

Coordinated Public Transit - Human Service Transportation Plan

What is the purpose of a Coordinated Plan? The purpose of the plan is to broaden the dialogue and support coordination between public transportation and human services transportation focused on target populations; older adults, people with disabilities and persons of low income. The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) and the Oregon Department of Transportation have expectations and requirements for a coordinated planning process. As the designated recipient of federal funds, ODOT is required to conduct a competitive selection process to determine use of the funds, and to certify that projects were derived from a coordinated plan. ODOT also administers Oregon's Special Transportation Fund (STF). An administrative rule requires that STF Agencies (the counties, transportation districts and Indian tribes designated by state law to receive the STF moneys) prepare a plan to guide the investment of STF moneys to maximize the benefit to the elderly and people with disabilities within that area. The 2015 update highlights current conditions, new initiatives, results of recent surveys and local planning.

What are Coordinated Plans? Locally developed, coordinated public transit-human services transportation plan ("coordinated plan") which identifies the transportation needs of individuals with disabilities, older adults, and people with low incomes, provides strategies for meeting those local needs, and prioritizes transportation services for funding and implementation. A coordinated plan must also incorporate activities offered under other programs sponsored by Federal, State, and local agencies to greatly strengthen its impact.

Transportation-Human Services Coordination Study

<https://www.oregon.gov/ODOT/RPTD/RPTD%20Document%20Library/transportation-human-services-coordination-study.pdf>

This is a cooperative project of Association of Oregon Counties (AOC); Oregon Department of Transportation, Public Transit Division (ODOT PTD); and Oregon Department of Human Services (DHS). The subject of coordination is complex and multi-faceted. For this Study, the focus was coordination of public transportation services and human services. At the local level, coordination means the efficient and effective use of transportation resources for getting people to important destinations, such as jobs and medical appointments. Coordination is working with transit providers, human service agencies, private institutions, businesses, volunteers and political leaders to broaden transportation options. At the state level, coordination is more about reducing duplication of services and enhancing the use of funding and other resources contributed by the Federal government and the State for transportation services.

Coordinated Plan Required Elements: Transit projects shall be derived from a coordinated plan that minimally includes the following elements at a level consistent with available resources and the complexity of the local institutional environment:

- (1) An assessment of available services that identifies current transportation providers (public, private, and non-profit);
- (2) An assessment of transportation needs for individuals with disabilities, older adults, and people with low incomes. This assessment can be based on the experiences and perceptions of the planning partners or on more sophisticated data collection efforts, and gaps in service (Note: If a community does not intend to seek funding for a particular program (Section 5310, 5311), then the community is not required to include an assessment of the targeted population in its coordinated plan);
- (3) Strategies, activities, and/or projects to address the identified gaps between current services and needs, as well as opportunities to achieve efficiencies in service delivery; and
- (4) Priorities for implementation based on resources (from multiple program sources), time, and feasibility for implementing specific strategies and/or activities identified.

Flexibility in updating the Coordinated Plan

FTA recognizes that many communities have conducted assessments of transportation needs and resources regarding individuals with disabilities, older adults, and/or people with low incomes. FTA also recognizes that some communities have taken steps to develop a comprehensive, coordinated, human service transportation plan either independently or through United We Ride efforts. FTA supports communities building on existing assessments, plans, and action items. As all new Federal requirements must be met, however, communities may need to modify their plans or processes as necessary to meet these requirements. FTA encourages communities to consider inclusion of new partners, new outreach strategies, and new activities related to the targeted programs and populations.

Plans will vary based upon the availability of resources and the existence of populations served under these programs. A rural community may develop its plans based on perceived needs emerging from the collaboration of the planning partners, whereas a large urbanized community may use existing data sources to conduct a more formal analysis to define service gaps and identify strategies for addressing the gaps. This type of planning is also an eligible activity under three other FTA programs—the Metropolitan Planning (Section 5303), Statewide Planning (Section 5304), and Urbanized Area Formula (Section 5307) programs, all of which may be used to supplement the limited (10 percent) planning and administration funding under this program. Other resources may also be available from other entities to fund coordinated planning activities. All “planning” activities undertaken in urbanized areas, regardless of the funding source, must be included in the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) of the applicable MPO.