

The Supporting Statement

Introduction:

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) has established the biennial Excellence in Right-of-Way Awards Program to recognize partners, projects, and processes that use FHWA funding sources to go beyond regulatory compliance and achieve right-of-way excellence. Excellence in Right-of-Way awardees can contribute to the outstanding innovations that enhance the right-of-way professional's ability to meet the challenges associated with acquiring real property for Federal-aid projects.

Similarly, FHWA established the Excellence in Utility Relocation and Accommodation Awards Program to honor the use of innovative practices and outstanding achievements in reducing the cost or shortening the time required to accommodate or relocate utilities associated with highway improvement projects. The goal of the program is to showcase exemplary and innovative projects, programs, initiatives, and practices that successfully integrate the consideration of utilities in the planning, design, construction, and maintenance of transportation facilities.

Part A. Justification.

1. Circumstances that make collection of information necessary:

Information collection for FHWA's Excellence in Right-of-Way Awards Program and Utility Relocation and Accommodation Awards Program supports the agency's mission to "improve mobility on our Nation's highways through national leadership, innovation, and program delivery."¹ The two awards programs recognize outstanding initiatives and partnerships across the United States, increasing the awareness of these successes and encouraging the sharing of innovative practices to achieve FHWA's mission.

The Excellence in Right-of-Way Awards Program categorizes award recipients and nominations under the following topic areas: Peer of the Year; Innovation; Leadership; Stewardship; Streamlining and Integration; Technical Specialty; Judges; Tribal; Current Initiatives. The Utility Relocation and Accommodation Awards Program categorizes award recipients and nominations under the following topic areas: Project Development; Construction Management; Innovation; Utility Program Performance; and Incentives for Utility Relocation. These categories will help transportation stakeholders obtain information about the selected projects so that they can learn more about the projects and potentially bring these examples or similar efforts into their own agency practices.

Information collection for FHWA's Excellence in Right-of-Way Awards Program and Utility Relocation and Accommodation Awards Program also support the U.S. Department of Transportation's "State of Good Repair" and "Economic Competitiveness" strategic goals. The two awards programs will highlight projects that reflect these goals in their processes and results.

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

The Excellence in Right-of-Way Awards Program will be a biennial awards program sponsored by FHWA that recognizes partners, projects, and processes across the United States that use FHWA funding sources to go beyond regulatory compliance and achieve right-of-way excellence. Similarly, FHWA's biennial Excellence in Utility Relocation and Accommodation Awards Program honors the use of innovative practices and outstanding achievements in reducing the cost or shortening the time required to accommodate or relocate utilities associated with highway improvement projects.

FHWA will accept nominations for any project, process, group, or individuals involved in a project or process that has used FHWA funding sources to make an outstanding contribution to these areas. Anyone may submit an application to nominate those involved in a project. An independent panel of judges with various backgrounds, disciplines, and expertise review the applications and select the winning

¹ FHWA Mission: www.fhwa.dot.gov/about/vmcv.cfm

entries. Award recipients are recognized at a ceremony that FHWA organizes. Information about the Excellence in Right-of-Way Awards recipients will be available on FHWA's Awards and Recognition website and in a published document. Information about the Utility Relocation and Accommodation Awards recipients will be available on FHWA's Utility Program website and in a published document.

The purposes of the Excellence in Right-of-Way Awards Program is to honor outstanding innovations that enhance the right-of-way professional's ability to meet the challenges associated with acquiring real property for Federal-aid projects. In parallel, the Utility Relocation and Accommodation Awards Program is intended to showcase exemplary and innovative projects, programs, initiatives, and practices that successfully integrate the consideration of utilities in the planning, design, construction, and maintenance of transportation facilities

The recipients of both types of awards demonstrate strong commitments to ground-breaking solutions in their respective fields. These recipients serve as effective examples for other agencies or individuals looking to promote excellence in their work. The data gathered and information collected as part of these awards programs identify superlative efforts occurring nationwide that go beyond traditional transportation practices to create best practice examples products for other practitioners and interested parties.

3. Extent of automated information collection:

The entire notification of award programs and application process will be completed electronically. FHWA will distribute emails informing potential applicants of awards programs. Applicants will make submissions to the award programs by filling out editable nomination forms available to them via FHWA's website. These nomination forms will allow prospective applicants to nominate individuals, projects, or processes. Along with the nomination form, the applications will submit a written endorsement by either a FHWA Division Office (for the Right-of-Way Awards) or a State Department of Transportation (for the Utility Relocation and Accommodation Awards), and at least one picture of the project. FHWA expects the estimated completion of each application by respondents to be approximately six hours. All information is to be submitted electronically via email.

4. Efforts to identify duplication:

The Excellence in Right-of-Way Awards Program and the Utility Relocation and Accommodation Awards Program are both unique among Federal awards programs. They place a significant emphasis on the ways that the right-of-way professional's ability to meet the challenges associated with acquiring real property for Federal-aid projects, as well as on the cost and time reductions associated with accommodating or relocating utilities for highway projects.

5. Efforts to minimize the burden on small businesses:

There will be no burden on small businesses. FHWA intends to use an electronic application process, and no special equipment is required to apply. The completion and submission of applications for the awards program will take place via email.

6. Impact of less frequent collection of information:

The biennial Excellence in Right-of-Way Awards Program and the Utility Relocation and Accommodation Awards Program both facilitate the submittal of current, innovative practices. If the programs were less frequent, FHWA could miss opportunities to highlight significant partners, projects, or processes that use FHWA funding sources to achieve excellence in the right-of-way and utility fields.

7. Special circumstances:

There are no special circumstances associated with this collection.

8. Compliance with 5 CFR 1320.8:

The FHWA published a 60-day Federal Register notice regarding the renewal of this information collection on November 25, 2020, issue 85/75402. No comments were received.

9. Payments or gifts to respondents:

No payments or gifts are provided to respondents.

10. Assurance of confidentiality:

FHWA is not providing assurance of confidentiality.

11. Justification for collection of sensitive information:

None of the information collected is sensitive or private in nature.

12. Estimate of burden hours for information requested:

FHWA anticipates that it will take six hours per respondent per application to complete each of the 50 Excellence in Right-of-Way Awards and each of the 50 Utility Relocation and Accommodation Awards nomination applications that will be submitted biennially.

The nomination process email will take 2 minutes to complete and will be sent to approximately 1000 respondents (500 for the Right-of-Way awards and 500 for the Utility Relocation Awards).

Totals:

Excellence in Right-of-Way Awards Nomination Forms 6hrs X 50 respondents = 300 hours
Utility Relocation and Accommodation Nomination Forms 6hrs X 50 respondents = 300 hours

Excellence in Right-of-Way Awards Nomination process email 2 minutes X 500 respondents = 17 hours
Utility Relocation Nomination process email 2 minutes X 500 respondents = 17 hours

Total = 634 hours per collection cycle.

**** For ROCIS Entry Purposes ****

We will collect information 2 times during this 3 year approval, totaling 1268 hours (634 X 2). This gives FHWA an average of 422 hours per year (1268 X 3).

13. Estimate of total annual costs to respondents:

There will be no costs to the respondents.

14. Estimate of cost to the Federal government:

FHWA anticipates that the projected cost estimate to the Federal government is \$29,852. This cost estimate assumes a GS-12 hourly staff salary of \$35.88 and 416 hours (2,080 * 20% Staff Time) per awards program, every other year dedicated to reviewing, processing, and managing both programs.

15. Explanation of program changes or adjustments:

There are no program changes.

16. Publication of results of data collection:

FHWA will publish the results of the Excellence in Right-of-Way Awards on Awards and Recognition website. FHWA will publish the results of the Utility Relocation and Accommodation Awards on its Utility Program website. FHWA will also produce a document for each award program that recognizes the recipients and describes the partners, projects, and processes that were selected as winners. Winners will also be announced and recognized at an awards ceremony.

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

Not applicable. FHWA is not seeking approval to not display the OMB expiration date.

18. Exceptions to certification statement:

There are no exemptions to the certification statement.

