second, we proposed to organize competitions for the creation of 10 artistic bus stop shelters in order to beautify the streetscape. In the final application, we suggested a gateway feature, sculptures, murals and sequential art to enhance first and last impressions of the city by visitors.

Locally, our three proposals were in competition with twenty others — 14 for bicycle/pedestrian improvements, 3 relating to railroad facilities, and 3 in other categories. In the first review by the Transportation Enhancement Task Force, our proposals were not ranked highly, probably due to a preponderance of traditional transportation interests on the task force. Proposals for a scenic highway overlook of a spectacular desert attraction (a Spanish colonial mission) in Tucson were ranked highest, followed by proposals to expand the very popular network of bicycle/pedestrian paths along Tucson’s riverbeds and washes. However, because the state TERC will probably review proposals and make awards in each of the ten designated enhancement categories, prospects for our proposals look promising, inasmuch as they were the only ones submitted in category four, “scenic beautification.”



Given prospects for funding of our proposals at the state level, Tucson transportation officials have shown a willingness to support and sponsor the first two. The last, art for the airport corridor, will have to be developed as part of a larger transportation improvement, ideally with support for art enhancements from the Tucson Airport Authority, the Convention and Visitors Bureau and the tourism industry.

We will not know the outcome of the first application round before April 1994. In the meantime, we are working with state transportation officials and their consultants to define art enhancements early-on that can be designed as integral features of larger transportation improvements to which the state transportation administration is already committed or is considering.

For further information, please contact David Johnson, Tucson/Pima Arts Council, 166 West Alameda, Tucson, AZ 85701. 602-624-0595. ■



MESSAGE FROM NALAA's 1994 PUBLIC ART PRECONFERENCE WORKSHOP HOST

by Margaret Robinette, Dallas Office of Cultural Affairs

There is a vital link between Public Art and the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA). The link is the potential for mutual support and expanded effectiveness. ISTEA addresses the rebuilding and revitalization of perhaps the most pervasive and severely deteriorated element of our nation's infrastructure: public transit systems.

Within the past five years, there has been increasing involvement of public art and public artists in the enhancement — both aesthetic and functional — of the infrastructures of communities across the nation. Not since the WPA years has there been such interest in incorporating public art into a community's basic life-systems, such as

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water management, waste disposal, and transportation. ISTEA is viewed by the public art field as an attractive and viable tool to facilitate this kind of integrative collaboration, which is why one of our focuses for the Public Art Preconference in Dallas, Texas this year will be "Revitalizing the Infrastructure." I invite you to join us in Dallas on June 2 — 4, 1994, as we examine ISTEA issues in further detail. (Look for NALAA conference registration materials in March!) ■

METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATIONS

The following is the Federal Highway Administration's (FHA's) list of ISTEA key contacts for each Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) throughout the country as of August 1993. Local arts agencies interested in pursuing ISTEA funding should contact the MPO in your area. Please contact your State Department of Transportation liaison (listed on page 23) if your community does not have a MPO listed below. This list is compiled in state alphabetical order within the FHA's 10 regions:

REGION I

CONNECTICUT

Bridgeport-Milford

James T. Wang
203-366-5405

Bristol/New Britain

Beverly P. Paul
203-589-7820

Danbury, CT-NY

Jonathan Chew
203-775-6256

Hartford-Middletown

Dana S. Hanson
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New Haven-Meriden

James A. Butler
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New London-Norwich

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Lowell, MA-NH

Robert W. Flynn
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Pittsfield

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Springfield, MA-CT

Timothy W. Brennan
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The following is the Federal Highway Administration's (FHWA's) list of ISTEA key contacts at the state departments of transportation in alphabetical state order:

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