



COORDINATING COUNCIL ON ACCESS AND MOBILITY (CCAM)

Focus Group Report 2018

U.S. Department of Transportation

Federal Transit Administration

1200 New Jersey Ave SE, Washington, DC 20590

Executive Summary

CCAM BACKGROUND

The Coordinating Council on Access and Mobility (CCAM) is an interagency partnership established by Executive Order to improve coordination across federal programs that fund transportation services for older adults, people with disabilities, and individuals of low income. Chaired by the Secretary of Transportation, the CCAM's membership includes the Cabinet-level leadership of 11 different federal agencies. Through coordination, the CCAM endeavors to reduce program duplication, fragmentation, and overlap in order to increase the efficiency and availability of federally funded transportation service.

FOCUS GROUP OBJECTIVES

The Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act directs these members to develop a strategic plan that includes recommended changes to federal laws and regulations that will eliminate barriers to local transportation coordination. In response to FAST Act requirements, the Department of Transportation (DOT) sponsored federal interagency work groups in 2017 to identify coordination barriers and develop preliminary recommendations for addressing those barriers through statutory and regulatory changes. To further inform and refine the Council's response to these requirements, DOT conducted a series of focus groups with state and local stakeholders in 2018. Through a combination of virtual focus groups, in-person focus groups and interviews, and industry listening sessions, DOT engaged over 200 stakeholders representing 22 states. Sessions included recipients of funding from seven different CCAM member agencies (see **Figure 1**). In conducting the focus groups, DOT pursued three objectives:

1. Understand the current state of transportation services for people with disabilities, older adults, and individuals of low income;
2. Identify transportation coordination success stories and promising practices; and
3. Identify barriers to transportation coordination.

Feedback from these stakeholders is critical to better understand the policies and practices that prevent local transportation coordination. The CCAM will work to address these barriers and promote identified promising practices.

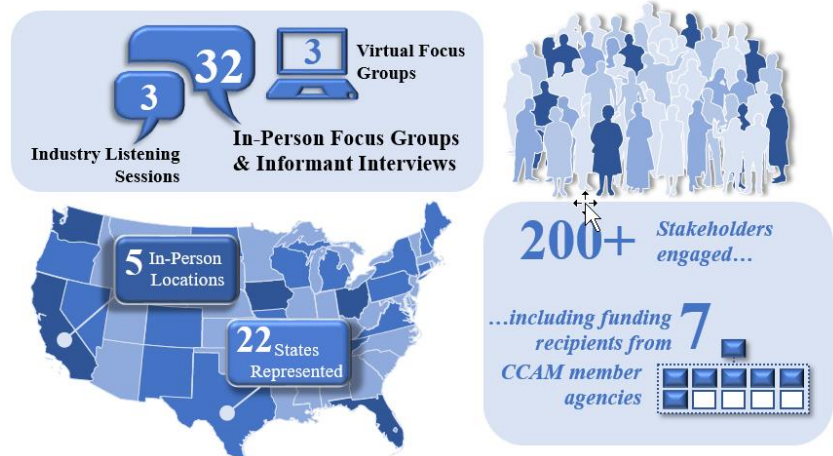


Figure 1 - CCAM Focus Groups by the Numbers

FINDINGS

This report details cumulative findings from focus group sessions as well as stakeholder-specific findings relevant to certain subsets of focus group participants.

Cumulative Findings

The barriers to transportation coordination reported by focus group participants are organized into ten key barrier categories. **Table 1** outlines these categories.

Barrier	Definition
Limited Awareness	A lack of awareness of the federal funding sources available for human service transportation, the policies that enable transportation coordination, and/or the community's transportation options for targeted populations
Unengaged Stakeholders	Challenges associated with establishing and maintaining the organizational and community partnerships necessary to pursue transportation coordination
Program Restrictions	Reporting obligations, eligibility criteria, trip purpose restrictions, and other program rules that make it difficult to coordinate across different transportation programs
Insufficient Incentives	A lack of incentives or financial motivation for human service providers to pursue transportation coordination initiatives
Limited Federal Guidance	An absence of the federal guidance that states and local communities need to coordinate transportation in compliance with federal law
Jurisdictional Boundaries	City, county, or other regional lines that define an organization's service area and prevent that organization from coordinating with other entities beyond the service area
Administrative Burden	The accounting obligations, logistical responsibilities, implementation work, and other administrative tasks that consume an excessive amount of time and resources
Insufficient Data	A lack of the data that states and local communities need to increase the transparency of transportation spending, demonstrate the utility of transportation coordination, and allocate the costs of coordinated transportation equitably
Cost Sharing Concerns	Apprehension about sharing the costs of coordinated transportation across participating stakeholders in a way that is equitable and proportionate to the services received
Inaccessible Systems	Transportation vehicles and facilities that funding recipients cannot use for some coordination activities because they are inaccessible to people with functional limitations

Table 1 - Transportation Coordination Barrier Categories

Of these categories, five barriers emerged across a majority of focus group sessions and stakeholder groups as the most prevalent barriers to coordination (see **Table 2**).

Stakeholder Findings

The facilitation team selected focus group participants based on the services they provide or fund for older adults, individuals with disabilities, and/or individuals of low income; however, the nature of these services varies broadly. Grouping stakeholders that provide similar services and serve similar populations allowed for more targeted analysis of the challenges state and local funding recipients experience. **Table 2** outlines the coordination barriers that emerged as themes within each stakeholder group (**Table 7** in the **Methodology** section defines each stakeholder group). These themes reflect barriers that a majority of participants representing a particular stakeholder group reported. Stakeholders also shared examples of successful coordination and made recommendations for how the federal government can remove barriers to local coordination.

The facilitation team also met with representatives of statewide coordination initiatives to discuss their challenges and successes, outlined in the **Statewide Coordination Initiatives** section.

Barrier	Aging Services Stakeholders	Disability Services Stakeholders	Employment and Training Services Stakeholders	Housing Services Stakeholders	Medicaid NEMT Stakeholders	Physical and Behavioral Health Services Stakeholders	Transit Stakeholders	Veterans Transportation Stakeholders
Limited Awareness	•	•	•			•		•
Unengaged Stakeholders		•		•	•		•	•
Program Restrictions			•		•	•	•	•
Insufficient Incentives	•		•	•		•		
Limited Federal Guidance	•				•		•	
Jurisdictional Boundaries				•			•	
Administrative Burden	•				•			
Insufficient Data			•			•		
Cost Sharing Concerns							•	
Inaccessible Systems		•						

Top 5 Barriers

Table 2 - Coordination Barriers by Stakeholder Group

NEXT STEPS

In support of CCAM progress to date, the focus group findings will help the CCAM promote transportation coordination (see **Figure 2**). The CCAM will convene federal work groups that will use the focus group findings to develop recommendations for Congressional and agency action. Based on these recommendations, Congress can change federal law and agencies can update their policy and guidance to remove barriers to local coordination and improve the efficiency and availability of federally funded transportation for people with disabilities, older adults, and individuals of low income.

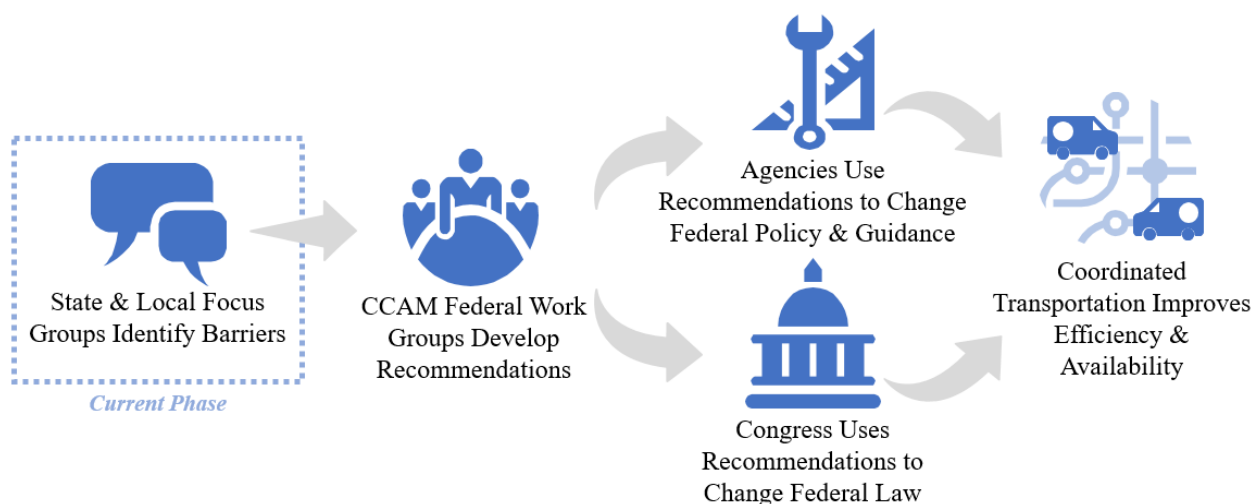


Figure 2 - Focus Group Feedback Integration