An Overview of Amtrak's Great American Stations Project

October 2018
Who We Are and What We Do

• Created in 2006 to educate communities on the benefits of redeveloping train stations, offer tools in this effort and provide the appropriate Amtrak points of contact.

• Amtrak does not own most of the 500+ stations it serves: multi-layered ownership patterns account for the land, structure, platform, rails and parking.

• Communities often drive station projects from start to finish, with Amtrak and other stakeholders providing guidance and feedback.

• GASP provides a clearinghouse for this info and makes it easy for communities to contact us before they invest significant time and money in a major station project.

Arcadia, Mo., joins the Amtrak network in 2016.
Community Tools: Case Studies

THEMES

• Architectural & Aesthetic Improvements
• Civic Pride
• Cultural Space & Museums
• Economic Development
• Historic Preservation
• Tourism Growth
• Commercial Use
Community Tools: Planning
Funding Options

A combination of local, state and federal resources fund most station improvement and new construction projects.

Funds might be obtained through grants, loans, and tax credits. The purpose of each resource is different and the approach you take in planning your station project will determine your best option. A station owner might reevaluate a project to consider ways to make it eligible for greater funding.

Multimodalism, in which various transportation modes are linked together in one interconnected system, has long been a goal of federal transportation funding. When contemplating a station project, consider how it could benefit riders across many modes. For example, intercity passenger rail, commuter rail and local bus riders would all benefit.

Surface Transportation Block Grant Program: Transportation Alternatives (TA) Set-Aside

Filing Date:
Varies; contact your state DOT or local FHWA official for more information.

Eligibility:
Funds are allocated to the state DOT which in turn disburses the funds to project sponsors. In general, a sponsor is an organization with the authority to tax and could include local governments, regional transportation authorities, transit agencies, public land agencies, tribal governments and any other local or regional governmental entity. Under the FAST Act, nonprofit entities responsible for the administration of local transportation safety programs are now able to apply for TA funds.

Often times, non-profit organizations or community groups that wish to sponsor a TA project will submit an application in partnership with a local government. Consult your state TA officer for further information.

Description:
This program provides funding opportunities to help expand transportation choices and enhance the transportation experience through 10 eligible activities related to surface transportation, including historic preservation and vegetation management in transportation rights-of-way. Funds can also be used for the construction, planning and design of transportation projects to achieve compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990.
Community Tools: Station Host Volunteer Programs

Station Host Volunteer Manual

• Reflects best practices as developed by established programs.
• Assists local governments, transportation authorities and rail advocates.

Contents

• Getting Started
• Success Stories & Case Studies
• Sample Association Manual
  ▪ Constitution and bylaws;
  ▪ Station host role;
  ▪ Safety in and around the station; and
  ▪ General Amtrak policies.
Great American Stations News

**Welcome Center and Community Room Keep Depot Bustling**

In beautiful Southern Pines, N.C., located in the famed Sandhills area renowned for its golf courses – the stately 100-year-old station is the center of the popular downtown shopping and dining district. Served by the daily Silver Sheen (New York-Tampa-Miami), the depot includes an Amtrak passenger waiting area, station master’s office, community room and the Southern Pines Welcome Center.

The Great American Stations Project recently interviewed Suzanne Coleman, president of Welcome to Southern Pines Inc., the non-profit organization that operates the Welcome Center, to learn more about how the depot serves as a community gateway. Volunteers staffing the Welcome Center greet visitors from across the United States and the world.

**Art Gallery Moves Into Westerly Station**

WESTERLY, R.I. – In August 2018, the Westerly depot became the new temporary home of the

**Sign up for our quarterly e-newsletter and check out recent station news from around the country.**
Success Stories: Norman, Okla.

- Depot is home to the non-profit Performing Arts Society
  - Creates fine arts programming including artist exhibitions, poetry readings, musical performances and educational programs
  - 50+ events/year
  - Depot remains open during business hours

- Waiting room available for rent; holds up to 100 people
  - Approx. 450 rental hours/year
  - Rental income helps fund PAS operations, programming and administration.

- Acts as a keystone for larger downtown events.
Success Stories: Mystic, Conn.

• Since 2016, the building has housed Mystic Depot Roasters, a café and gift shop.

• Amtrak customers have access to interior including restrooms.

• Lessees undertook an extensive rehabilitation project to prepare the space for food service.

• Upgraded electrical, plumbing and fire protection systems; installed accessible restrooms; patched the roof; and installed exhaust fans.

• Workers also refinished the floors and walls, repaired windows and painted the building inside and out.
Contact Us
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