

2009 Innovations Awards Program

APPLICATION

Idaho Transportation Department *Idaho's Mobility Access Pathway (IMAP)*

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ID # (assigned by CSG): 09-W-08ID

Please provide the following information, adding space as necessary:

State: Idaho

Assign Program Category: Infrastructure and Economic Development (Subcategory: Transportation)

1. Program Name

Idaho's Mobility and Access Pathway (IMAP)

2. Administering Agency

Idaho Transportation Department

3. Contact Person (Name and Title)

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9. Please provide a two-sentence description of the program.

Idaho's Mobility and Access Pathway (IMAP) is the vision, framework, and approach to generate a coordinated and meaningful statewide public transportation system that is accessible, seamless, and based on consumer needs and priorities.

IMAP establishes consumer needs, priorities, and the most preferred mobility – or public transportation - environment through a dynamic system of Local Mobility Networks and public/private partnerships, utilizing contemporary mobility management principles.

10. How long has this program been operational (month and year)? Note: the program must be between 9 months and 5 years old on March 2, 2009 to be considered.

This program officially kicked off on April 17, 2008 (approximately 10 months ago). On this date, the Idaho Transportation Department Board voted to adopt the IMAP program.

11. Why was the program created? What problem[s] or issue[s] was it designed to address?

IMAP emerged from a process initiated by the Department to evaluate the effectiveness of statewide mobility. During this process, staff clearly heard the desire of stakeholders to create a vibrant system of mobility that is relevant and useful, and is capable of responding to the following environmental realities.

- Consumer needs and priorities should establish the foundation of all mobility systems.
- Local leadership should have the ability to engage in the design of mobility systems for their community.
- Service providers should remain cognizant of, and responsive to, the needs and priorities of the consumer and communities.
- State agencies, local agencies, and private organizations should establish partnerships to ensure the coordination and delivery of mobility services that are relevant to consumers.
- Coordination of services and resources between rural communities and urban communities brings an additional layer of challenges, however it should be established as a program priority.
- There are many challenges associated with identifying mechanisms to fund mobility programs at a level that make them relevant. Idaho should pursue the findings of the 2003 Governmental Accounting Office report that identified 62 federal programs that fund mobility. Most of these programs are administered independently without knowledge of, or in coordination with, the other federal programs. Additionally, to a certain extent this same situation exists within various state and local agencies.
- Any credible request for additional mobility funding must rest upon three fundamental concepts. First, existing mobility resources must be identified and leveraged to their fullest extent. Second, mobility gaps and their impact must be identifiable. And third, resource utilization and mobility gaps must be quantified and communicated clearly.
- The manner in which Federal Transit Administration grants are awarded based on service provider requests and historical service patterns should be discontinued. This process

does not encourage the continual redesign of mobility systems based on changing community needs and priorities.

- Align all processes and mobility options in support of the Federal Transit Administration vision of true *Mobility Management*, which emphasizes moving people instead of the mode of transportation.
- Efficient and effective mobility systems must be balanced and tracked through an appropriate performance management program. Efficiency is an objective measurement of providing the most services possible at the least possible cost. Effectiveness is the extent to which mobility management services meet the consumers' individual and various needs. Effectively meeting one consumer's needs may cost more and look different from meeting the needs of another consumer. To be efficient and effective, mobility management efforts and entities must appropriately balance and coordinate the tension between the two concepts and measurable results will demonstrate that balance.
- The appropriate use of technology should be utilized in generating mobility efficiencies in the support of coordination and providing adaptive assistance to consumers.
- Program should have capacity to respond to challenges that result from our country's desire to become energy independent, the volatility of energy prices, the condition of our state/national economy, a population that is aging, ever-rising operational costs, and the anticipated population growth especially within Idaho.

12. Describe the specific activities and operations of the program in chronological order.

Idaho's Mobility and Access Pathway (IMAP) provides the vision, framework, and approach that supports Idaho communities in their desire to define and build their own unique mobility environment. The IMAP program relies upon and enables the effective coordination, collaboration, and engagement of stakeholders at each level of mobility. IMAP accomplishes this through a three-tiered supportive structure that progresses from the local, district, and then finally to the state.

Local Tier: *Local Mobility Networks* representing every community throughout Idaho regardless of size or status provide consumers and stakeholders the opportunity to articulate needs and identify prioritized strategies. Consumer groups - the elderly, disabled, low-income, students, tribes, commuters, tourists and more – are integral to the active engagement of each local community, local agencies, and local representatives of state agencies. Each local network is provided with the authority to establish their mobility needs, strategies, priorities, establish performance criteria, and make mobility funding decisions. Each local network also produces its own mobility plan based upon the unique characteristics of their local area.

District/Regional Tier: *District Coordination Councils* address the second tier of planning. District councils include regional representatives of state agencies, local agencies, and other key constituencies, including that of the private sector, that have an interest in improving mobility from a District-wide perspective. Each council is tasked with improving coordination, collaboration, and partnerships between the specific Local Mobility Networks that reside within their district and amongst the agencies themselves. They are also asked to make funding decisions for mobility projects that cross between local networks. During the mobility planning process each District Coordination Council builds a unique district plan by aggregating the

district's local mobility plans together. This aggregation of local plans produces a unique district specific plan that truly represents the preferred mobility environment as voiced by the local communities within the District.

State Tier: At the state level, two entities exist to provide statewide coordination support and to make statewide project funding recommendations.

The statewide *Interagency Working Group* (IWG) includes state representatives of agencies that have a responsibility for providing mobility options to their clients and are in most cases a state-level representative for an agency with district-representation on the District Coordination Councils. The Interagency Working Group works to improve statewide coordination, collaboration, and partnerships between the specific districts and between the various agencies. The Interagency Working Group makes recommendations on mobility projects that cross between the districts and builds the final statewide mobility plan directly from the six district mobility plans producing a state plan that is representative of consumer needs.

The IWG is also instrumental in tackling the issue of the 62 separate, and isolated, federal programs that provide mobility funding in Idaho. The intent is to broaden the scope of this funding integration to include all state and potentially local funding programs. This total integration will present significant program funding opportunities that did not exist prior to the IMAP program.

The second statewide group is the *Public Transportation Advisory Council* (PTAC). Each PTAC member holds a seat on the Interagency Working Group, and is therefore directly involved in improving statewide coordination and partnerships. However, there are two additional functions assigned to the PTAC. First, they assign available state and federal funding to mobility projects as recommended by the Local Mobility Networks, District Coordination Councils, and the Interagency Working Group. Secondly, the PTAC remains actively engaged with all mobility stakeholders at the local, district, and state levels through a number of functions and specifically by serving as chair of their respective District Coordination Councils. This secondary channel of representation for all stakeholders ensures the continuity of equal representation of and integration throughout the IMAP model.

13. Why is the program a new and creative approach or method?

Idaho's Mobility and Access Pathway (IMAP) puts customer needs first, provides a platform for engaged local leadership, establishes processes for enhanced coordination and prioritization, and synchronizes the needs and responsibilities of agencies and entities with responsibilities for mobility. Ultimately, it collects into a single discussion all of the mobility resources available in Idaho, and provides a venue for leveraging, coordinating, and utilizing those in the most effective and efficient manner.

Public agencies have historically encouraged consumers to participate in public outreach activities to gather input that is used within a decision-making process and where the ultimate decision is made by the public agency.

The premise of IMAP is that the consumer drives decisions regarding the products and services generated using public funds. The burden that comes with this decision-making authority is the direct responsibility of consumers to actively participate, gather and digest information, act and advocate for the benefit of all consumers, and generate constructive solutions.

The consumer defines Idaho's future mobility environment, and private and public sector entities are collectively involved in the specific steps to achieve that environment. As more consumers and mobility partners engage in this enhanced decision-making process, there is a further willingness of mobility partners to act in a cooperative and coordinated fashion. As more mobility partners become engaged, then new and unique opportunities to solve mobility issues are presented. The results that come from the empowerment-engagement-solutions cycle ultimately produces follow up cycles and even more solutions. This approach to engaging consumers and mobility partners has generated a very dynamic environment that is constructing Idaho's new future for mobility.

14. What were the program's start-up costs? (Provide details about specific purchases for this program, staffing needs and other financial expenditures, as well as existing materials, technology and staff already in place.)

Start-up costs associated with the IMAP process were minimal and are estimated to be approximately \$50,000 within the first year. These costs resulted primarily from the enhanced public outreach efforts and included travel, communications, meeting facilitation, and printing

While the Division of Public transportation has one full-time staff member assigned to the IMAP program, no additional staff was added. A simple reorganization of the Division was sufficient to cover the new tasks and duties for implementing the new structure. One reason for this is that as decision-making processes become the responsibility of the local networks and districts, IMAP staff's workload is reduced.

15. What are the program's annual operational costs?

The Division of Public Transportation estimates that there will be no additional "net" annual program operating costs associated with this program.

While there are some nominal program costs, there is significant cost savings derived from the IMAP program not only within the initiating agency but also across all mobility stakeholder organizations and state agencies. Cost savings come from leveraging resources, elimination of duplicated functions, cost sharing, and process streamlining because of standardized mobility planning.

Costs are also controlled through the extensive network of mobility partners. Consumers, advocates, state agencies, local agencies, and providers of service participate and contribute to the overall well being of the system. Incremental commitments are not necessarily great, but in their totality they are significant in moving mobility forward.

Cost reductions for partner agencies can be significant as it relieves them of the burden of administering their own individual program for mobility. This consolidated partnership approach allows these agencies to put their limited resources into other areas that reflect the intent of their mission.

16. How is the program funded?

Through Federal Transit Administration program administration funding.

17. Did this program require the passage of legislation, executive order or regulations? If YES, please indicate the citation number.

No

18. What equipment, technology, and software are used to operate and administer this program?

No equipment is directly required to operate and administer this program. There are, however, several technologies that are being deployed to enhance this program such as Intelligent Transportation Systems, Advanced Public Transportation Systems, Web site integration, etc. These systems were already planned and the IMAP program will further enhance their relevancy.

19. To the best of your knowledge, did this program originate in your state? If YES, please indicate the innovator's name, present address, telephone number and e-mail address.

Yes, this program was developed within the State of Idaho. There is no single person who could be credited with the creation of this program. The process that generated this program was a response to recommendations by Idaho's Interagency Working Group and Public Transportation Advisory Council.

20. Are you aware of similar programs in other states? If YES, which ones and how does this program differ?

No, I am not aware of any programs similar to this.

21. Has the program been fully implemented? If NO, what actions remain to be taken?

The program has been fully implemented, however all participants are currently adjusting to their new roles and specific program guidelines are being developed.

22. Briefly evaluate (pro and con) the program's effectiveness in addressing the defined problem[s] or issue[s]. Provide tangible examples.

Program effectiveness (Pros):

- Consumer Voice: Within the IMAP structure, consumers have a voice from which local priorities and system services emerge. Locals have a venue for generating their own Local Mobility Networks based on the unique needs and challenges of their own environments. Collectively the Local Mobility Networks, Districts Coordination Councils, and statewide groups provide the venues for coordination to occur at all levels and across all areas. For the first time, the State of Idaho is able to generate a statewide plan for mobility that is based on consumer needs, generated by local leadership, and thoughtfully coordinated by all with fiscal and administrative responsibilities for the same.
- Mobility Network Efficiencies: The IMAP Program has successfully established an open and transparent environment where mobility stakeholders are coming together; including various state and local agencies that had not previously participated, to begin having discussions regarding network issues and potential solutions. Without this defined program and process, with established rules to interaction, these discussions would simply not occur.
- Cost Effective: Mobility plan development as designed through IMAP has generated a structure that is identical for all Local Mobility Networks but are unique in content. Using this single structured approach to mobility planning has reduced planning costs by approximately 75%.

Program effectiveness (Cons):

- Competitive Nature: The competitive nature of the IMAP program presents special challenges for public sector agencies and stakeholders. These challenges can be significant, however they can be overcome through transparency, collaboration, and compromises.

23. How has the program grown and/or changed since its inception?

The vision articulated in Idaho's Mobility and Access Pathway that features a consumer-driven system has not changed since the program was first established. However, specific processes, systems, mechanisms, committees, groups, mission, etc. have evolved since this program was introduced. This is the power of this system as it supports and even encourages a changing environment, attacks challenges, and takes advantage of opportunities.

As word spreads about the IMAP program, we have experienced a greater level of interest and participation within the various stakeholder interest groups. We are seeing more involvement from local and state leadership, which has also generated further changes in the internal mechanism of the program. Outside events, opportunities, and challenges have also generated changes within the program.

The IMAP program is about an overall philosophy of engagement to generate relevant mobility options. Consumers, local stakeholders, and local leadership drive the specific details on how that is accomplished.

24. What limitations or obstacles might other states expect to encounter if they attempt to adopt this program?

Three basic, but very important, elements had to occur before this program could have ever been initiated.

First, a program such as this requires the full support and vision from the Office of the Governor and senior leadership of the transportation department. The courage that is required to embrace this philosophy including secondary issues that arise from identified barriers absolutely requires a leadership commitment.

Second, the momentum of the program can only be sustained through the commitment of a group of *champions* within each tier of the program. In the case of Idaho, the initial activity that resulted in the IMAP Program came directly from the Division of Public Transportation. Once the program moved forward, it was then imperative that each Local Mobility Network have champions to carry their program forward, and then the District Coordination Council, Interagency Working Group, and then finally the Public Transportation Advisory Council. The importance of identifying and developing these champions within each of the tiers and groups cannot be understated.

Finally, States must also understand that they will not be controlling or overseeing the systems, processes, or outcomes but are simply executing those directives that come from the local stakeholders.

IMAP truly is a grass-roots program.