

Introduction

The purpose of Access North Texas is to document the public transportation needs for seniors (older adults), individuals with disabilities, individuals with limited financial resources, and other transit-dependent populations. These populations can have difficulty finding public transportation options that connect them to medical appointments, work opportunities, job training, education, food access, and other essential destinations. This plan identifies where these transportation connections could be improved within Wise County. This chapter provides an overview of outreach efforts, demographics, existing transportation services, findings, and prioritized strategies. More information about the plan and regional findings can be found in the Executive Summary.

Outreach

Public outreach for Wise County was conducted through a survey and stakeholder outreach meeting. Outreach efforts were advertised through email communication, the Access North Texas website, a Local Motion publication, and social media. Opportunity to share transit-related comments and concerns anonymously by location in a virtual public mapping tool called Map Your Experience was also available through the Access North Texas website.

The North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) conducted 13 meetings across the region, which included a virtual stakeholder outreach meeting for Wise County on April 3, 2025. Emails were sent to 110 recipients on the Wise County email subscriber list. The meeting was also promoted on the Access North Texas website. No county providers or residents attended the meeting.

A transportation survey was also available to residents and stakeholders online, on paper, and available in English and Spanish. The online survey could also be translated into other languages by selecting the preferred language option from a drop-down box on the live survey page. The survey collected input on public transportation in the region. A similar survey was also available online for organizations and agencies that work with transit-dependent populations. For the public survey, there were 18 participants for Wise County. For the public agency survey, participants from three agencies indicated they operate in or serve Wise County. Finally, no transit-related comments were received for Wise County through Map Your Experience.

All feedback from outreach efforts were cleaned, compiled, and coded for analysis, in addition to the survey feedback. Using the coding key, qualitative feedback was quantified to create visual representations of feedback for identified barriers, missed trips, desired modes, and enhancements. See Appendix D for the visualizations. Additional feedback was factored into the Wise County analysis as applicable, such as in situations where comments relate to multiple counties, no county was specified, or for transit providers operating across county boundaries.

Demographics Assessment

Wise County continues to experience moderate growth. According to the 2024 American Community Survey (ACS) 5-Year Estimates, the population is 75,005, in comparison to 2019 ACS 5-Year Estimates of approximately 66,290. This shows a 13.1 percent increase in population. Wise County's population, according to the region's long-range transportation plan, Mobility 2050, is expected to reach an estimated 171,714 by 2050.

When comparing the 2019 ACS to the 2024 ACS, the populations of older adults increased by 18.3 percent and individuals with a disability increased by 2.2 percent, while the low-income population decreased by 2.8 percent. Areas with higher concentrations of these populations should be a particular priority in efforts to promote existing or new transit services. Detailed estimates and percentages for these key populations, as well as other demographics, are shown in the table below and in the appendix.

Metric	Wise County Population (approximate)	Wise County	Regional
Households	25,135	-	-
Zero-Car Households	651	2.6%	4.8%
65 and over	11,658	15.5%	12.3%
With a Disability	11,324	15.3%	10.5%
Low-Income Individuals	9,285	12.6%	14.1%
Total Veterans	4,955	8.8%	5.5%
Youth (under 18)	18,405	24.5%	25.0%
Total LEP Individuals	4,245	6.0%	11.9%

Table 1: Target Population and County Metrics. Data from 2024 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.

Transportation Services Assessment

Wise County receives public transit service primarily through Texoma Area Paratransit System, Inc.'s Get-a-Ride transportation program. The map and descriptions below provide a brief overview of this and any other relevant programs, including the extent of their service areas and the types of transportation options they provide. The most updated service area boundaries, fares, and hours of operation can be found on the providers' website. Contact information per provider can be found on the provider's website or the Get-A-Ride Guide in the appendix.

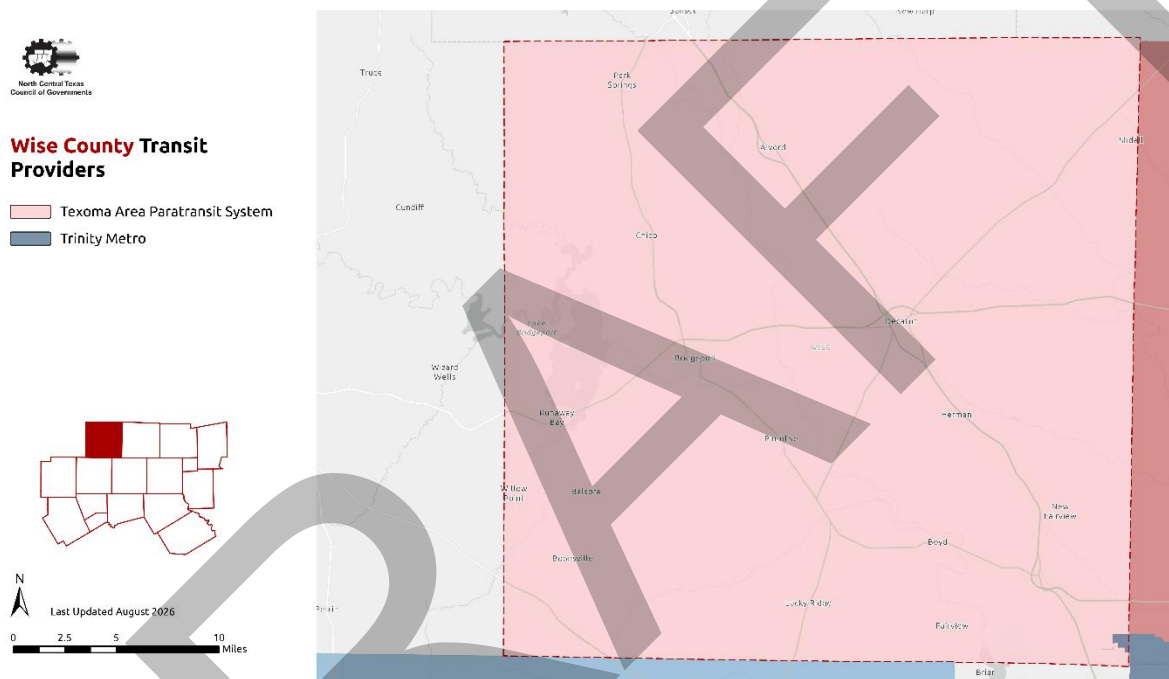


Figure 1: County Transit Service Map

Texoma Area Paratransit System, Inc.

Texoma Area Paratransit System, Inc. (TAPS) operates Get-a-Ride, a shared-ride, curb-to-curb demand response transportation service for residents throughout Wise County (as well as five additional counties along the Texas-Oklahoma border). This service is available to the general public, with reduced fare options available for seniors, people with disabilities, students, children under 12, and veterans. Trips must be scheduled at least two business days in advance, with call center agents available on weekdays between 7 AM and 3 PM. Fares vary based on factors like trip destination and rider category, and some connecting service to out-of-county destinations is available.

Vanpool Program

In addition to the other transportation options and services, Denton County Transportation Authority (DCTA) and Trinity Metro operate a Vanpool Program in the North Central Texas region. Through Trinity Metro, as of April 2026, six vanpools originate in Wise County, no vanpools have a destination in Wise County, and no vanpools have an origin and destination within the county. Through DCTA, as of April 2026, one vanpool originates in Wise County, no vanpools have destinations in Wise County, and no vanpools have an origin and destination within the county. The number of vanpools may change month to month as the regional program expands shared commuter transportation opportunities.

Overall, gaps in service still exist in Wise County due to a variety of factors. Survey and outreach responses show some insight into what gaps may exist and where further assessment is needed. Through continued collaboration amongst stakeholders, the gaps in service can be identified, reviewed, and discussed.

Needs/Gaps Assessment (Data Analysis)

In Wise County, survey respondents helped to identify a variety of transportation barriers, potential enhancements, missed trips, and desired modes. The combination of all outreach efforts, including surveys and meetings, revealed that residents are interested in the topic of public transportation and would like to see greater access and availability of service. This section analyzes survey and outreach findings while incorporating inputs through the Map Your Experience tool and the Transit Accessibility Improvement Tool map to identify priority need areas. A more comprehensive and detailed view of notes, input, feedback, and reports can be found in Appendix D.

Outreach Meeting

From the outreach meeting, no county residents, providers, or stakeholders attended.

Public Survey

Of the total regionwide survey participants who identified a county of residence, approximately 2.5 percent were from Wise County. While a slim plurality of public survey respondents for Wise County indicated they are not missing trips, an overall majority indicated that they have missed some type of trip. The most common category of missed trips by a significant amount was medical, followed by shopping, as well as a smaller number of work, religious, and social/entertainment/event trips. Of those that identified barriers that prevent them from getting where they need to go, the top selections were that there was no car available to the participants and nobody to drive them.

With 22 percent of 18 respondents indicating that public transportation does not meet their needs, the top identified reason is that transportation services require advanced reservations and are not available on days they need to travel.

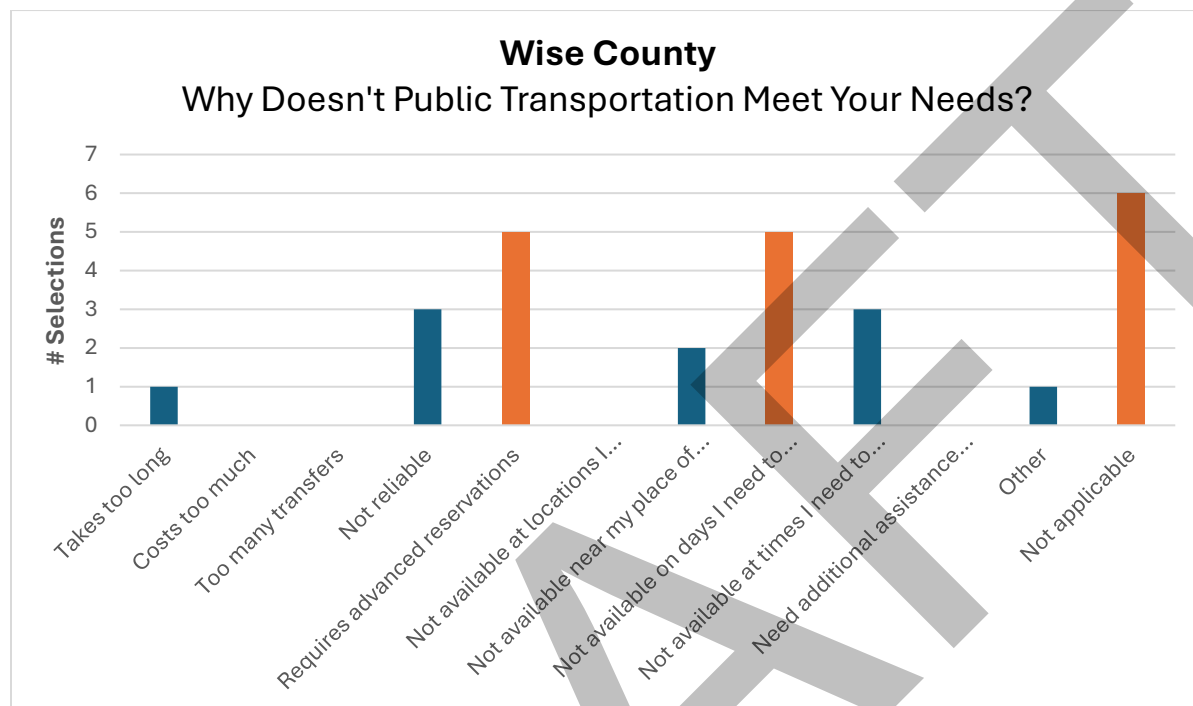


Figure 2: Visual of public survey question responses. Orange highlighted bars indicate most popular selections.

The survey also asked about potential ways to enhance the public transit experience. For this question, respondents selected desired enhancement options and ranked them in order of preference, with a score of 1 indicating the most preferred option. Of the four online survey respondents for this specific question, the Expanded Service Area option was selected by about 75 percent of participants and given an average ranking of 1.00, making it the most preferred option by a sizeable margin. The top three ranked enhancement options are reflected in Figure 3. Of the survey respondents who submitted surveys manually, the top enhancement preferences are for more frequent buses or trains, followed by expanded service area.

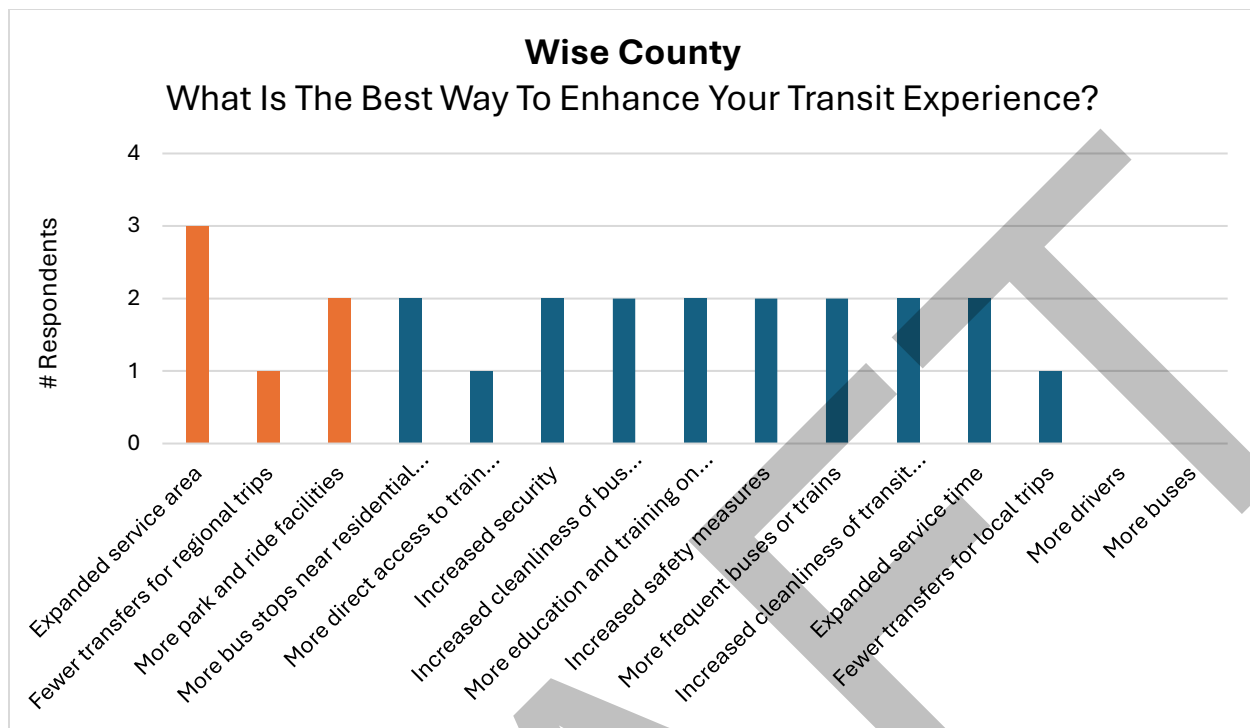


Figure 3: Visual of public survey question asking participants to rank options in order of preference. Orange highlighted bars indicate top three preferred enhancements from online participants.

Agency Survey

Three agencies who participated in the survey indicated they serve or operate in Wise County and that their agency serves multiple populations, including older adults, individuals with disabilities, individuals with limited financial resources, and others. Agencies who provided transportation-related feedback include TAPS and the North Central Texas Area Agency on Aging.

The table below identifies top responses provided by the agency representatives and/or staff who participated in the agency survey. More information on survey responses can be found in appendix D.

What are the most requested trips among those you serve?
• Medical
What keeps your customers from getting where they need to go?
• No car available to them • Nobody to drive them • Public transportation services don't meet their needs
For public transportation options that don't meet your customers' needs, what is the reason?
• Not available at locations needed to travel • Need additional assistance getting to/from or on/off the vehicle
What is the best way to enhance your customer's public transportation experience?
• More frequent buses or trains • Increased security

Table 2: Summary of select public agency survey question responses. Not all responses apply to the individual county; however, in the overall service area the agencies operate, Wise County is included.

Categorized Qualitative Feedback

Meeting notes, “other” inputs for survey questions, comments, and feedback gathered offered insight into experienced barriers, missed trips, desired modes, and enhancements in Wise County. The table below summarizes qualitative feedback top findings that may be compared to other findings. Participation and feedback varied among the different outreach methods.

Barriers	Missed Trips	Desired Modes	Enhancements
Disability			
Requires advance reservation	Medical		
Not available at days and times needed	Religious	Bus services	Rider Experience
Access and/or availability of service	Shopping		

Table 2: Summary of categorized qualitative feedback. More detailed information can be found in Appendix D.

Transit Accessibility Improvement Tool

In Wise County, there are several Census block groups where populations of individuals age 65 and older, below poverty level, and persons with disabilities are above the regional percentages. For the Transit Accessibility Improvement Tool (TAIT) map, illustrated in Figure 4, the block groups where these three variables are all above the regional percentage include a small area in the southwestern portion of Decatur, a narrow stretch along the northern portion of Highway 287, the area surrounding Lake Bridgeport in the

west, a block in the southeastern portion of the county along Highway 287, and a section along the southern edge of the county adjacent to FM 51.

As illustrated in Appendix C, populations 65 and over concentrations are broadly dispersed, with the most substantial densities being found in the northeastern corner of the county along FM 51, as well as a moderate population in Runaway Bay south of Lake Bridgeport. For persons with a disability population, relatively dense concentrations of these individuals are found in areas throughout the county, including in the southeastern portion of Decatur, tracts in the southeastern area of the county along Highway 287, and across broad areas on the northern half of the county. For low-income individuals, the most substantial population concentration is located in a tract that stretches along FM 51 to the south of Decatur, with low-to-moderate densities scattered elsewhere, particularly along the outer edges of the county.

Wise County

Transit Accessibility Improvement Tool (TAIT)



Source: 2024 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

The Transit Accessibility Improvement Tool (TAIT) are 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 Level, and Persons with Disabilities.

Figure 4: TAIT Map for Wise County

For zero-car households, as illustrated in Figure 5, overall concentrations are relatively sparse, with only a few areas of relatively moderate density including tracts to the northeast of Decatur, in the northwestern corner of the county, and bordering SH 199 in the southwest portion of the county.

Wise County Zero-Car Households

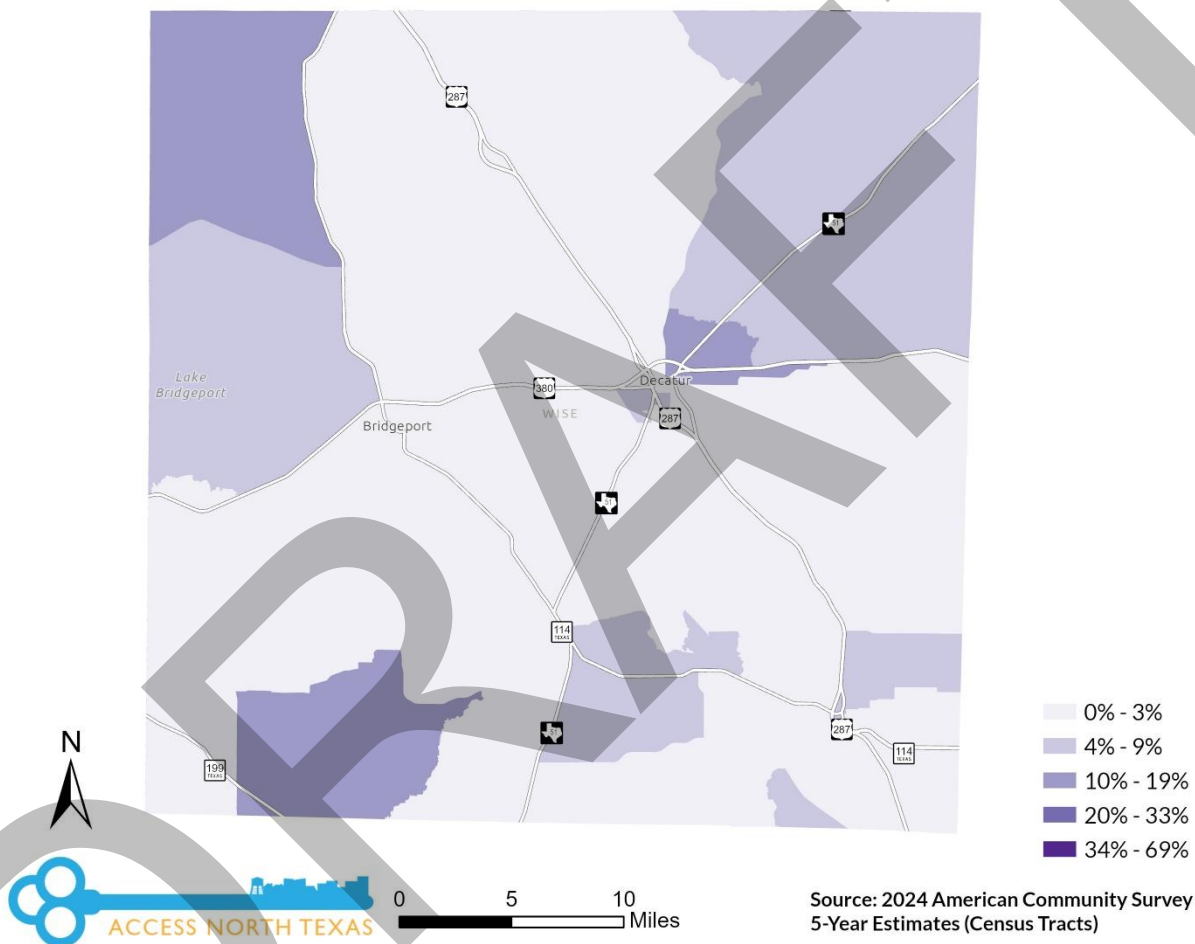


Figure 5: Individual Variable Map showing Zero-Car Households in Wise County

Goals/Strategies Development

The regional goals (five main categories identifying themes across the 16-county region) provide a framework for Access North Texas on a regional level, while the individual prioritized strategies applied to Wise County are applicable to furthering those goals while also addressing needs within the county. These goals and strategies help provide direction

for transit providers and stakeholders to plan and implement future projects and services that support transit-dependent populations.

The prioritized strategies were developed using information from multiple sources, including outreach, meetings, surveys, available data, and regional knowledge through stakeholder engagement and collaboration. Data and information were compiled and analyzed to help identify patterns and gaps. Prior to the finalization of the plan, the goals and strategies were provided to stakeholders for feedback and review.

Goals & Strategies – MORE TO BE ADDED LATER

Regional Goal	Wise County – Specific Strategies
Plan and Develop Transportation Options by Assessing Community Needs and Challenges	1. Conduct planning activities to further identify public transportation needs of residents outside of existing transportation authorities and define additional coordination opportunities for existing providers. 2. Prioritize programs that facilitate transportation for work-related trips, medical, and healthcare appointments
Implement Services by Enhancing Transportation Options and Expanding Where Service Gaps Exist	1. Implement service enhancements, including route frequency, service optimization, mode connectivity, and operating hours. 2. Work with specialized service providers, those that may have limitations on populations they serve, to improve transit access by streamlining rider registration and scheduling processes.
Coordinate with Transportation Providers, Public Agencies, and Stakeholders to Increase Efficiencies	1. Work with public transportation providers and stakeholders to improve or maintain services connecting riders to the transit system, healthcare, and other key destinations. 2. Improve regional connectivity by increasing ease of travel across municipal and county boundaries, providing access to different transit modes, and enabling transfers to

Regional Goal	Wise County – Specific Strategies
	existing systems across various fare structures.
Drive Sustained Growth of Public Transportation Ridership	1. Improve safety, security, and sanitation measures to build rider confidence and comfort.
Promote Access and Information about Available Transportation Options	1. Enhance communication and outreach programs to improve awareness of existing or new transportation options.