

Transportation System of The Year

Rural – 5311 or 5310 – Ridership less than 100,000 annually

Criteria: Agency eligible for the award will be judged on the following criteria:

- Innovative and creative services in the community;
- Being responsive to its customers' and community needs;
- Actively coordinating and collaborating with other public and special services transportation;
- Creates partnerships with a wide-range of organizations, both public and private;
- Providing accessible transportation service;
- Building transportation alternatives that are intended to meet a wide range of the communities needs.

URBAN – 5307 or 5311 – Ridership more than 100,000 annually

Criteria: Agency eligible for the award will be judged on the following criteria:

- Innovative and creative services in the community;
- Being responsive to its customers' and community needs;
- Actively coordinating and collaborating with other public and special services transportation;
- Creates partnerships with a wide-range of organizations, both public and private;
- Providing accessible transportation service;
- Building transportation alternatives that are intended to meet a wide range of the communities needs.

NOMINEE INFORMATION

Nomination Process: Nominations must be typed or printed, and include:

1) Name of person submitting the nomination: David R. Irvin

Position or title: Transit Coordinator

Address: P.O. Box 246, Shelby, Montana 59474

Phone number: (406)450-8712

2) Name of System Nominee: Northern Transit Interlocal

Address: P.O. Box 246, Shelby, Montana 59474

Phone number: (406)470-0727

3) A written endorsement explaining the Systems accomplishments in each of the criteria listed above, approximately one paragraph per criteria and not more than one typed page in length.

SUBMISSION DEADLINE: April 15, 2018



P.O. Box 246, 226 1st Street South
Shelby, Montana 59474
Phone (406)470-0727 email: tcTransit@gmail.com

Transportation System of The Year Nomination – Rural 5311 – Ridership less than 100,000 annually

Northern Transit Interlocal (NTI) has created innovative ways to reach its ridership base in the last year. During this time, the company has created a Facebook page, Website and Google Transit Service. These services have created ease for the passenger to get up to date information on routes, schedules and make reservations for routes 24 hours a day through messaging. No longer do passengers have to wait for business hours to call and get information or to make a reservation. By using technology NTI has increased its ridership 76% compared to just one year ago. NTI feels that the more informed its passengers are about its services, and the ability to gather that information with ease, has increased ridership two fold compared to just using conventional methods, i.e. brochures, newsprint, etc. These additional services NTI provides also ties right into the second criteria of being responsive to its customers' and community needs.

When passengers use NTI's 24 hour messaging service they are guaranteed a response within 20 minutes any time of the day or night. People who contact a transit company are usually looking for immediate service to get to where they are going, they want answers quickly. The messaging service has opened avenues where the passenger gets the information they need when they need it. The several rural communities NTI services now have the ability to get the transit schedule, route locations and exact pick up locations through their website and google transit. This is very important to the medical community who set up rides for its patients. They have the ability to make a reservation, look up schedules and see exactly where that patient will be picked up at their medical facility.

NTI has coordinated efforts with 6 other transit company's and 11 special service needs locations. NTI will pick up and drop off its passengers at any medical facility, special needs facilities and senior centers. By providing this service passengers have the ease of depending on a single transit service. In special cases, we coordinate with other transit providers in advance to relay and setup the needs of passenger so there is a flawless connection for the rider. NTI likes to tell its customers, "We give them one less thing to worry about!"

NTI has created a partnership with 5 major medical facilities, 4 local Senior Centers and several specialty service locations and are actively involved with those providers, by including them in their quarterly TAC meetings as well as facilitating them with printed schedules, educating staff on what NTI provides, especially when it comes to those passengers with special needs. NTI's approach to working with services in the community is hands on. The time spent visiting with local community leaders in the area it serves on an annual basis, keeps those who make community decisions informed on direction, changes, and services NTI provides.

NTI is continually working on ways to make its transit service accessible to all those it serves. The additional technology NTI has added informs passengers in ways that just isn't possible over a communication line. Location services NTI has added, are park benches and markers so passengers know where the bus is expected to be, especially at any special service location. NTI has also focused on driver training, which includes safe driving, however this is just part of what services that the driver provides to its passengers. All drivers are trained in communicating with passengers in a way that makes them accessible. NTI drivers have translator applications on their phones for those passengers who do not speak English, or are disabled with blindness. Drivers at NTI understand that many passengers depend upon them to get information so that they may feel at ease and confident they will get where they need to go.

NTI has and will continue to improve upon ways to best provide transportation to its rural communities. NTI has taken steps to work on a transportation outlook program. This program, in part, works with community leaders, passengers, and the general public to continually gather information on the needs of those it serves. This information assist NTI in what needs it may have to provide the proper vehicles, ADA facilitation, and overall function of its transit system. As NTI ridership grows, so must it continue to diversify and provide the highest quality service its passengers and community's come to expect.