



WA Transpo, commonly known as Urban/Rural Rides, is a volunteer-based transportation service providing mobility to people in Westmorland and Albert Counties. Our service is designed to improve the quality of life for people with little or no access to affordable transportation.

The Community Inclusion Network {Westmorland/Albert} with Tele-Drive Albert County, Rural Rides Petitcodiac/Salisbury, and the Volunteer Driver Program {Dieppe, Moncton and Riverview} looked at options of providing transportation to areas of Westmorland/Albert region that do not have affordable transportation. This working group along with community partners conducted a pilot project for six {6} months in the Tantramar region offering affordable transportation. This pilot had the benefit of the resources and experience that has been demonstrated by the other existing driving programs and was successful at determining there is a great need for affordable transportation in all regions and showed further expansion of service was possible through a collaborative effort of the existing services.

In July 2018, Urban/Rural Rides launched service in the remaining un-serviced areas of Westmorland and Albert Counties including Memramcook, Shediac, Cap Pele and Beaubassin Est. To properly service the Francophone areas, a bilingual dispatcher is needed to service all regions.

Each year, we coordinate approximately 720 rides for residents of Riverview in addition to 150 to 200 rides we provide to clients in other regions travelling into Riverview to access services and shopping.

How it works:

Clients register with the service and then call to book a ride 48 hours in advance. They are matched with a volunteer driver by the dispatcher. The driver picks up the client at the designated time, takes them to their appointment, waits for them and then drives the client home again. Clients are invoiced at the end of the month for rides taken. The rate is \$.70 per km and the subsidize rate is \$.25/km for low income families and individuals with a minimum ride fee of \$10 for a round trip. We have found that nearly all our clients qualify for the subsidized rate.

Who are our clients? Seniors, those with disabilities and low income families and individuals. Basically, anyone for who cannot access transportation because of economic or physical barriers.

Volunteer drivers are required to carry \$2 million liability insurance (we will reimburse the extra cost up to \$80 per year), have a clean criminal record check, provide reference checks, sign an oath of confidentiality and have a safe, well maintained vehicle. Drivers are reimbursed \$.41 per km from their door back to their door.

Who are our Volunteers? Mostly seniors and retired individuals but anyone with a vehicle who clears the screening process with a desire to help others can become a volunteer driver.

Urban/Rural Rides is applying to The Regional Service District for funds to employ a full time bilingual dispatcher to manage ride requests for all regions as well as some funding for accounting support.

Urban/Rural Rides Contributions:

Urban/Rural Rides benefits the whole community by:

1. Providing affordable, needed transportation to get residents to medical and treatment appointments, etc.
2. Promoting sustainable transportation in rural and typically underserved areas.
3. Improving the quality of life for people with little or no access to affordable transportation.
4. Creating partnerships with individuals, groups, non-profit organizations, local and regional governments, and businesses.
5. Keeping the residents active in their own and surrounding communities
6. Retaining residents that have no transportation in the area instead of moving to the city.
7. Providing opportunity to attend job fairs, job training and interview's leading to employment

Our ask to you today is:

1. That you would use whatever resources you have to communicate this service to your residents such as your Facebook page, newsletter or links on your website.
2. Because this service runs by using volunteers, we are always in need of volunteer drivers. So please feel free to volunteer or refer volunteers to us.
3. Urban/Rural Rides is a non-profit organization comprised of 3 Registered Charity Members. The cost to provide rides is always greater than the amount we charge so we rely on donations for the municipalities we serve to help offset that benevolent expense. We will be applying to the Town of Riverview as we have to other municipalities to contribute to the benevolent fund to help cover the actual cost of providing rides so we can keep the cost as affordable as possible for those who need the service.