



United We Ride Community Leadership Awards on Effective Public Transit Human Services Transportation Coordination, Planning and Implementation

Overview

On February 24, 2004, President George W. Bush signed the Executive Order (EO) on Human Service Transportation Coordination (#13330). As part of the EO issued by President Bush, the Federal Interagency Coordinating Council on Access and Mobility (CCAM) has continued to implement United We Ride (UWR), a national initiative to enhance human service transportation for older adults, individuals with disabilities, children, and individuals with lower incomes.

In its 2005 Report to the President, the CCAM recommended the establishment of a coordinated planning process for human service transportation programs. Subsequently, on August 10, 2005, the President signed legislation to reauthorize Federal public transportation and highway programs that included a transportation coordinated planning process. This legislation, the Safe, Affordable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act, A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU), included a requirement for a “locally-developed, coordinated, public transit human service plan” for the Federal Transit Administration’s (FTA) three human service transportation programs for underserved populations (Elderly Individuals and Individuals with Disabilities, Job Access and Reverse Commute, and New Freedom Programs) Funding for these programs is contingent upon communities establishing an initial locally-coordinated human service transportation plan by 2007 and a complete plan by 2008.

United We Ride is pleased to announce the 2008 National United We Ride Community Leadership Awards on Effective Public Transit for Human Services Transportation Coordination, Planning, and Implementation (“2008 National UWR Leadership Awards” or “Awards”). These non-monetary awards will recognize up to five states, localities, communities, or organizations that have provided leadership and action toward developing and/or implementing exemplary high-quality coordinated human service transportation programs or systems.

Plans selected to receive an Award will have demonstrated progress towards achieving the three goals of United We Ride: 1) providing more rides for the same or fewer assets (efficiency); 2) streamlining access to transportation resources (effectiveness); and 3) improving customer service (quality). Nominations are encouraged from states, communities, and/or organizations that have developed successful coordination strategies in the area of human service transportation. At its core, Award recipients will highlight how they have tackled the growing and complex infrastructure of needed transportation services while finding common sense transportation solutions.

During the last several decades, leaders in communities across the country have greatly improved the lives of millions of people by coordinating transportation services between human service agencies, public transportation agencies and private transit. This level of coordination and management of services has gone far in meeting the needs of customers who need access to

healthcare, jobs, training, education and social networks and for all levels of Government officials who must make the most efficient and effective use of limited resources.

Coordination between community agencies is essential to building and implementing infrastructures, policies and programs that facilitate coordination. These Awards will highlight the success of communities and organizations that have made significant progress in providing coordinated local transportation services for older adults, individuals with disabilities, children, and individuals with lower incomes.

Awardees will be honored at a national event, to be held in Washington, DC, in October 2008. UWR channels will provide a platform to share the successes of the awardees. The National Resource Center on Human Services Transportation Coordination is confirming the event date and will fund the costs of transportation and accommodations to the event for two people from each of the winning nominations.

Eligibility

Nominations for the 2008 National UWR Leadership Awards must be submitted by states; localities; urban, suburban, rural and/or tribal communities; and/or organizations that are planning and moving toward implementing high-quality, coordinated human service transportation programs or systems. Eligibility for an Award includes coordinating efforts between a variety of funding sources at the local, state, and Federal levels and demonstration of successful approaches to leveraging resources in the planning and implementation of coordinated service strategies leading to effectively coordinated human service transportation. Nominees must also demonstrate successful collaborative strategies and partnerships between government, transportation, human service agencies, workforce investment/employment and training agencies, stakeholder organizations and customers.

Organizations can self-nominate, however, letters of support and communications documenting activities that reflect interagency coordinated transportation efforts must be included in the application.

Criteria for Selection

Applications will be evaluated to determine the degree to which nominees have incorporated the components of a coordinated human service transportation plan, as well as to determine which nominees have made measurable progress towards achieving the goals of United We Ride.

Criteria will be weighted on a point system, as indicated below, and these points will be the initial basis in evaluating applications. **Applicants must address each of the evaluation components.** Examples of possible activities are provided under each component. Evaluators will be looking for these, or similar examples, in the applicant's proposal. Additional information can be found on the UWR Web site at:
<http://ftawebprod.fta.dot.gov/UsefulPractices/Practices/Practices.aspx>.

Evaluation Components

1. **Inventory and Assessment (15 points)** – The program has successfully identified and assessed available transportation resources and service gaps, and how those gaps are addressed through collaboration and realignment of services.

Examples:

- A formal need assessment has been conducted (possibly using the [Framework for Action](#)).
- The assessment process identifies both needs and resources, including an inventory of existing transportation services, in the nominee's community or locality.
- An analysis of service gaps and opportunities to improve the efficient delivery of existing services has been undertaken.
- The gap and service efficiency analysis identifies priorities for program development.
- Nominee has developed and/or implemented a plan for addressing service gaps and improving the coordination of existing services to improve the efficiency and productivity of service delivery.

2. **Customer Focus (15 points)** – The program plan incorporates actions addressing customer needs.

Examples:

- The program demonstrates coordination of existing transportation services, includes a Family of Transportation Services, and is responsive to customers' varying needs.
- Scheduling and dispatching services are responsive to customer needs. Plans are implementing actions to promote customer responsiveness, including developing simplified access for customers to transportation services through the development of one call centers that handles requests for the various transportation services.
- There is an array of user-friendly and accessible information sources that help customers learn about and use the transportation services.
- Mobility management coordinators and support services are available to customers to enhance the accessibility and usability of transportation services. The plans should address customers' needs including travel training to facilitate access, trip planning for individuals, and the other activities to help customers to develop the skills needed to use the appropriate service system.

3. **Collaboration (15 points)** – The program demonstrates measurable success in building partnerships and leveraging financial resources and other assets. Nominee has engaged a wide range of stakeholders in developing and implementing the program, and sustains these linkages to implement program activities.

Examples:

- Stakeholders were involved at critical junctures in the development and adoption of the plan. Stakeholders include human service, workforce, health care and educational organizations, public, private, non-profit transportation providers, organizations representing individuals with disabilities, older adults, youth and individuals with lower incomes. The group also includes representation from policymakers and funding agencies, as well as economic development, housing and the business community.

- Collaborative relationships have measurably advanced one or more of the goals of United We Ride, including increasing the availability and quality of service and improved access.
- Collaborative partnerships reflect funding partnerships to support the implementation of the plan.
- The collaboration includes liaison and full coordination, with the applicable metropolitan or statewide transportation planning processes and their attendant public participation and stakeholder consultation activities.

4. **Use of ITS Technologies (15 points)** – The program integrates technology in innovative and creative ways so as to maximize resource utilization, consumer access and customer satisfaction.

Examples:

- Technology strategies automate or simplify administrative processes and procedures and are designed to increase the efficiency of reservations, scheduling, dispatching, reporting, and billing. In addition, customers with disabilities may benefit from the use of assistive technology to plan trips, identify stops, and recognize landmarks.
- A broad range of wireless and wired communications-based information technologies. When integrated into the transportation system infrastructure and placed in vehicles, these technologies help monitor and manage traffic flow, reduce congestion, provide alternate routes to travelers, enhance productivity, and save lives, time and money.

5. **Measures of Effectiveness (15 points)** – The program include mechanisms to continuously measure progress. Procedures should include reliable and valid outcome measures, benchmarks, data collection procedures, and analyses techniques. A comprehensive program evaluation must include measures to capture qualitative and quantitative data regarding the:

Examples:

- Alignment with the needs of customers through inventory and assessment.
- Focus on customer services, including testimonials from customer groups.
- Use and implementation of technologies.
- Replicability and transferability of the program across diverse settings.
- Cost effectiveness and the alignment between financial resources and program needs.

6. **Reliability and Sustainability (25 points)** – The program demonstrates the degree to which the coordination strategy or aspects of it show potential for successful replication by other states, communities, and/or organizations, and the program demonstrates its achieved or potential sustainability.

Examples:

- Published materials clearly describe the steps and resources necessary for program replication.
- Descriptions of tools and informational resources that would facilitate program replication in new venues.
- Descriptions regarding the personnel needed and the fiscal resources required to replicate the program.
- A clear plan or strategy for sustaining the program, which may include indicators that point to reasonably expected sustainability and may include documentation of the program's historic success.

Application Submission

Please submit the following information for each nomination for the 2008 National UWR Leadership Awards Program:

1. Please complete all of the evaluation components when submitting an application.
2. Nominations should include the cover page and up to nine (9) pages of text.
3. Supporting documentation may be included in an appendix. These items include: program marketing materials, interagency agreements, letters of support, and documentation to substantiate the program's effectiveness in interagency coordination and coordinated services.

Nominations should be submitted electronically to the Federal Transit Administration at: UnitedWeRide@fta.dot.gov no later than 5:00 p.m. on September 8, 2008. Awardees will be selected in late Fall of 2008, and will be invited to attend a national recognition event in Washington, DC, in October 2008.

Additional copies of the nomination form can be found at www.unitedweride.gov. If you have any questions, please contact FTA staff members Doug Birnie at (202) 366-1666 or Douglas.Birnie@dot.gov; or Pamela Brown at (202) 493-2503 or Pamela.Brown@dot.gov.