

Introduction

The purpose of Access North Texas is to document the public transportation needs for seniors (older adults), individuals with disabilities, individuals with lower income, 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 Kaufman County. This chapter provides an overview of outreach efforts, demographics, existing transportation services, findings, and prioritized strategies. More information about the plan and findings can be found in the Executive Summary.

Outreach

Public outreach for Kaufman 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 Kaufman County on March 25, 2025. Emails were sent to 130 recipients in the Kaufman County email subscriber list through the Public Input platform. The meeting was also promoted on the Access North Texas website. Two individuals and five NCTCOG staff attended.

The 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 multiple languages by selecting the preferred language option from a drop-down box on the live survey page. The survey for the public 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 seven participants for Kaufman County. For the public agency survey, participants from three

agencies indicated they operate in or serve Kaufman County. Finally, two transit-related comments were received for Kaufman 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 Kaufman County analysis as applicable, such as in situations where comments relate to multiple counties or for transit providers operating across county boundaries.

Demographics Assessment

Kaufman County continues to experience exceptional growth. According to the 2024 American Community Survey (ACS) 5-Year Estimates, the current population exceeds 172,500 in comparison to 2019 ACS 5-Year Estimates of just over 123,800. This shows an over 39 percent increase in population. Kaufman County's population, according to the region's long-range transportation plan, Mobility 2050, is expected to reach more than 403,000 by 2050.

When comparing the 2019 ACS 5-Year Estimates to the 2024 ACS 5-Year Estimates, the older adult population increased by 26.2 percent, individuals with a disability population increased by 21.8 percent, and individuals with low-income population increased by 28.2 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 of interest, are shown in the table below.

Metric	Kaufman County Population	Kaufman County	Regional
Households	50,990	-	-
Zero-Car Households	1,570	3.1%	4.8%
Older Adults (65 and over)	18,404	10.7%	12.3%
Individuals with a disability	18,976	11.1%	10.5%
Individuals with low-income	24,143	14.1%	14.1%
Veterans	7,172	5.8%	5.5%
Youth (under 18)	49,649	28.8	24.9%
Limited English-Speaking Individuals	10,804	6.8%	11.9%

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

Transportation Services Assessment

Kaufman County is serviced largely by transit providers with STAR Transit being the main transit authority, with some connections to Dallas Area Rapid Transit. The map and descriptions below provide a brief overview of these 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 Appendix B.

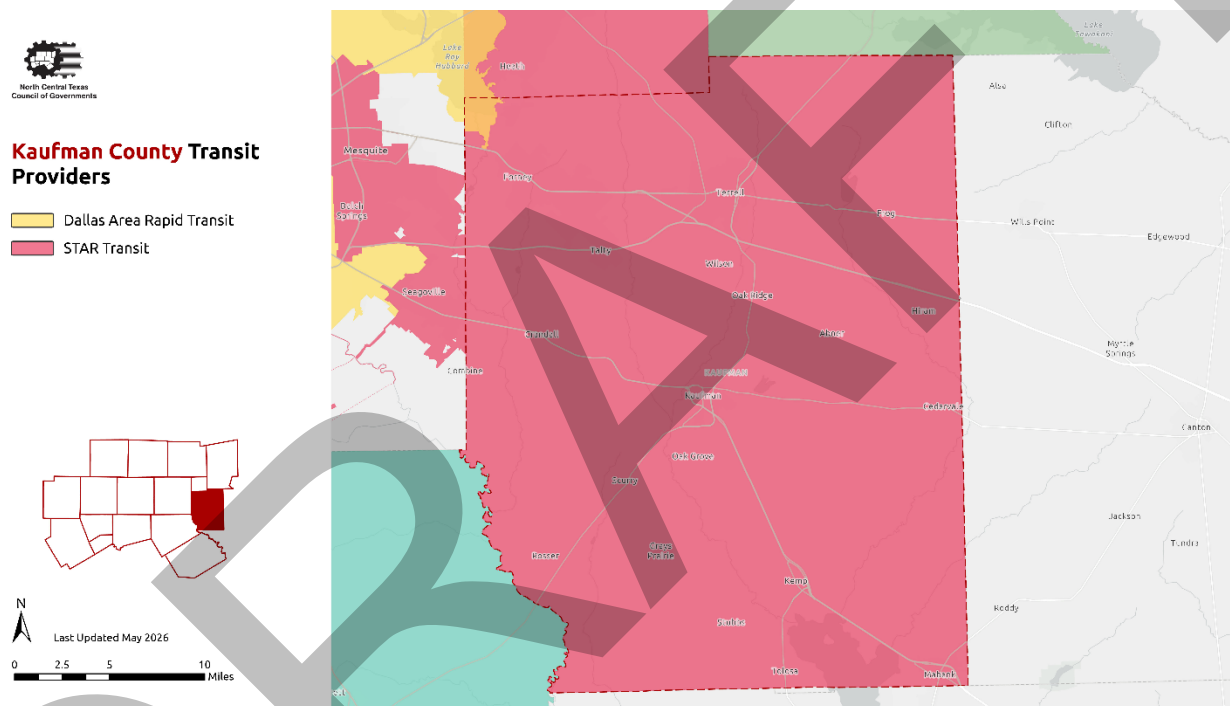


Figure 1: County Transit Service Map

Dallas Area Rapid Transit

Dallas Area Rapid Transit (DART) does not offer transit services in Kaufman County. However, residents may use DART's GoPass app to purchase tickets for rides with STAR Transit.

STAR Transit

STAR Transit offers multiple services, including an express bus route, same-day trip service, demand response trip service, and connections to DART. Riders may call customer service to book rides, use the STARNow app, or use the GoPass app (excluding demand response trips) to purchase tickets. Other payment options include using exact

cash on STAR Transit vehicles, account credits, and pre-paying using a credit card. Reduced fares are available to eligible riders 60 years of age or older, veterans, and/or people with disabilities. Fare options for bus and same-day service include single ride, day pass, and 31-day pass.

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, there are no vanpools with origin or destination in the county. Through DCTA, as of April 2026, 22 vanpools originate in Kaufman County, 4 vanpools have destinations in Kaufman County, and 1 vanpool has 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 Kaufman 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 Kaufman 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 discussion, there was interest in improving connectivity to Dallas County, along with a need for rail expansion and expanded partnership with STAR Transit. Expanded transit options and hours of operation were also suggested as enhancement opportunities, due to interest from Kaufman County-based manufacturing plant managers as their regular business hours are not typically from 8 AM to 5 PM. Additionally, highway 80 was described as heavily traveled and regularly congested. Based on the discussion, three desired enhancements include (1) Connections to Rail Stations, (2) Service Area Expansion, and (3) Service Time Expansion.

Public Survey

Of the total regionwide survey participants who identified a county of residence, approximately 1 percent were from Kaufman County. While most public survey respondents indicated they are not missing trips, there are others who are. Most oriented towards work and medical trips. Of those that identified barriers that prevent them from getting where they need to go, the top selection was public transportation services don't meet their needs.

With 67 percent of six survey respondents indicating that public transportation does not meet their needs, the top identified reason is that services are not available near their place of residence. Figure 2 shows the top reasons why public transportation does not meet the participants' needs for Kaufman County.

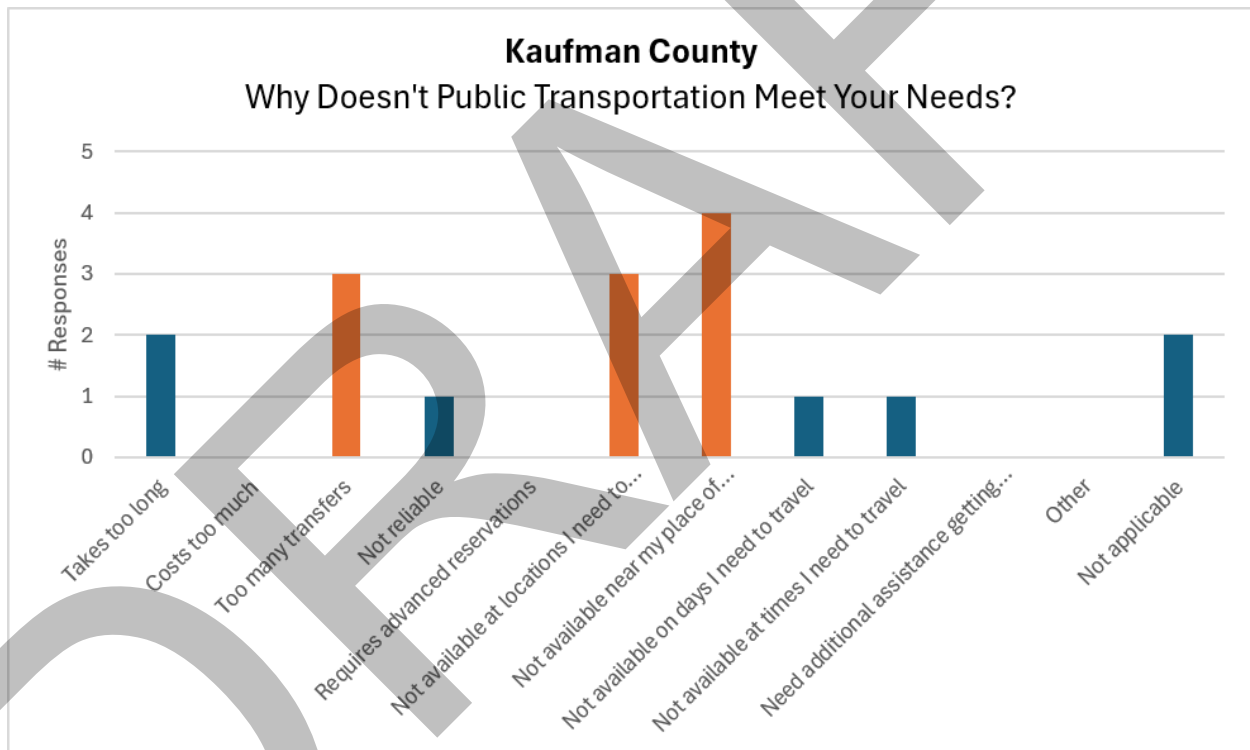


Figure 2: Visual of public survey question responses. Orange highlighted bars indicate most popular selections.

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. For Kaufman County, of the survey respondents, increased security was selected as the preferred

option with a ranking of 1.5 by two participants. The top three ranked enhancement options are reflected in Figure 3.

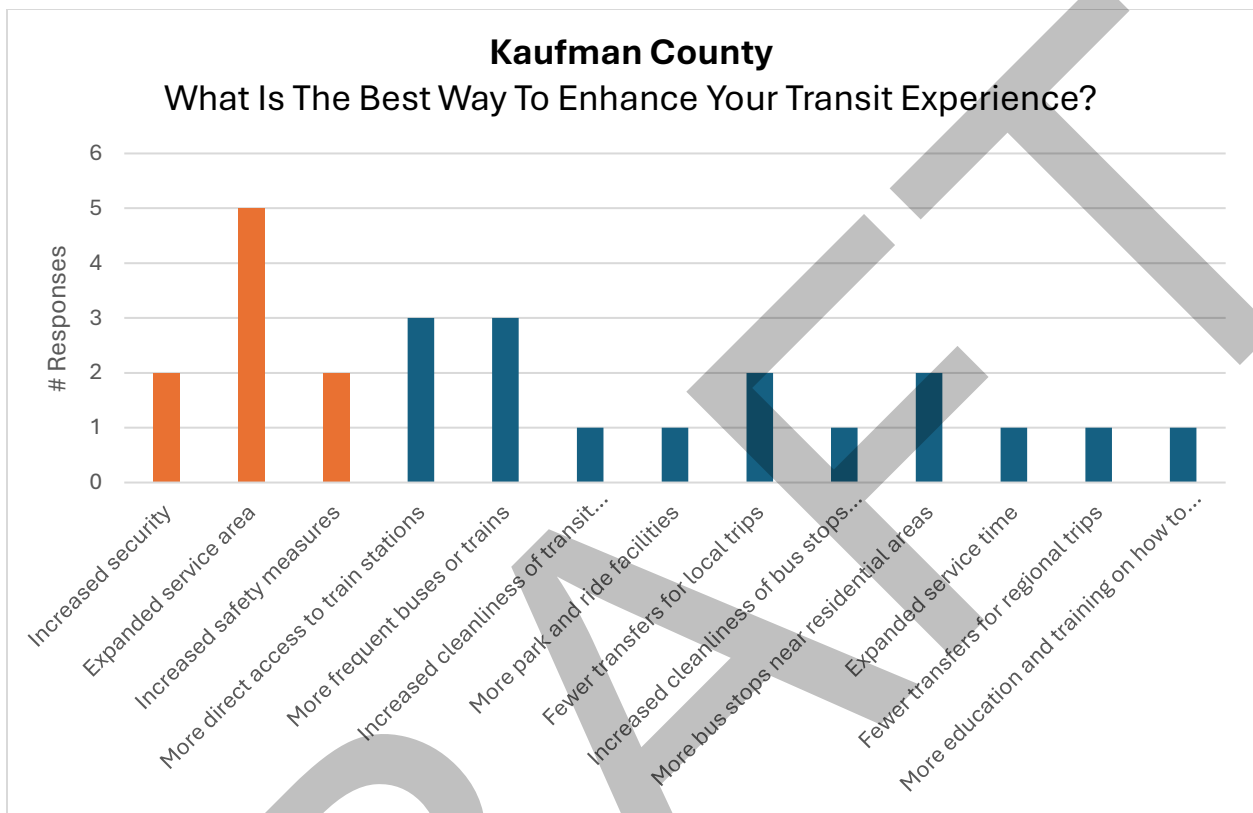


Figure 3: Visual of public survey question asking participants to rank options in order of preference. Orange highlighted bars indicate top three preferred enhancements.

Agency Survey

Approximately 19 percent of agencies who participated in the survey indicated they serve or operate in Kaufman County and that their agency serves multiple populations, including older adults, individuals with disabilities, individuals with lower income, and others. Agencies who provided transportation-related feedback include STAR Transit and the North Central Texas Area Agency on Aging.

The tables below identify 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 is available to them • Nobody to drive them
For public transportation options that don't meet your customers' needs, what is the reason?
• Not available at locations needed to travel • They need additional assistance getting to/from or on/off the vehicles
What is the best way to enhance your customer's public transportation experience?
• Expanded service area

Table 2: Summary of select public agency survey question responses. Not all responses apply to the individual county, however, the overall service area the agencies operate, which includes Kaufman County.

Categorized Qualitative Feedback

Meeting notes, comments in the survey questions, and additional feedback from providers offered insight into experienced barriers, missed trips, desired modes, and enhancements in the 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
Lack of access and/or availability of service	None Identified	Rail service	Access and availability of service

Table 3: Summary of categorized qualitative feedback. More detailed information can be found in the Appendix D.

Kaufman County

Transit Accessibility Improvement Tool (TAIT)

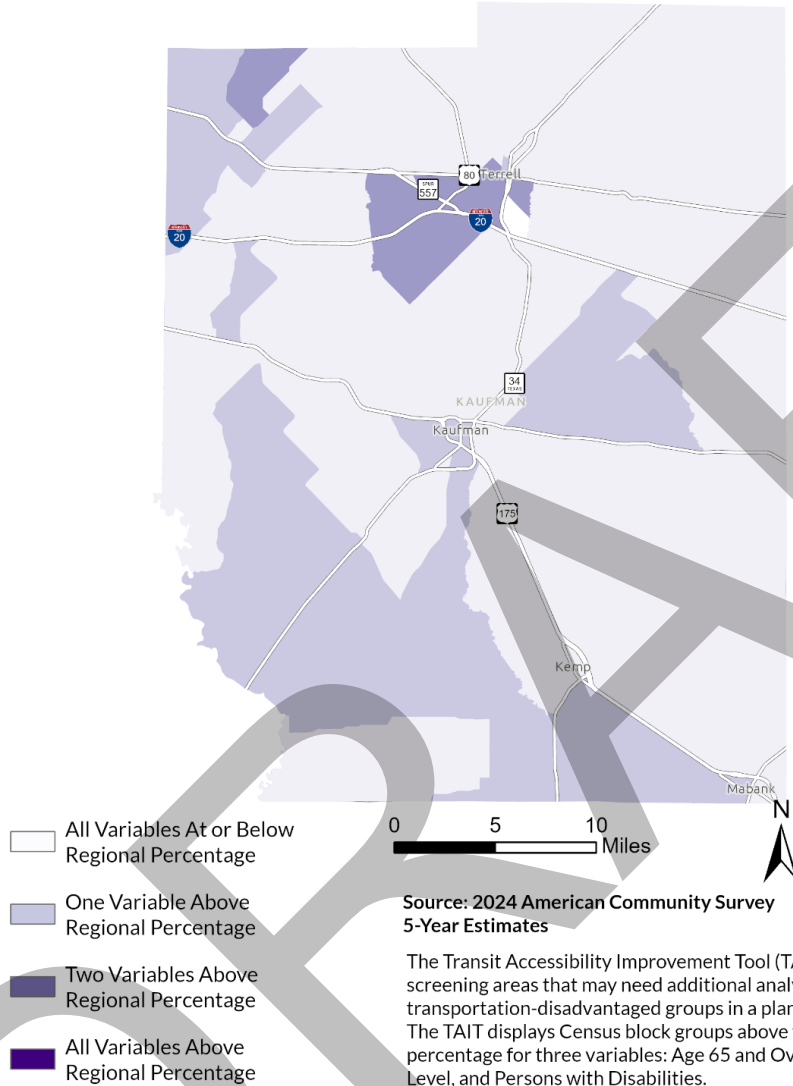


Figure 4: TAIT Map for Kaufman County

The most concentrated areas where two variables are above the regional percentage are near and northwest of Terrell. There is a mix of areas throughout the county showing one variable above the regional percentage and all variables at or below the regional percentage.

For populations aged 65 and over, as illustrated in figure 4 in Appendix C, the highest concentration of areas with moderate ranges of older adults are in the middle to eastern side of the county. There are no areas with high concentrations over 53 percent. East of Terrell and southeast of the city of Kaufman, there are large areas with moderate concentrations of older adults. The western side of the county shows moderately low concentrations of older adult populations. For persons with a disability population, as illustrated in figure 4 in Appendix C, the highest concentration is southeast of the city of Kaufman along IH 175 and moving south through Kemp and toward Mabank. Just south of the city of Kaufman and north of Terrell, there are moderately high concentration areas, while throughout the county, there are scattered areas reflecting moderately low to moderate concentrations. For people with low income, as illustrated in figure 4 in Appendix C, the highest concentration areas with moderately high ranges are south of the city of Kaufman along IH 175 towards Kemp and just south of Terrell. Throughout the rest of the county are mixed areas with low to moderate concentration ranges.

Kaufman County Zero-Car Households



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

For zero-car households, as illustrated in figure 5, the higher concentration areas are west of Terrell and in smaller areas northwest of Terrell near the county border. There is a mix of low to moderately low areas throughout the county, with more lower ranging concentrated areas throughout the eastern side of the 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 Kaufman 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 will be added later

Regional Goal	Collin County – Specific Strategies
Plan and Develop Transportation Options by Assessing Community Needs and Challenges	1. Invest in programs to assist with filling gaps in public transportation. 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. Establish additional assistance or more specialized public transportation options for customers who are not Americans with Disabilities Act paratransit eligible or physically capable of utilizing regular public transportation services. 2. Implement service enhancements, including route frequency, service optimization, mode connectivity, and operating hours.
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.
Drive Sustained Growth of Public Transportation Ridership	1. Promote partnerships between public transit providers and other public or private organizations to increase opportunities to make fares more affordable for those in need.

Regional Goal	Collin County – Specific Strategies
Promote Access and Information about Available Transportation Options	1. Enhance communication and outreach programs to improve awareness of existing or new transportation options. 2. Conduct travel training to educate the public on available services and policies. 3. Partner with agencies, recreation centers, communities, assisted living facilities, healthcare, and other organizations to publicize information.