

SUPPORTING STATEMENT

National Historic Covered Bridge Preservation Program Application Information

INTRODUCTION

This is to request an extension to an approved information collection, from the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for an information collection entitled, National Historic Covered Bridge Preservation Program Application Information. OMB granted FHWA an emergency approval on June 27, 2006. This request is for a three year approval.

Part A. Justification.

1. Circumstances that make collection of information necessary.

The National Historic Covered Bridge Preservation Program, originally established under the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21) (Pub. L. 105-178 as amended by Title IX of Pub. L. 105-206), has been reauthorized under section 1804 of the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU) (Pub. L. 109-59; Aug. 10, 2005). Information collected is necessary to administer the program while effectively preserving these national treasures and ensuring proper stewardship of the public trust. This program, and the information collected, supports the DOT Strategic Goal of Mobility.

2. How, by whom, and for what purpose is the information used.

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) will collect this information from State Transportation Agencies. Applicants are limited to State Transportation Agencies. The applications are submitted by the State Transportation Agency through the FHWA Division Offices to the FHWA Office of Bridge Technology. Information will be used to award project and report on project awards to Congress and the general public.

3. Extent of automated information collection.

All applications should be submitted electronically using e-mail. Applicants can, at their discretion, chose to submit hard-copy applications, though this would be discouraged. As all State Transportation Agencies have integrated currently available technology into their business practices, it is anticipated that 100% of the applications will be submitted via e-mail.

4. Efforts to identify duplication.

Once the bridge National Bridge Inventory (NBI) Structure number has been identified, additional information may be obtained from the NBI database within the FHWA. Only a few data fields, which are available through the NBI, are requested. These are requested to give the applicant the opportunity to expand upon the information should they feel that such additional information is pertinent to the project selection process.

5. Efforts to minimize the burden on small businesses.

Applicants are limited to State Transportation Agencies by statute and there is no burden on

small business.

6. Impact of less frequent collection of information.

Information will only be collected once annually to administer the program. As annual awards are required, information cannot be collected less frequently.

7. Special circumstances.

None

8. Compliance with 5 CFR 1320.8:

Please see attached copy of the 60-day Federal Register notice. The reference for the notice is: Federal Register: May 18, 2006 (Volume 71, Number 96) [Notices] [Pages 28910-28912]. Two comments were received.

9. Payments or gifts to respondents.

Not applicable

10. Assurance of confidentiality:

The information will only be used for administration of the National Historic Covered Bridge Preservation Program.

11. Justification for collection of sensitive information:

No sensitive information will be collected.

12. Estimate of burden hours for information requested:

The overall annual burden is estimated to be 105 hours. Respondents are limited to State Transportation Agencies. Projects may only be awarded for preservation of historic covered bridges. While theoretically every State may apply, many States do not have historic covered bridges in their inventory. It is anticipated that FHWA will receive 30 total applications. Each response will take an estimated 3.5 hours to prepare, totaling 105 burden hours for the estimated 30 applications. The estimated hourly wage including overhead costs of the respondents is \$85. Accordingly, the estimated annual salary cost is \$8,925.

13. Estimate of total annual costs to respondents

There are no additional costs above those in item 12.

14. Estimate of cost to the Federal government.

The estimated annual cost to the Federal Government for this information collection is \$31,394. The Federal Government will incur cost to announce the information collection, to respond to comments, to analyze the information, etc. It is estimated that the Federal government will incur significantly more costs, in terms of labor hours. For review and award of the data, it is

anticipated that each reviewer will take 2 hours to review each proposal. It is anticipated that there will be 6 federal employees on the review panel. Each employee will require 60 hours of review time plus 20 hours of discussion for a total of 80 hours to complete the reviews. With six employees spending 80 hours each to review the applications, this equates to 480 labor hours. In addition another 80 hours will be needed for one employee who will make the announcements, handle awards, and handle the maintenance of data. The total labor hour's burden to the Federal government will be 560 labor hours. The staff handling these tasks average to a GS 13- step 5, which has an hourly rate of \$42.15. This gives us a total federal hourly cost with an additional 1/3 overhead cost of \$56.06. This gives us a total federal cost of \$31,394.

15. Explanation of program changes or adjustments.

This is a new information collection.

16. Publication of results of data collection.

Notice of awards will be published on the FHWA Office of Bridge Technology web site. In addition, all applicants will be notified of the awards via memorandum from the Director of the Office of Bridge Technology.

17. Approval for not displaying the expiration date of OMB approval.

Not applicable.

18. Exceptions to certification statement.

Not applicable.

ATTACHMENTS:

- 1. Section 1804**
- 2. NHCBP Guidance**
- 3. NHCBP Solicitation Letter**
- 4. 60 Day Federal Register Notice**
- 5. 83I Form**
- 6. 30-Day Federal Register Notice**