

CHAPTER 08



JOHNSON COUNTY



INTRODUCTION

The purpose of Access North Texas is to document the public transportation needs for seniors, individuals with disabilities, and individuals with lower incomes. These populations can have difficulty finding public transportation options that connect them to doctor's appointments, work opportunities and education or job training. This plan identifies where these transportation connections do not exist or could be improved within Johnson County. This chapter will give an overview of existing services, research conducted and collected, the public outreach meetings, the transportation poll used to collect individualized input on public transit needs, and the prioritized strategies for Johnson County.

EXISTING TRANSPORTATION RESOURCES

Johnson County's designated public transportation provider is City/County Transportation, which is provided through the City of Cleburne. City/County Transportation provides demand-response, curb-to-curb transportation service throughout Johnson County, as well as a commuter bus route into downtown Fort Worth. City/County Transportation provides transportation services throughout Johnson County with all trips originating and ending within the county, with the exception of service to Texas Health Huguley Hospital, and the portion of Burleson that lies outside of county lines. City/County Transportation's demand-response services are available to the general public, though they primarily serve seniors and individuals with disabilities, while the commuter bus service typically serves the general population and low-income individuals.

Services are available from 7:00 am to 6:00 pm Monday through Friday and 8:00 am to 5:00 pm on Saturday with no service available on Sunday. Riders must book rides at least one day in advance. Transit services cost \$3.00 per trip within same-

city limits and travel outside of the city limits and the cost between cities is \$3.00 for every 5 miles. Passes may also be purchased, including a "Regular Pass" for \$55.00 or a "Reduced Pass" for \$30.00 available for passengers 60 years of age or older, individuals with disabilities, and children under the age of 18. Individuals with disabilities must submit a doctor's note to the office verifying that the rider has a disability that prevents them from driving.

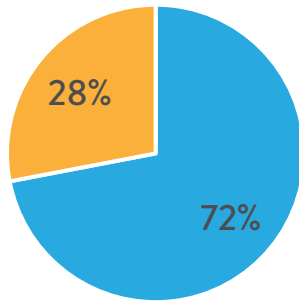
In addition to other transportation options and services, Trinity Metro operates a commuter vanpool program within the North Central Texas region. As of May 2022, Trinity Metro operated up to 9 vanpools with origins in Johnson County and 2 vanpools with destinations in Johnson County. The number of vanpools may change month to month as the program expands offering shared commuter transportation opportunities.

Finally, see Appendix B for a list of private transportation providers operating in the 16-county region. These private providers are an additional transportation option that individuals can use for personal trips (if cost-effective). Organizations can also contract with them to provide specific services for clients.

DEMOGRAPHIC ANALYSIS

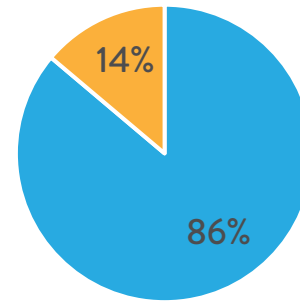
The demographic composition of Johnson County reflects a significant amount of growth and a diverse population, that may have high potential need for public transportation. According to the American Community Survey's 2019 5-year estimates, Johnson County's population has increased by 7.6% since 2015. Johnson County's total population is made up of more than 167,000 individuals and more than 57,000 households according to the same estimates. There are over 23,000 individuals 65 years of age and older, making up 13.8% of the population, over 16,700 individuals with a disability, making up 10% of the population, and over 23,300 individuals are low-income, making up 14.3% of the population.

Johnson County
Minority Status



■ Total Non-Minority
■ Total Minority

Johnson County
Percentage of Population 65+



■ Under 65 Population
■ 65 and Over Population

Johnson County also hosts relatively few zero-car households at just 2% of households.

Johnson County’s racial composition includes a majority White population, making up 90.7% of the total population, followed by 3.6% total Black, 1.0% total Asian, 0.5% total American Indian or Alaska Native, 0.4% total Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander, 2% total Other Race, and 1.9% total Two or More Races. Of the total population, 21.4% of individuals identify as Hispanic or Latino. When compared to the aggregate of the 16-county North Central Texas Region of 68.8% total White population, Johnson County as a larger population, at 90.7%. Of the total population in Johnson County, 6.1% are considered to have limited English proficiency. Efforts to promote existing or new transit services should include strategies to reach this population.

PROCESS

Outreach

Public outreach for Johnson County was conducted through a series of virtual public meetings, one-on-one meetings with county stakeholders, surveys, and public mapping data. Outreach efforts were advertised through our Access North Texas website and Local Motion publication. Staff sent out 62 emails inviting

Johnson County stakeholders and contacts to participate in public outreach efforts.

Virtual public meetings saw 10 attendees including members of the public and representatives from county non-profits, Independent School Districts, and local municipalities. The public survey received 88 responses from Johnson County residents and the agency survey received 2 responses from Johnson County stakeholders and organizations. Finally, 4 one-on-one meetings were conducted with stakeholders from non-profits and municipalities throughout Johnson County.

Data Sources

The planning process for Access North Texas involved North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) staff, community stakeholders, transportation providers, and community members. Through virtual meetings, members from each county prioritized its main concerns about transit access in their area.

Virtual public meetings and discussions with Johnson County stakeholders revealed desire for increased connectivity within the county and into the more urban parts of the region. Many noted the desire for expansion of on-demand or demand-response public transportation options

within the county and some mentioned a desire for fixed route bus within the county, and commuter bus or rail into Tarrant County employment hubs. Discussions with local stakeholders revealed that public transportation is frequently used to connect older residents to medical appointments. Some municipal representatives noted that there is demand for rail connectivity into Fort Worth

Some common themes among discussions with Johnson County residents and stakeholders included the need for increased connectivity across municipal boundaries and increased service choice. Participants mentioned the desire or need to implement fixed-route bus services within the county and increased commuter services into Fort Worth and Dallas to fit residents' travel needs.

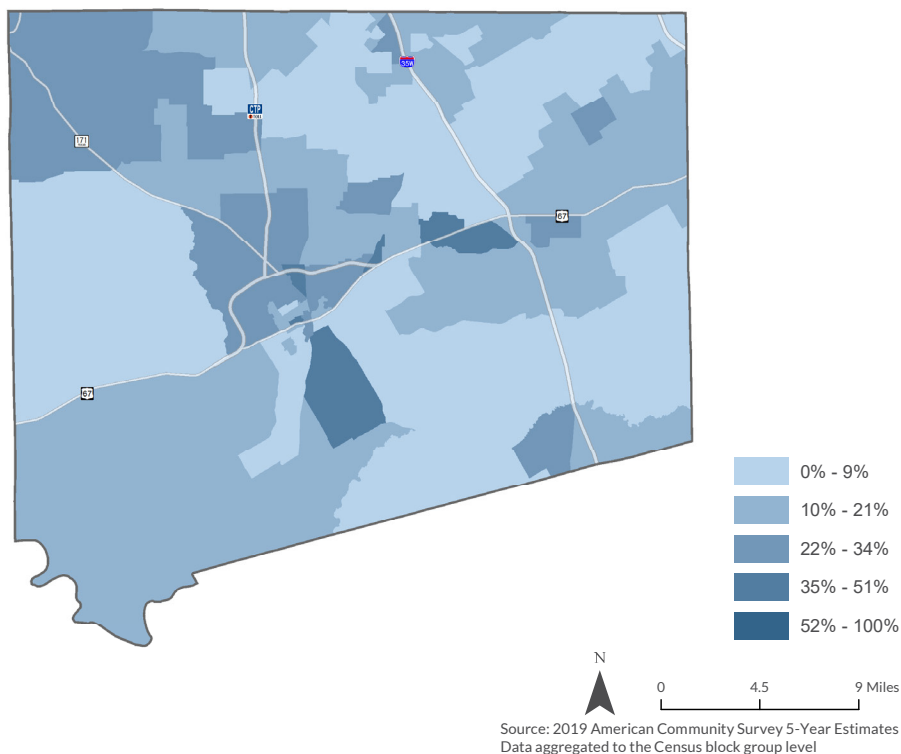
Some additional concerns revealed through virtual public meetings and one-one-one meetings included concerns related to health and sanitation measures on transit vehicles and the desire for more extensive informational and educational

resources related to existing transit options. Respondents expressed interest in a more expansive and accessible transit service network in Johnson County that facilitates travel across municipal boundaries and provides healthy and safe travel to their destinations.

Another form of receiving data from Johnson County residents and stakeholders was a transportation survey; made available online and translated into English and Spanish. Due to COVID-19 limitations, paper copies were available upon request or through transportation partners. The survey helped NCTCOG staff to collect first-hand data about public transportation in the region from riders and organizations that work with transit-dependent populations.

Staff received 90 survey responses from Johnson County including 88 responses from the public surveys and 2 responses from the agency survey. The survey revealed that many respondents noted health concerns and

Johnson County Low-Income Individuals



limited-service areas among barriers to public transportation experienced in Johnson County. Many noted that public transportation does not meet their needs or that information about how to use existing transit options is lacking.

When prompted to note the kinds of missed trips individuals were experiencing, a significant portion of respondents noted that they were not missing trips, however, those who were missing trips or experienced delays noted that they were primarily missing work and medical trips. Respondents most frequently noted that their desired mode of transportation is demand-response or on-demand services, followed closely by fixed-route bus or commuter bus to light rail stations. Most respondents noted that the enhancements they would like to see include better information about how to use transit and increased health and sanitation measures on vehicles.

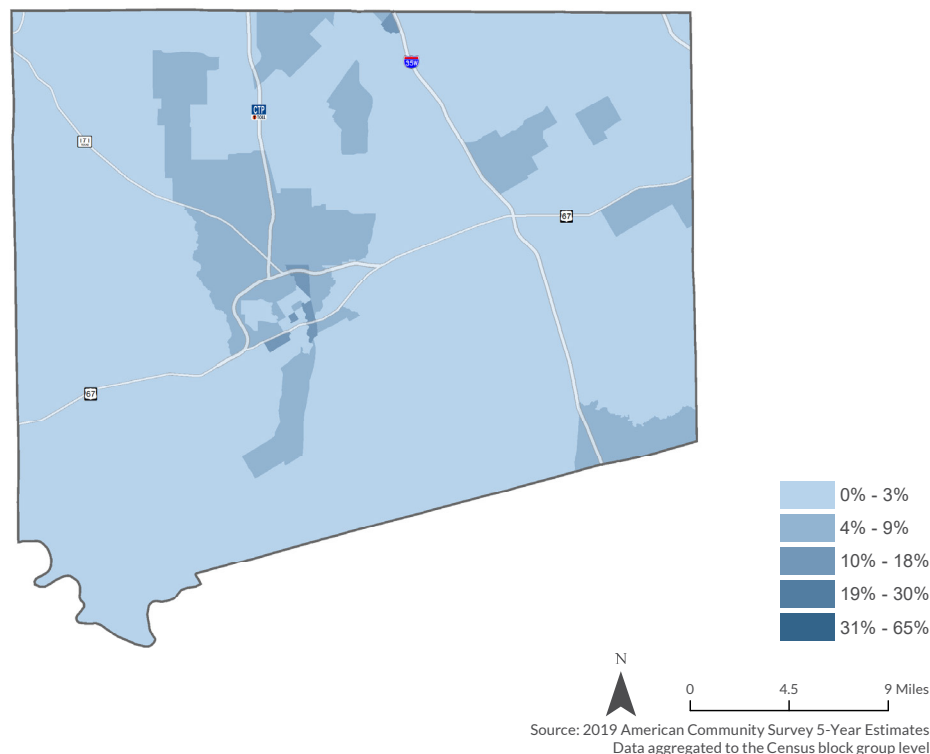
The surveys revealed that Johnson residents and stakeholders would like to see Johnson County

transit services gain more connectivity into Fort Worth and Dallas, expand demand-response or on-demand transit service options, and provide more detailed and accessible information about the services to connect them to work and to medical trips. All information gained through outreach meetings and transportation survey was gathered to develop the prioritized strategies for Johnson County.

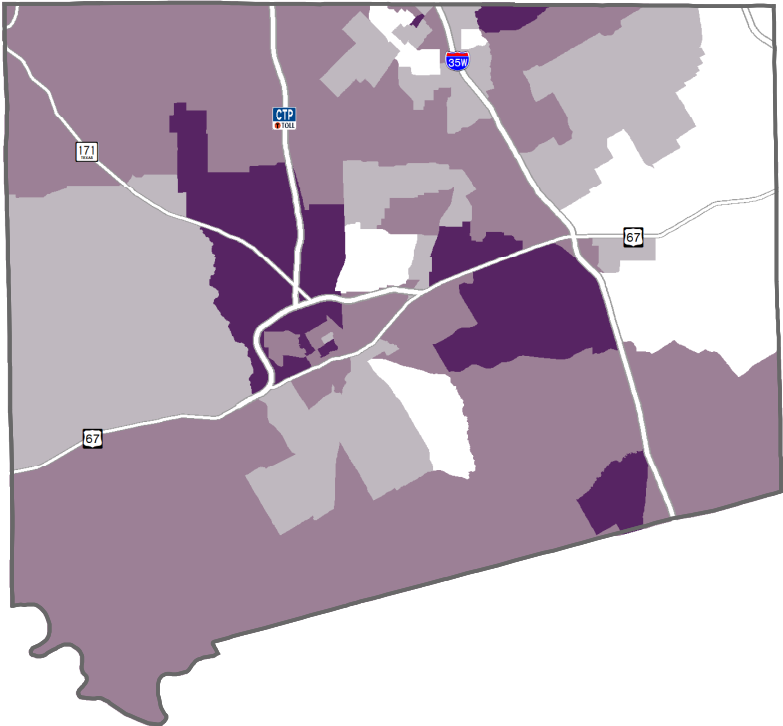
TAIT Tool and Environmental Justice

The Transit Accessibility Improvement Tool (TAIT) identifies communities who face transportation disadvantages and may have greater potential need for public transit. This tool is updated by NCTCOG and is based on American Community Survey 5-year estimates. Based on information from TAIT, in Johnson County there are a few census block groups where populations of individuals age 65 and over, below poverty, and with disabilities are above the regional percentages.

Johnson County Zero-Car Households

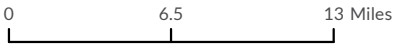


Johnson County Transit Accessibility Improvement Tool (TAIT)



Legend

- All Variables At or Below Regional Percentage
- One Variable Above Regional Percentage
- Two Variables Above Regional Percentage
- All Variables Above Regional Percentage



Source: 2019 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

The Transit Accessibility Improvement Tool (TAIT) is a preliminary screening areas that may need additional analysis when considering transportation-disadvantaged groups in a plan, project, or program. The TAIT displays Census block groups above the regional percentage for three variables: Age 65 and Over, Below Poverty, and Persons with Disabilities.

Analysis

The Johnson County TAIT map reveals that Johnson County contains a few Census blocks wherein the proportion of populations of seniors, individuals with disabilities, and people below the poverty line is above the regional average. The populations which fit this description are located at the core of the county, primarily near Cleburne and at the intersection of highway 67 and I35W. Johnson County hosts several Census block groups in which two variables are above the regional average, most of which are located along the more rural southern and northwest portions of the county.

Development of Strategies

The prioritized strategies were developed once information from outreach meetings, the transportation poll, and research data was compiled and analyzed for patterns and gaps of service. Observations and recommendations were coded into six main categories to identify themes across the 16-county region and inform regional goals. Those goals provide a framework for the Access North Texas and individual strategies were identified for Johnson County to further those goals and provide a plan for transit providers and organizations in future implementation of services. Drafted goals and strategies were provided to the stakeholders for additional feedback and review prior to the finalization of the plan.

FINDINGS

Outreach efforts within Johnson County revealed that residents and stakeholders are interested in seeing transit services expand mode options, increase connectivity to employment centers in Tarrant and Dallas Counties, improve educational resources surrounding transit, and increase health and sanitation measures on transit vehicles.

In Johnson County, 90 individuals completed the Access North Texas public survey with 47% of respondents indicating that they could get to

where they need to go, while others noted several barriers to getting to where they need to go, service areas and health concerns, chief among them. Many noted a desire for better connectivity to Dallas and Fort Worth employment centers and a desire to travel more easily across county and municipal lines.

Outreach efforts revealed that 51 respondents noted a need for better information about how to use transit and available transit resources. Concerns with transit service areas limiting travel to desired destination was highlighted by 7 respondents. In Johnson County, 28 respondents indicated that health and sanitation enhancements would benefit transit services with 9 respondents indicating that health concerns are a barrier to transit travel. Safety concerns were also listed among 6 respondents and 4 respondents indicated that transit services take too long to connect individuals to their destinations.

Johnson County residents and stakeholders are interested in seeing a more expansive, safe, and mode-diverse transit service in Johnson County. Respondents would like to have better access to rail stations and employment destinations outside of county and municipal boundaries through the expansion of demand-response and on-demand solutions or fixed-route and commuter bus services. Johnson County residents would like better access to work, medical appointments, and other destinations and easier access to information about the public transit options available for them to do so.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The goals and strategies below identify ways to address the most important public transportation needs stakeholders identified as needing to be implemented over the next few years. The strategies build upon the progress and feedback that has been provided since the 2018 Access North Texas plan and should be referenced when

REGIONAL GOAL

JOHNSON COUNTY-SPECIFIC STRATEGIES

Plan and Develop Transportation Options by Assessing Community Need and Challenges

- A) Conduct planning activities to further identify public transportation needs of residents outside of existing transportation authorities and define additional coordination opportunities for existing providers
- B) Invest in programs to assist with filling gaps in public transportation and facilitate service for work-related trips
- C) Invest in programs that facilitate transportation trips to medical and healthcare appointments

Implement Services by Enhancing Transportation Options and Expanding Where Service Gaps Exist

- A) Increase access to employment, social (such as entertainment and shopping centers), religious, and well-being trips in areas with limited to no public transportation service
- B) Expand public transportation services to key destinations throughout the region without comprehensive service and support regional integration of new services.

Coordinate with Transportation Providers, Public Agencies, and Stakeholders to Increase Efficiencies

- A) Work with regional and local organizations to increase ease of travel across municipal and county boundaries
- B) Foster cooperation between public transit providers within counties to allow better connectivity and simplify regional trips

Support Public Transportation Recovery and Growth

- A) Promote safe and healthy practices on public transportation services
- B) Establish driver recruitment and retention programs for public transportation services to address difficulties in retaining drivers

Promote Access and Information about Available Transportation Options

- A) Enhance communication and outreach programs to improve awareness of existing or new transportation options
- B) Partner with agencies, recreation centers, senior residencies, housing assisted living centers, and other organizations to publicize information
- C) Identify, recruit, educate, and support influential champions for public transportation (elected officials, community leaders, or business leaders) to promote and support public transportation through leadership, policy, or funding initiatives

state and federal funds for public transportation become available.

Implementing the Plan

Within Johnson County, both the City of Burleson and the City of Cleburne have included elements of public transportation in their city plans to address short- and long-term transportation needs. For the City of Burleson's Imagine Burleson 2020 Midpoint Update, goals include encouraging a multi-modal transportation system by developing a mobility innovation plan and a transit master plan. In the City of Cleburne's 2014 Comprehensive Plan, regional commuter rail was identified a possible development opportunity to help accommodate traffic growth and expand mobility.

Transportation providers and partners may begin to implement some of these strategies in Johnson County by focusing on increasing public awareness of transit services through travel training programs or marketing efforts in the area. Due to the interest in expanded transit services, transportation providers and stakeholders may desire to coordinate with one another to increase connectivity and expand options.

Agencies and organizations looking to develop transit projects aligned with these strategies may find support through NCTCOG's Transit Strategic Partnerships Program or the TxDOT Call for Projects. Competitive proposals will demonstrate innovative solutions, strategic value, sustainability, implementation capacity, and evidence of collaboration. Most importantly, the proposal's needs assessment will need to be supported directly by county specific strategies identified in this plan. The most competitive proposals will demonstrate how the proposed project or service will utilize one or more strategies to enhance transit accessibility for transit-dependent

populations. More information on the Transit Strategic Partnerships Program can be found at www.nctcog.org/strategicpartnerships-transit. More information on the TxDOT Call for Projects can be found at www.txdot.gov/inside-txdot/division/public-transportation/local-assistance.html

REFERENCE TO THE APPENDIX

For more detailed information about Johnson County, please see Appendices A-E, available online at www.accessnorthtexas.org.

See Appendix A, Summary & Status of 2018 to review previously adopted goals and strategies that were included in the 2018 Access North Texas plan.

See Appendix B, Get-A-Ride Guide, for a list of public and private transportation providers operating in the 16-county region. These providers are an additional transportation resource that individuals can use for personal trips (if cost-effective), or organizations can contract with to provide specific service for clients.

See Appendix C, Transit Accessibility Improvement Tool, for additional information on how the tool was developed and how to use it.

See Appendix D, Data & Analysis, for copies of the transportation surveys, statistics, and affiliated county-based maps.

See Appendix E, Outreach Meeting and Supplemental Information, for a list of previously held virtual meetings by county with a copy of the presentations.