

# Coordination

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## The Three C's

Three terms are often used interchangeably in discussing transit partnerships

Cooperation

Consolidation

Coordination

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## Cooperation



Working together in some type of loose association, perhaps focusing primarily on information sharing, in which all agencies retain their separate identities and authorities, including control over the vehicles they own

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### Consolidation



One agency retains all operational authority and provides services according to purchase of service agreements or other contractual relationships

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### Coordination



Involves joint decision making and actions of two or more agencies with formal arrangements to provide management of the resources and transit within a defined area

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### What is Coordination?

- Strategy for managing resources
- Tool for doing more with the resources currently available
- Developing partnerships and cooperation in the delivery of transportation services
- Sharing power among organizations that are working together to achieve common goals

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### What is Coordination?

- The best way to stretch scarce resources and improve mobility for everyone
- "Coordination" refers to all sorts of ways in which two or more entities agree to work together toward some common purpose.

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### Coordination

- The key is to clearly define and communicate what is meant by coordinated transportation to all parties that are potential participants.




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### Benefits and Challenges

It is crucial to understand and explain the pros and cons of coordination so potential partners do not develop unrealistic expectation.




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### Benefits of Coordination

- Improvements in service quality
- Increase in service quantity
- Better cost efficiencies
- Increased access for all



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### Benefits of Coordination

- Greater customer satisfaction
- Increased integration
- Greater productivity
- More options to get to jobs, health care, shopping, etc.



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### Benefits of Coordination

- Increased activity for local businesses
- Greater visibility for transit
- Enhanced ability of human service and other entities to focus on their primary missions



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### Benefits of Coordination

- Stronger support and funding commitment from elected officials
- Broader community support for maintaining and expanding transit services
- Could lead to one-stop customer access
- At some point it may lead to increased funding



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### Challenges

Initially, Coordination may be...



- More expensive**
- More difficult**
- More time-consuming**

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### Challenges

- Various funding requirements
- Problems with cost allocation
- Match requirements for federal funds
- Regulatory requirements



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**Challenges**

- Perceived incompatibility of goals, needs, or client eligibility
- Unrealistic expectations
- Unequal standards of service quality



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**Challenges**

- May reduce unit costs/trip but not free up transportation \$ for other activities
- Coordination agreements can unravel over time with changes in personnel and funding levels



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**Challenges**

- Medicaid Funding
- Head Start Vehicle Specifications
- Confidentiality Concerns
- Billing for Rides



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**Challenges**

- Working with people who are not used to sharing power in relation to their clients
- Crossing over long-standing barriers and boundaries
- Different "political" jurisdictions



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**Challenges**

- Lack of administration funding
- Differences in funding cycles
- Vehicle ownership
- Combining a variety of vehicles and vehicle conditions
- Maintenance philosophies
- Vehicle signage



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**Challenges**

- Fare Equity
- Resistance to Change
  - Agency Administration
  - Agency Staff
  - Passengers



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### Challenges

- Lack of effort or support from funding sources for coordinated operations
- Inability to understand the true costs of operating transit services
- Personalities
- TIME!




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### The Coordinated Plan

- Required for the following FTA programs:
  - 5310 - Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities
  - 5316 - Job Access Reverse Commute (JARC)
  - 5317 - New Freedom




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### Required Elements

1. Assessment of available services that identifies current transportation providers
  - Public, private, non-profit
  - Inventory of Existing Means of Personal Mobility (your vehicles & other vehicles in the community – i.e., nursing home, adjustment training center, daycares, churches, etc.)

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**Required Elements**

2. Assessment of transportation needs for individuals with disabilities and seniors
  - Stakeholder input
  - Community perceptions
  - Identify gaps in service
  - Other targeted data collection

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**Required Elements**

3. Strategies, activities and/or projects to address the identified gaps between current services and needs
  - Satisfying unmet needs
  - More efficiencies in service delivery
  - Partnerships

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**Required Elements**

4. Priorities for implementation based on resources
  - Time
  - Feasibility of implementation
  - Available physical resources
  - Potential funding sources

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### Transit needs...

The identification of various market segments that are transit dependent and are in need of public transit services, e.g. senior citizens, disabled persons, low income persons, those without access to a vehicle, and youth

Greater Minnesota Transit Plan 2010-2030

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### Unmet transit needs...

an expressed or identified need which is not currently being met through the existing system of public transportation systems



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### 3 Steps to Determine These Gaps

1. Market research
  - Demographics
  - Census data
  - On-board surveys
2. Technical Analysis
  - Mathematical models
  - Performance measure data

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### 3 Steps to Determine These Gaps

- 3. Public involvement and community outreach




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### Strategies to Determine these Gaps

- Community planning session
  - Identify stakeholders
  - Identify needs based on experiences
  - Identify strategies to address needs
  - Set priorities
    - Time
    - Resources
    - Feasibility

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### Strategies to Determine these Gaps

- Self-assessment tool
  - Diagnostic questions
  - Assess progress
  - How to develop elements of the plan

[www.transit.dot.gov/ccam](http://www.transit.dot.gov/ccam)




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### Strategies to Determine these Gaps

- Focus groups
  - Provides greater input for a greater number of stakeholders
  - Opens new dialogue
  - Discuss key strategies and plans for implementation

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### Strategies to Determine these Gaps

- Surveys
  - Email, in-person, direct mail
  - Accessible to all stakeholder groups
  - Consider data sampling strategies, analysis, sampling, projected return rates

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### Strategies to Determine these Gaps

- Detailed study/analysis
  - GIS mapping
  - Mathematical models
  - 3<sup>rd</sup> party consultants
  - Must have available funding or funding partners

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### Planning Tips

- ✓ Look at your own internal capacity and capabilities
- ✓ Assess needs locally and across adjoining service areas
- ✓ Start with one partner and build upon successes
- ✓ Constantly assess coordination efforts

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### Planning Tips

- ✓ Be patient in the process
- ✓ Be willing to invest time
- ✓ Work with individuals and agencies committed to coordination
- ✓ Be realistic
- ✓ Do not make promises you cannot keep

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### Planning Tips

- ✓ Build trust and a knowledge base among coalition members
- ✓ Search for consensus
- ✓ Do not stop when you encounter roadblocks
- ✓ Establish clear roles & responsibilities
- ✓ Be flexible & willing to adapt

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### Planning Tips

- ✓ Ensure partners are fully vested in process
- ✓ Work with local decision makers
- ✓ Put together a transportation advisory committee
- ✓ Listen to customers

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### Planning Tips

- ✓ Leverage funding
- ✓ Educate the public
- ✓ Clearly define what services will be provided in contracts

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### Planning Tips

- ✓ Share vehicles to maximize their utility
- ✓ Select a lead coordinating agency to function as the mobility manager
- ✓ Secure funding

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### Identifying Potential Partners

- YMCA, YWCA, Boys & Girls Clubs of America
- Park and Recreation Offices
- Shelters
- Red Cross
- Salvation Army



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### Identifying Potential Partners

- Universities, colleges & technical schools
- English as a Second Language programs
- Taxi and limo companies
- Private transit operators (i.e., Jefferson Lines)



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### Identifying Potential Partners

- Alcohol & Drug Services
- Rehabilitation Services
- Hospitals & clinics
- Dialysis or Cancer treatment centers or other medical facilities



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### Identifying Potential Partners

- Vocational & Developmental Disabilities Departments (Adjustment Training Centers/Centers for Independent Living)
- Job Service and Departments of Employment
- Veteran's Services




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### Identifying Potential Partners

- Other public transportation providers
- Department of Human Services
- County Social Services
- State and/or County Health Department
- State, Regional or County Mental Health Services




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### Identifying Potential Partners

- Area Agencies on Aging/Aging Services
- Long-term care facilities & assisted living centers
- Senior and public housing
- Community Action
- Churches and faith-based organizations




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### Identifying Potential Partners

- Metropolitan or Regional Planning Organizations or economic development office
- County Fair organizers
- Child Daycare Providers
- Adult Day Stay Programs
- Cancer Society
- Local private non-profits (Senior Companions, RSVP)



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### Identifying Potential Partners

What about the private sector?

- Banks
- Grocery Stores
- Pharmacies
- Beauty Salons
- Wal-Mart, Kmart, and others



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### Identifying Potential Partners

What about the private sector?

- Restaurants/Cafes
- Industrial Park management
- Technology Park management
- Manufacturing Plants
- Processing Plants



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### Identifying Potential Partners

- Trip Generators
  - What type of activities, needs, etc. generate the need for transportation? (Be specific and explain the types of trips provided by your agency)



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### Identifying Potential Partners

- Identify who you want to approach
- Plan what you want to say
- Create a bullet list of facts about your transit organization
- Pull together materials to leave with the potential partner about your agency

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### Identifying Potential Partners

- Learn about their organization
- Attend meetings that are about their needs/concerns in community
- Ask them about their goals for their clients/customers
- Ask about their general needs for their clients/customers (not just mobility needs)

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### Activity

- How many of the sources listed do you currently have formal coordination agreements with?
- List 3 "Potential Partners" from the list that you are not currently working with that you will commit to contact



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### Implementing the Plan

- Collect & carefully monitor fiscal, operating, & client data
- Allocate costs clearly, carefully & fairly
- Market the service
- Make a strong commitment to training
- Develop a clear & comprehensive joint rider's guide and/or transit policy manual

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### Implementing the Plan

- Recognize & take advantage of new opportunities
- Purchase services & equipment that meet needs
- Passenger assistance & customer service training for drivers and dispatchers
- Kinds/amounts of funding to pay costs of passenger trips

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### Implementing the Plan

Increased productivity focuses on:

- Improved accessibility
  - Greater adaptability
  - More affordability
  - Increased availability
- ... of transportation services



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### Implementing the Plan

Greater efficiencies are achieved by focusing on reducing duplication & fragmentation in:

- operations
- administration
- planning
- funding



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### Implementing the Plan

You must not break FTA Rules:

- You cannot do charter trips
- You cannot contract for exclusive school transportation

You must clearly define in your Coordination Plan what "working with" means. Comprehensively explain your relationship with your coordination "partners."



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**For More Information**

TCRP Report 101  
 Transportation Research Board  
*Toolkit for Rural Community  
 Coordinated Transportation Services*

[www.tcrponline.org](http://www.tcrponline.org)

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**For More Information**

Federal Transit Administration (FTA)  
 Coordinating Council on Access  
 and  
 Mobility (CCAM)  
 United We Ride

[www.transit.dot.gov/ccam](http://www.transit.dot.gov/ccam)

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